

Senate Bill 440

By: Senators Brass of the 28th, Parent of the 42nd, Dixon of the 45th, Butler of the 55th, Williams of the 25th and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to the "Quality Basic Education Act," so as to provide for the Accelerated Career
3 Diploma Program; to provide a short title; to establish and provide for the ACE Grants pilot
4 program; to provide for ACE (accelerated career education) grants for technical college
5 students pursuing certain degrees, diplomas, and certificates; to provide for reporting; to
6 provide for the automatic repeal of such pilot program; to provide for the adoption of content
7 standards for a minimum course of instruction in foundations of algebra; to revise a
8 definition in the "Dual Enrollment Act"; to revise provisions relating to the maximum of
9 eligible dual enrollment courses allowable for students; to make conforming changes; to
10 extend an automatic repeal; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date;
11 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

13 **SECTION 1.**

14 Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to the
15 "Quality Basic Education Act," is amended in Part 2, relating to competencies and core
16 curriculum, by revising Code Section 20-2-149.2, relating to awarding of high school

17 diploma for completion of postsecondary programs and identification of critical needs fields
18 of study, as follows:

19 "20-2-149.2.

20 (a) This Code section shall be known and may be cited as the 'Accelerated Career Diploma
21 Program.'

22 (b) A local board of education ~~may~~ shall be authorized to award a high school diploma to
23 a student enrolled in coursework pursuant to Code Section 20-2-161.3 who:

24 (1) Completes rigorous coursework at a postsecondary institution which meets the
25 requirements in paragraph (7) of Code Section 20-3-519;

26 (2)(A) Has completed at least the following ~~state required ninth and tenth grade level~~
27 ~~high school~~ courses:

28 (i) The high school English course, including its end-of-course assessment, required
29 for purposes of federal accountability requirements, plus at least one additional state
30 funded English course;

31 (ii) The high school math course, including its end-of-course assessment, required for
32 purposes of federal accountability requirements, plus either a state funded course on
33 the foundations of algebra or one other state funded math course;

34 (iii) The high school science course, including its end-of-course assessment, required
35 for purposes of federal accountability requirements, plus at least one additional state
36 funded science course;

37 (iv) One course on American government plus one additional state funded social
38 studies course; provided, however, that in lieu of taking such additional state funded
39 social studies course, a student shall be allowed to take a state funded math course in
40 addition to the courses required in division (ii) of this subparagraph, provided that
41 such math course is aligned with competencies required by such student's technical
42 college program of study; and

43 (v) One health and physical education course.

44 (B) School personnel shall counsel each student to choose additional state funded
45 courses provided for in divisions (i) through (iv) of subparagraph (A) of this paragraph
46 that meet workforce needs and are appropriate for such student based on his or her
47 competencies and on the competencies required in the technical college program of
48 study.

49 (C) As used in this paragraph, the term 'state funded' courses shall include any high
50 school course listed on the state funded core course list and any technical college
51 diploma-level or postsecondary degree-level English, math, science, or social studies
52 course for which the student earns dual credit.

53 (D) For the purposes of this paragraph, students participating in the Accelerated Career
54 Diploma Program shall be required to complete at least a half-credit course in financial
55 literacy; provided, however, that a school system may offer such financial literacy
56 course to such students at any time prior to graduation, either as a standalone course or
57 by embedding the content standards prescribed pursuant to subsection (a) of Code
58 section 20-2-194.4 within the framework of existing coursework offered by the school
59 system and count financial literacy as either a math course or a social studies course;
60 ~~two English courses, two mathematics courses, two science courses, two social studies~~
61 ~~courses, and one health and physical education course, and any state required tests~~
62 ~~associated with any such courses;~~

63 (3) Receives a score of admission acceptable on the readiness assessment required by the
64 postsecondary institution; and

65 (4) Completes: (i) an ~~associate~~ associate's degree program at a unit of the Technical
66 College System of Georgia; (ii) a technical college diploma program at a unit of the
67 Technical College System of Georgia and ~~all postsecondary academic education and~~
68 ~~technical education and training prerequisites for any state, national, or industry~~
69 ~~occupational certifications or licenses required to work in the field; or (iii) at least two~~
70 ~~technical college certificate of credit programs in one specific career pathway and all~~

71 ~~postsecondary academic education and technical education and training prerequisites for~~
72 ~~any state, national, or industry occupational certifications or licenses required to work in~~
73 ~~the field as determined by the Technical College System of Georgia included in the~~
74 ~~High-demand Career List published by the State Workforce Development Board as~~
75 ~~provided in Code section 34-14-3.~~

76 ~~(b)(c) The State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia shall publish a list that~~
77 ~~identifies which certificates are in the same or closely related program of study and also~~
78 ~~list the courses that make up each of technical college certificates of credit program~~
79 ~~included in the High-demand Career List. The State Board of the Technical College~~
80 ~~System of Georgia shall annually identify fields of study in which a critical need or~~
81 ~~shortage of trained personnel exists in the labor markets in this state and provide such~~
82 ~~information to the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education shall annually~~
83 ~~provide such information to local school systems for the purpose of emphasizing areas of~~
84 ~~critical workforce needs and shortages in the labor markets in our state to high school~~
85 ~~students to support their career pathway decisions.~~

86 ~~(c)(d) The State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Board of the Technical~~
87 ~~College System of Georgia and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia,~~
88 ~~shall establish rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this Code section.~~

89 ~~(d)(e) A student who meets the requirements of subsection (a) (b) of this Code section~~
90 ~~shall be deemed to have met all graduation requirements of the State Board of Education~~
91 ~~and shall not be subject to any assessments otherwise required for purposes of graduation.~~

92 ~~(f)(1) There is established the ACE Grants pilot program to provide for awarding~~
93 ~~accelerated career education grants to students participating in the Accelerated Career~~
94 ~~Diploma Program, as provided for in this Code section.~~

95 ~~(2) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall be authorized to provide funds~~
96 ~~appropriated by the General Assembly for the implementation of a three-year pilot~~

97 program to award ACE grants to students pursuing a degree, diploma, or certificate
98 provided for in paragraph (4) of subsection (b) of this Code section.

99 (3) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall assess the pilot program and shall,
100 no later than December 1 of each year during the pilot program, provide the Governor,
101 the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the director of the
102 Office of Planning and Budget, and the chairpersons of the House Committee on
103 Education, the Senate Education and Youth Committee, the House Committee on Higher
104 Education, and the Senate Higher Education Committee with a comprehensive report to
105 include recommendations as to the program's continued implementation and any changes
106 deemed necessary for such program.

107 (4) The Georgia Student Finance Commission, in consultation with the State Board of
108 the Technical College System of Georgia and the State Board of Education, shall
109 establish rules and regulations consistent with the provisions of this Code section to
110 implement, assess, and report on the pilot program.

111 (5) This subsection shall be repealed by operation of law on July 1 of the year following
112 the conclusion of the pilot program."

113 **SECTION 2.**

114 Said article is further amended in said part by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

115 "20-2-149.5.

116 (a) The State Board of Education shall adopt content standards for a minimum course of
117 instruction in foundations of algebra to be completed by students in any of grades nine
118 through 12.

119 (b) Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year and continuing each school year thereafter,
120 each local board of education may require all students, as a condition of graduation, to
121 complete at least a half-credit course in foundations of algebra which implements the
122 minimum course of instruction based on the content standards prescribed pursuant to

123 subsection (a) of this Code section. Such course of instruction shall be eligible to count
 124 toward a mathematics or elective unit of credit requirement for graduation and shall be
 125 deemed a core course in math upon which grade point averages for HOPE scholarship
 126 eligibility are calculated pursuant to paragraph (3.1) of subsection (b) of Code Section
 127 20-2-157."

128 **SECTION 3.**

129 Said article is further amended in Part 4, relating to financing, by revising paragraph (7) of
 130 subsection (b), paragraph (3) of subsection (f), and subsection (g) of Code Section
 131 20-2-161.3, relating to the "Dual Enrollment Act," purpose, dual credit courses, eligibility
 132 for participation, and eligibility for payment, as follows:

133 "(7) 'Eligible dual credit course' means a dual credit course which is included in the
 134 eligible course list and which is eligible for payment under this program ~~subject to the~~
 135 ~~following maximum credit hour caps:~~

136 ~~(A) Eligible high school students with 18 or fewer semester hours, or the equivalent~~
 137 ~~amount of quarter hours, of dual credit courses funded under this part on or before June~~
 138 ~~30, 2020, shall be limited to a total of 30 semester hours, or the equivalent amount of~~
 139 ~~quarter hours, of eligible dual credit courses, and~~

140 ~~(B) Eligible high school students with 19 or more semester hours, or the equivalent~~
 141 ~~amount of quarter hours, of dual credit courses funded under this part on or before June~~
 142 ~~30, 2020, shall be limited to 12 additional semester hours, or the equivalent amount of~~
 143 ~~quarter hours, of eligible dual credit courses."~~

144 "(3) The local board of education or other authorized governing body of a ~~A~~ participating
 145 eligible high school shall be required to award a high school diploma to an eligible high
 146 school student who is enrolled at or through an eligible postsecondary institution under
 147 the program as so long as the credit earned at or through such postsecondary institution
 148 satisfies course requirements ~~needed for the eligible high school student to complete high~~

149 ~~school graduation provided in subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-149.2. The State~~
150 ~~Board of Education, in consultation with the State Board of the Technical College System~~
151 ~~of Georgia and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, shall~~
152 ~~determine appropriate courses to meet these requirements. No later than July 1, 2015, the~~
153 ~~department shall communicate to high schools the subject area requirements or elective~~
154 ~~courses that may be satisfied with dual credit courses provided by eligible postsecondary~~
155 ~~institutions, which shall include completion of:~~

156 ~~(A) At least the following state required ninth and tenth grade level high school courses~~
157 ~~or their equivalent: two English courses, two mathematics courses, two science courses,~~
158 ~~two social studies courses, and one health and physical education course; and any state~~
159 ~~required tests associated with any such courses; and~~

160 ~~(B) One of the following:~~

161 ~~(i) An associate degree program;~~

162 ~~(ii) A technical college diploma program and all postsecondary academic education~~
163 ~~and technical education and training prerequisites for any state, national, or industry~~
164 ~~occupational certifications or licenses required to work in the field; or~~

165 ~~(iii) At least two technical college certificate of credit programs in one specific career~~
166 ~~pathway and all postsecondary academic education and technical education and~~
167 ~~training prerequisites for any state, national, or industry occupational certifications or~~
168 ~~licenses required to work in the field as determined by the Technical College System~~
169 ~~of Georgia.~~

170 ~~Students who have taken dual credit courses in pursuit of a high school diploma under~~
171 ~~this paragraph, and were funded under this part, on or before June 30, 2020, shall not be~~
172 ~~subject to any maximum credit hour caps as set forth in this Code section. Such students~~
173 ~~may continue participation in the program until the student completes the coursework~~
174 ~~required for his or her high school diploma."~~

175 "(g)(1) Each eligible student shall be limited to a total of 30 semester hours, or the
176 equivalent amount of quarter hours, of eligible dual credit courses funded under this part;
177 provided, however, that, subject to appropriations specifically for such purpose, the
178 commission shall be authorized to waive such limitation for students participating in the
179 Accelerated Career Diploma Program provided for in Code Section 20-2-149.2 to the
180 extent necessary for such students to complete such program.

181 (2) Hours for eligible dual credit courses taken at or through an eligible postsecondary
182 institution pursuant to this Code section by an eligible high school student shall not count
183 against any maximum hourly caps which may be applicable for purposes of HOPE
184 scholarships or grants."

185 **SECTION 4.**

186 Said article is further amended in said part by revising the undesignated text at the end of
187 paragraph (2) of subsection (a) and subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-161.4, relating to
188 accessing HOPE scholarship funds for dual enrolled students and termination, as follows:

189 "No later than January 1 each year, the Georgia Student Finance Commission shall
190 provide an interim report to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the
191 House of Representatives, the director of the Office of Planning and Budget, and the
192 chairpersons of the House Committee on Education, the Senate Education and Youth
193 Committee, the House Committee on Higher Education, and the Senate Higher Education
194 Committee. A final report shall be provided to the same no later than September
195 December 1, 2026 2027."

196 "(b) This Code section shall stand repealed on June 30, ~~2026~~ 2027."

197 **SECTION 5.**

198 This Act shall become effective July 1, 2024.

199

SECTION 6.

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