

The Senate Committee on Education and Youth offered the following substitute to SR 545:

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Creating the Senate Paid Student Teaching Study Committee; and for other purposes.

- 2 WHEREAS, student teaching in Georgia currently requires aspiring educators to work more
3 than 40 hours per week in public school classrooms without pay, while simultaneously
4 paying tuition and covering living expenses, creating significant financial hardship and
5 feelings of burnout; and

- 6 WHEREAS, this uncompensated labor creates a barrier for students from low and middle
7 income backgrounds, limiting access to the teaching profession and exacerbating the shortage
8 of new educators in Georgia's education workforce; and

- 9 WHEREAS, the growing teacher shortage in Georgia, compounded by high attrition rates
10 and decreased enrollment in traditional educator preparation programs, requires urgent and
11 sustainable policy solutions, including compensation during student teaching to support
12 recruitment and retention; and

- 13 WHEREAS, other states have launched successful paid student teaching initiatives, and
14 Georgia currently has the fiscal capacity to explore this investment with unallocated surplus
15 funds available in the state budget; and

16 WHEREAS, study is needed to examine the feasibility, benefits, and fiscal implications of
17 providing compensation to student teachers in Georgia, including, but not limited to, the
18 study of:

- 19 (1) The financial and logistical challenges faced by student teachers;
- 20 (2) The impact of unpaid student teaching on the recruitment and retention of educators,
21 particularly in high-need and rural schools and school systems;
- 22 (3) The relationship between paid internships and teacher preparedness, diversity, and
23 performance;
- 24 (4) Cost estimates and funding mechanisms for implementing a state-wide paid student
25 teaching program; and
- 26 (5) Best practices from other states and pilot programs.

27 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE:

- 28 (1) **Creation of Senate study committee.** There is created the Senate Paid Student
29 Teaching Study Committee.
- 30 (2) **Members and officers.** The committee shall be composed of six members. Four
31 members shall be members of the Senate appointed by the Senate majority caucus leader
32 and two members shall be members of the Senate appointed by Senate minority caucus
33 leader. The President of the Senate shall designate a legislative member of the committee
34 as chairperson of the committee.
- 35 (3) **Powers and duties.** The committee shall undertake a study of the conditions, needs,
36 issues, and problems mentioned above or related thereto and recommend any action or
37 legislation which the committee deems necessary or appropriate.
- 38 (4) **Meetings.** The chairperson shall call all meetings of the committee. The committee
39 may conduct such meetings at such places and at such times as it may deem necessary or
40 convenient to enable it to exercise fully and effectively its powers, perform its duties, and
41 accomplish the objectives and purposes of this resolution.

42 (5) **Allowances and funding.** The legislative members of the committee shall receive
43 the allowances provided for in Code Section 28-1-8 of the Official Code of Georgia
44 Annotated. The allowances authorized by this resolution shall not be received by any
45 member of the committee for more than five days unless additional days are authorized.
46 Funds necessary to carry out the provisions of this resolution shall come from funds
47 appropriated to the Senate.

48 (6) **Report.**

49 (A) In the event the committee adopts any specific findings or recommendations that
50 include suggestions for proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file a report of the
51 same prior to the date of abolishment specified in this resolution, subject to
52 subparagraph (C) of this paragraph.

53 (B) In the event the committee adopts a report that does not include suggestions for
54 proposed legislation, the chairperson shall file the report, subject to subparagraph (C)
55 of this paragraph.

56 (C) No report shall be filed unless the same has been approved prior to the date of
57 abolishment specified in this resolution by majority vote of a quorum of the committee.
58 A report so approved shall be signed by the chairperson of the committee and filed with
59 the Secretary of the Senate.

60 (D) In the absence of an approved report, the chairperson may file with the Secretary
61 of the Senate a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the committee in lieu thereof.

62 (7) **Abolishment.** The committee shall stand abolished on December 1, 2026.