

House Bill 646

By: Representatives Glanton of the 75<sup>th</sup>, Jones of the 25<sup>th</sup>, Belton of the 112<sup>th</sup>, Hugley of the 136<sup>th</sup>, and Kausche of the 50<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 4 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia  
2 Annotated, relating to financing under the "Quality Basic Education Act," so as to enact the  
3 "P-TECH Dual Enrollment Act"; to provide for a pathway for students through high school,  
4 technical college, and workforce entry by establishing unified partnerships; to provide for  
5 definitions; to provide for certain dual credit courses; to provide for participating students,  
6 high schools, and units of the Technical College System of Georgia; to provide for  
7 responsibilities of industry partners; to provide for responsibilities of the Georgia Student  
8 Finance Commission, the Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and the  
9 State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia; to provide for planning grants; to  
10 provide for implementation; to provide for a short title; to provide for related matters; to  
11 provide for an effective date and applicability; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other  
12 purposes.

13 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

14 **SECTION 1.**

15 This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Pathways In Technology Early College  
16 High School (P-TECH) Dual Enrollment Act."

H. B. 646

17 **SECTION 2.**

18 Part 4 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
19 relating to financing under the "Quality Basic Education Act," is amended by adding a new  
20 Code section to read as follows:

21 "20-2-161.4.

22 (a)(1) This Code section shall be known and may be cited as the 'P-TECH Dual  
23 Enrollment Act.'

24 (2) The purpose of the P-TECH Dual Enrollment Program is to promote and increase  
25 access to postsecondary academic and technical education and training opportunities for  
26 Georgia high school students while increasing high school and technical college  
27 graduation rates, preparing a skilled and diverse workforce, and promoting a pathway for  
28 students, particularly underserved students, into information technology and other  
29 science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers while earning a high  
30 school diploma and an associate degree from a unit of the Technical College System of  
31 Georgia.

32 (b) As used in this Code section, the term:

33 (1) 'Commission' means the Georgia Student Finance Commission created by Code  
34 Section 20-3-233.

35 (2) 'Department' means the Department of Education.

36 (3) 'Industry partner' means a public, private, profit, not for profit, or nonprofit  
37 organization authorized to do business in Georgia by the laws of this state that, working  
38 in collaboration with one or more P-TECH high schools and P-TECH colleges, provides  
39 expertise, resources, and other support for the development and coordination of P-TECH  
40 curricula and provides workplace experiences, including, but not limited to, mentoring  
41 and paid internship opportunities for P-TECH students.

42 (4) 'Pathways In Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) Dual Enrollment  
43 Program', 'P-TECH program', or 'program' means the program provided for in this Code

44 section whereby a P-TECH student takes one or more P-TECH dual credit courses with  
45 the goal of earning a high school diploma and an associate degree from a unit of the  
46 Technical College System of Georgia.

47 (5) 'P-TECH college' means a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia that,  
48 working in collaboration with one or more P-TECH high schools and industry partners,  
49 participates in the program.

50 (6) 'P-TECH curriculum' means the course of academic and technical education and  
51 training implemented by P-TECH high schools and P-TECH colleges that is developed  
52 in collaboration with one or more industry partners.

53 (7) 'P-TECH dual credit course' means a postsecondary course, including a virtual  
54 course, taken by an eligible P-TECH high school student pursuant to an arrangement at  
55 or through an eligible P-TECH college for which the student receives secondary credit  
56 from his or her eligible P-TECH high school and which is eligible for the payment under  
57 the program. P-TECH dual credit courses shall be eligible for payment under the  
58 program and shall include postsecondary courses completed by a P-TECH student as  
59 required for completion of the P-TECH student's particular P-TECH college degree  
60 program, even if the student does not receive secondary credit for such courses from his  
61 or her eligible P-TECH high school.

62 (8) 'P-TECH high school' means a public secondary school in this state, including charter  
63 schools, that, working in collaboration with one or more P-TECH colleges and industry  
64 partners, participates in the program.

65 (9) 'P-TECH student' means a student entering or enrolled in tenth, eleventh, or twelfth  
66 grade in a P-TECH high school who is engaged in the P-TECH curriculum and taking  
67 any P-TECH dual credit course in a particular degree program at a P-TECH college.

68 (10) 'Secondary credit' means high school credit for P-TECH dual credit courses taken  
69 at or through a P-TECH college under the program.

70 (c) There is established a Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH)  
71 Dual Enrollment Program.

72 (d)(1) Industry partners shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the  
73 appropriate entity on behalf of each P-TECH high school and P-TECH college with  
74 which it partners as part of the program.

75 (2) Industry partners shall collaborate with P-TECH high schools and P-TECH colleges.

76 (3) Industry partners shall provide the following for the benefit of P-TECH students:

77 (A) Substantive mentoring by one or more qualified individuals employed or engaged  
78 by the industry partner;

79 (B) Workplace learning experiences that may include, without limitation, office site  
80 visits, job shadowing, receiving presentations, and free digital credentialing;

81 (C) Opportunities to participate in at least one paid internship, preferably during a  
82 summer recess, of at least 6 weeks in duration; provided, however, that if the number  
83 of available paid internships is less than the number of prospective interns, the industry  
84 partner shall be authorized to select interns based on merit utilizing a competitive  
85 selection process that is free, fair, and nondiscriminatory;

86 (C) Priority consideration for employment with the industry partner following  
87 graduation from the program; and

88 (D) Supplemental funding for transportation required by P-TECH students for travel  
89 within 25 miles of a P-TECH college via travel stipends paid to the P-TECH high  
90 school. The P-TECH high school principal or such principal's designee shall determine  
91 the means of transportation and distribution of available funds among P-TECH  
92 students.

93 (e) A P-TECH student may apply to a P-TECH college to take one or more P-TECH dual  
94 credit courses at or through such P-TECH college which are approved for secondary credit  
95 pursuant to subsection (f) of this Code section. If accepted at a P-TECH college, such  
96 P-TECH student may take any such approved P-TECH dual credit course at or through

97 such P-TECH college, whether or not the course is taught during the regular eligible high  
98 school day, and receive secondary credit therefor under the conditions provided in this  
99 Code section.

100 (f)(1) A P-TECH high school shall grant secondary credit to a P-TECH student enrolled  
101 in a P-TECH dual credit course in a P-TECH college if such student successfully  
102 completes such course. The secondary credit granted shall be for a comparable required  
103 course; career, technical, and agricultural education course; or elective course. Upon a  
104 P-TECH student's completion of a P-TECH dual credit course, the P-TECH college shall  
105 notify such student's P-TECH high school regarding his or her grade in such course.

106 (2) Secondary credits granted for P-TECH dual credit courses under paragraph (1) of this  
107 subsection shall be counted by the P-TECH high school toward graduation requirements  
108 and subject area requirements of the P-TECH high school. Evidence of successful  
109 completion of each P-TECH dual credit course and secondary credits granted shall be  
110 included in the P-TECH high school student's secondary school records.

111 (3) A P-TECH high school shall be required to award a high school diploma to a  
112 P-TECH student who is enrolled at or through a P-TECH college under the program as  
113 long as the credit earned at or through such P-TECH college satisfies course requirements  
114 needed for the P-TECH student to complete high school graduation. The State Board of  
115 Education, in consultation with the State Board of the Technical College System of  
116 Georgia and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, shall determine  
117 appropriate courses to meet these requirements. No later than March 1, 2022, the  
118 department shall communicate to high schools the subject area requirements or elective  
119 courses that may be satisfied with P-TECH dual credit courses provided by P-TECH  
120 colleges, which shall include completion of:

121 (A) At least the following state required ninth and tenth grade level high school courses  
122 or their equivalent: two English courses, two mathematics courses, two science courses,

123 two social studies courses, and one health and physical education course; and any state  
124 required tests associated with any such courses; and

125 (B) An associate degree program in specific science, technology, engineering, and  
126 mathematics (STEM) fields of study identified by the Technical College System of  
127 Georgia.

128 (4) No local school system that receives funding under this article shall exclude P-TECH  
129 students taking one or more P-TECH dual credit courses pursuant to this Code section  
130 from eligibility determinations for valedictorian and salutatorian of a P-TECH high  
131 school; provided, however, that this shall not apply to a student who moves into the local  
132 school system after tenth grade and has not taken any courses onsite at the P-TECH high  
133 school.

134 (g) In order to participate in the program, each P-TECH high school shall be required to  
135 execute a participation agreement as prescribed by the commission.

136 (h) In order to participate in the program, each P-TECH college shall be required to enter  
137 into a participation agreement with the commission agreeing to:

138 (1) Waive all mandatory and noncourse related fees for P-TECH students participating  
139 in the program and taking P-TECH dual credit courses;

140 (2) Provide course books to P-TECH students participating in the program and taking  
141 P-TECH dual credit courses at no charge to the student;

142 (3) Accept the amount paid by the commission as full payment for tuition, mandatory  
143 and noncourse related fees, and course books for P-TECH students taking P-TECH dual  
144 credit courses; and

145 (4) Provide enrollment and student record data to the Office of Planning and Budget and  
146 to the state-wide longitudinal data system maintained by such office. Such data shall be  
147 submitted in accordance with timelines and formats established by the Office of Planning  
148 and Budget.

149 (i) The commission shall provide funding in accordance with this Code section for  
150 P-TECH dual credit courses taken by P-TECH students; provided, however, that the  
151 funding provided to the commission for the program shall be subject to annual  
152 appropriations enacted by the General Assembly. The commission shall set criteria for  
153 funding for tuition, mandatory and noncourse related fees, course books, and  
154 transportation. The amount of such funds to be paid shall be determined by the  
155 commission. The commission shall create a grant program, subject to the availability of  
156 funds, pursuant to which P-TECH high schools may apply for transportation grants. Such  
157 grants shall be awarded based on criteria, terms, and conditions determined by the  
158 commission in consultation with the department.

159 (j) In the event the funds made available to the commission are not sufficient to enable the  
160 commission to meet all funding requirements of the program, the amount paid to P-TECH  
161 colleges shall be reduced by the commission. Under no circumstances shall a P-TECH  
162 college require a P-TECH student participating in the program and taking a P-TECH dual  
163 credit course to pay for tuition, mandatory and noncourse related fees, or course books.

164 (k) In consultation with and subject to approval by the commission, the department shall  
165 develop appropriate forms and counseling guidelines for the program and shall make such  
166 forms and guidelines available to P-TECH high schools and P-TECH colleges. No later  
167 than the first day of February each year, each P-TECH high school shall provide general  
168 information about the program, including such forms, to all its eligible high school  
169 students. A P-TECH high school shall also provide counseling services to such students  
170 and their parents or guardians before the students enroll in the program. Prior to  
171 participating in the program, the student and the student's parent or guardian shall sign the  
172 form provided by the P-TECH high school or by a P-TECH college stating that they have  
173 received the counseling specified in this subsection and that they understand the  
174 responsibilities that shall be assumed in participating in the program. Program information  
175 and materials shall be provided to each eighth grade public school student at the time the

176 student is developing his or her individual graduation plan as required by Code Section  
177 20-2-327.

178 (1)(1) Each P-TECH college shall be subject to examination by the commission for the  
179 sole purpose of determining whether such P-TECH college has properly complied with  
180 rules and regulations established pursuant to this Code section. Such examination shall  
181 be conducted by the commission no less frequently than once every three years. The  
182 commission is authorized to conduct the examination using sampling and extrapolation  
183 techniques; provided, however, that nothing in this subsection shall be construed to  
184 interfere with the authority of a P-TECH college to determine its own curriculum,  
185 philosophy, purpose, or administration. In the event it is determined that a P-TECH  
186 college knowingly or through error certified an ineligible student to be eligible for the  
187 program established under this Code section, the amount paid to the P-TECH college  
188 pursuant to such certification shall be refunded by the P-TECH college to the  
189 commission. The commission may suspend a P-TECH college from receiving payments  
190 under this Code section if it fails to refund any moneys due to the commission pursuant  
191 to this subsection.

192 (2) Each P-TECH high school shall be subject to examination by the commission for the  
193 sole purpose of determining whether such high school has properly complied with rules  
194 and regulations established pursuant to this Code section. Such examination shall be  
195 conducted on a schedule prescribed by the commission. The commission is authorized  
196 to conduct the examination using sampling and extrapolation techniques. In the event it  
197 is determined that a P-TECH high school knowingly or through error certified an  
198 ineligible student to be eligible for the program established under this Code section, the  
199 commission may institute corrective actions, including, but not limited to, removing the  
200 high school's eligibility under this program.

201 (m) P-TECH students enrolled in a work based learning program under Code Section  
202 20-2-161.2 may be eligible to earn dual credit upon completing a planned training



203 experience under guidelines developed by the department and the Technical College  
204 System of Georgia, provided that such students meet postsecondary readiness established  
205 in reading and writing and mathematics for the particular advanced training program or  
206 associate degree.

207 (n)(1) Subject to appropriations, the department may make grants available to establish  
208 a program to become a P-TECH high school.

209 (2) The department shall adopt regulations for verification by participating local school  
210 systems of the following:

211 (A) P-TECH student enrollment at P-TECH high schools;

212 (B) P-TECH student enrollment at P-TECH colleges;

213 (C) P-TECH high school costs;

214 (D) Performance of P-TECH students on federal and state assessments;

215 (E) Number of P-TECH students graduating with a high school diploma from each  
216 P-TECH high school;

217 (F) Number of P-TECH students receiving an associate degree from a P-TECH  
218 college;

219 (G) Industry partners associated with each P-TECH high school;

220 (H) Number of P-TECH students from each P-TECH high school who complete  
221 internship programs with industry partners; and

222 (I) Number of P-TECH students from each P-TECH high school who, after program  
223 completion, are employed with an industry partner, enrolled in an eligible  
224 postsecondary education institution as defined in paragraph (7) of Code Section  
225 20-3-519, or both.

226 (3) By December 1, 2022, and no later than December 1 of each year thereafter, the  
227 department shall report to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and General Assembly  
228 regarding the implementation of the P-TECH program, which shall include the  
229 information provided for in paragraph (2) of this subsection.

230 (o) Hours for P-TECH dual credit courses taken at or through a P-TECH college pursuant  
231 to this Code section by a P-TECH student shall not count against any maximum hourly  
232 caps which may be applicable for purposes of HOPE scholarships or grants.

233 (p) The commission is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations consistent with the  
234 provisions of this Code section relating to the program."

235 **SECTION 3.**

236 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law  
237 without such approval and shall apply to all school years beginning with the 2022-2023  
238 school year.

239 **SECTION 4.**

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