

The House Committee on Higher Education offers 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 fine arts courses in the calculation of grade point averages for determining student eligibility  
5 for the HOPE scholarships and other scholarships; to provide for applicability; to provide for  
6 a definition; to provide for related matters; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting  
7 laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

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

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

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

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16 (2) 'Advanced fine arts' means an advanced fine arts course that includes a standardized  
17 end-of-course assessment written and graded by a third party and for which the  
18 Department of Education has designated a unique course number and name indicating  
19 that such course is classified as advanced."

20 "(3.1) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time  
21 during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, the Georgia Student Finance  
22 Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for the HOPE  
23 scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section by equating each grade  
24 for a student in attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies,  
25 advanced fine arts, and foreign language during the student's ninth, tenth, eleventh, or  
26 twelfth grade year to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a grade of 'B'  
27 = 3.0, a grade of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0. Grades for  
28 coursework that is classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international  
29 baccalaureate shall be weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance Commission  
30 in calculating the overall grade point averages for students, provided that the weighting  
31 of such course grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state taking the specified  
32 coursework. The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the number of course  
33 grades, adjusted for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale; and"

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

40 **SECTION 2.**

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

42

**SECTION 3.**

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