

The Senate Committee on Higher Education offered the following substitute to SB 556:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 20-2-157 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 uniform reporting system for certain purposes, dual credit courses, and academic eligibility  
3 requirements to receive HOPE scholarship, so as to provide for the inclusion of advanced  
4 placement, Cambridge, and international baccalaureate fine arts courses in the calculation  
5 of grade point averages for determining student eligibility for the HOPE scholarships and  
6 other scholarships; to provide that Cambridge courses shall be weighted uniformly with  
7 advanced placement, dual credit, and international baccalaureate courses; to provide for  
8 applicability; to provide for a definition; to provide for related matters; to provide an  
9 effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

11 **SECTION 1.**

12 Code Section 20-2-157 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to uniform  
13 reporting system for certain purposes, dual credit courses, and academic eligibility  
14 requirements to receive HOPE scholarship, is amended by revising subsection (a.1),  
15 paragraph (3.1) of subsection (b), and paragraph (3) of subsection (c) as follows:

16 "(a.1) As used in this Code section, the term:

17 (1) 'Dual credit course' shall have the same meaning as in Code Section 20-2-161.3.

18 (2) 'Fine arts' means an advanced placement, Cambridge, or international baccalaureate  
19 fine arts course for which the Department of Education has designated a unique course  
20 number and name indicating that such course is classified as advanced placement,  
21 Cambridge, or international baccalaureate."

22 "(3.1) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time  
23 during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, the Georgia Student Finance  
24 Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for the HOPE  
25 scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section by equating each grade  
26 for a student in attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies,  
27 fine arts, and foreign language during the student's ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade  
28 year to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade  
29 of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0. Grades for coursework that is  
30 classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, Cambridge, or international  
31 baccalaureate shall be weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance Commission  
32 in calculating the overall grade point averages for students, provided that the weighting  
33 of such course grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state taking the specified  
34 coursework. The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the number of course  
35 grades, adjusted for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale; and"

36 "(3) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for  
37 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship from these electronic  
38 transcripts and shall notify students of their potential eligibility and high schools as to the  
39 potential eligibility of students; provided, however, that the Georgia Student Finance  
40 Commission shall not include fine arts course grades in the calculation of any grade point  
41 average for any student who graduated from high school before July 1, 2026."

42 **SECTION 2.**

43 This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2026.

44 **SECTION 3.**

45 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.