Senate Bill 88
By: Senators Goodman of the 8th, Jackson of the 2nd, Tippins of the 37th, Sims of the 12th, Burns of the 23rd and others

AS PASSED

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and secondary education, so as to provide that the Georgia Teacher of the Year shall be invited to serve as an advisor ex officio to the State Board of Education and to provide for reimbursement of actual cost for attending such meeting or hearing; to provide for a nontraditional teacher certification program for members and veterans of the United States armed forces; to provide for up to three years of creditable service for previous military service for certain teachers; to require local school systems participating in a tiered evaluation system to use the time saved due to reduced evaluations for evaluators to coach and mentor certain teachers; to provide for the Professional Standards Commission to require that teacher education programs include mandatory coursework in differentiated instruction and reading fundamentals; to provide for the Professional Standards Commission to promote increased student enrollment in and completion of teacher education programs offered at historically black colleges and universities in this state; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:
SECTION 1.
Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elementary and secondary education, is amended by revising Code Section 20-2-212.1, relating to increase in state salary of person selected as Georgia Teacher of the Year, as follows:

"20-2-212.1. Any person who has been selected as Georgia Teacher of the Year, as determined by the State Board of Education, shall:

1. Be moved up one salary step on the state salary schedule or receive an equivalent percentage rate increase in state salary to become effective on and after the beginning of the next school year in which the person is employed in the public schools of this state. The increase in state salary provided by this Code section shall be in addition to any other increase for which the person is otherwise eligible. This Code section shall not be construed to require or prohibit any increase in the local supplement payable to such teacher; and

2. Be invited by the State Board of Education to serve as an advisor ex officio at a meeting held pursuant to Code Section 20-2-5 or a public hearing held pursuant to Code Section 20-2-5.1, for which he or she shall be entitled to receive the sum provided for by Code Section 45-7-21 for actual expenses incurred in connection with attendance at such meeting or hearing of the State Board of Education and actual costs of transportation to and from the place of such meeting or hearing."

SECTION 2.
Said chapter is further amended by revising subsections (d) and (e) of and adding a new subsection to Code Section 20-2-206, relating to alternative teacher certification program, to read as follows:
"(d)(1) Pursuant to this subsection, each local school system shall support nontraditional teacher certification programs approved by the Professional Standards Commission for a teacher candidate who:

(A) Is a veteran of the United States armed forces who was honorably discharged as evidenced by United States Department of Defense Form 214 or National Guard Bureau Form 22 or who is currently serving as a member of the United States armed forces in an active duty or reserve component;

(B) Holds a bachelor's degree or higher, with a grade point average equal to or above a minimum established by the Professional Standards Commission, from a postsecondary educational institution approved by the Professional Standards Commission and accredited by a regional accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education; provided, however, that the degree requirement shall not apply if the candidate seeks to teach in a specific career, technical, and agricultural education field for which the Professional Standards Commission does not require a degree; and

(C) Attains a passing score on the Georgia educator ethics assessment portion of the Georgia Assessments for Certification of Educators (GACE).

(2) Upon an offer of employment by a local school system, the individual who meets the requirements provided for in paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be eligible for a three-year military support provisional certificate to be issued in one-year increments by the Professional Standards Commission following a joint application by the employing school system and the individual. During this three-year period, the individual shall:

(A) Receive high-quality professional development that is sustained, intensive, and classroom focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction, before and while teaching;

(B) During the first year, enroll in a nontraditional educator preparation program approved by the Professional Standards Commission that includes intensive supervision
with structured guidance and regular ongoing support. Individuals enrolling in such nontraditional educator preparation program approved by the Professional Standards Commission shall receive priority enrollment;

(C) During the first year, attain a passing score on the content assessment portion of the Georgia Assessments for Certification of Educators or other assessment approved by the Professional Standards Commission;

(D) During the second year, attain a passing score on the program admission assessment portion of the Georgia Assessments for Certification of Educators or meets the exemption criteria for such assessment established by the Professional Standards Commission;

(E) Assume functions as a teacher while completing a nontraditional educator preparation program for a period of time not to exceed three years;

(F) Demonstrate satisfactory progress toward full certification as prescribed by the Professional Standards Commission; and

(G) Successfully complete a nontraditional educator preparation program, after which the individual shall be eligible for an induction or professional certificate to be issued by the Professional Standards Commission.

A teacher receiving initial certification pursuant to this Code section shall be treated in the same manner as certificated professional personnel for purposes of this chapter or any local board of education policy, including receiving salaries pursuant to the minimum salary schedule provided for in Code Section 20-2-212.

(e) A local school system shall not discriminate or treat differently in any manner a teacher possessing initial certification pursuant to this Code section, an applicant seeking initial certification pursuant to this Code section, or an individual meeting the requirement contained in subparagraph (b)(1)(A) or paragraph (1) of subsection (c), or paragraph (1) of subsection (d) of this Code section and eligible for initial certification pursuant to this
(f) A teacher receiving initial certification pursuant to this Code section shall be treated in the same manner as certificated professional personnel for purposes of this chapter or any local board of education policy, including receiving salaries pursuant to the minimum salary schedule provided for in Code Section 20-2-212. A maximum of three years of creditable service shall be allowed for the previous military service of individuals who obtain a three-year military support provisional certificate pursuant to subsection (d) of this Code section.

SECTION 3.

Said chapter is further amended by revising paragraph (5) of subsection (b) of Code Section 20-2-210, relating to annual performance evaluation, as follows:

"(5) All teachers of record, assistant principals, and principals shall have a pre-evaluation conference, midyear evaluation conference, and a summative evaluation conference, in accordance with state board rules. All teachers of record, assistant principals, and principals shall be notified of and have access to the results of the annual summative performance evaluation and any formative observations conducted throughout the school year pursuant to this subsection within ten working days of such evaluation or observations. A teacher of record, assistant principal, or principal, or an evaluator of any such individuals, may request a conference within ten working days of notice of results of a formative observation and such conference shall be provided within ten working days of the request. Conferences shall include the individual being evaluated, his or her supervisor, and the evaluator, unless otherwise agreed upon. For teachers of record, the annual evaluation shall include multiple classroom observations conducted each year by appropriately trained and credentialed evaluators, using clear, consistent observation rubrics, and supplemented by other measures aligned with student achievement and..."
A local school system or charter school may include in its flexibility contract, or other agreement with the State Board of Education for local school systems that are not under a flexibility contract, a provision for a tiered evaluation system, in which reduced observations of certain teachers of record may be conducted to provide additional time for evaluators to coach and mentor new teachers and teachers with a performance rating of 'Needs Development' or 'Ineffective' pursuant to paragraph (4) of this subsection on a pathway of continuous improvement. For the evaluation of teachers of record with a minimum of three years' teaching experience and a performance rating of 'Proficient' or 'Exemplary' pursuant to paragraph (4) of this subsection in the previous school year, the local school system or charter school, in its discretion, shall require no less than two classroom observations and one summative evaluation for the school year. Each local school system participating in a tiered evaluation system shall apply the resources saved due to the reduced number of evaluations for evaluators to coach and mentor teachers with three years or less of experience and teachers with a performance rating of 'Needs Development' or 'Ineffective' pursuant to paragraph (4) of this subsection on a pathway of continuous improvement. Coaching and mentoring support for such teachers may include professional growth plans and remediation plans in evaluation systems if such elements are already required in the evaluation system used to rate the teacher's performance."

**SECTION 4.**

Said chapter is further amended by revising subsections (a) and (b) of Code Section 20-2-984, relating to the Professional Standards Commission's authority to create and implement standards and procedures for certifying educational personnel, recommending standards and procedures for certification, continuation of teaching certificates, and restrictions, as follows:
"(a) The commission shall create and implement standards and procedures for certifying educational personnel as qualified for a certificate to practice in the public schools of Georgia, including the following:

(1) Procedures for limiting the number and types of certificates to the fewest possible consistent with providing qualified teachers for Georgia's schools;

(2) In-service training and related requirements needed to renew or maintain certification;

(3) Multiple or alternative routes to professional teacher certification, including, but not limited to, the alternative and nontraditional teacher certification programs provided for in Code Section 20-2-206; and

(4) Requirements, including appropriate examinations and assessments, for acquiring and maintaining certification pursuant to Code Section 20-2-200.

(b) The commission shall recommend to the board of regents and private colleges and universities standards and procedures for preparing educational personnel to qualify for initial and renewable certification to practice in the public schools of Georgia, including the following:

(1) Pre-service preparation;

(2) Approval of teacher education programs, both graduate and undergraduate, which shall include, at a minimum, mandatory coursework in:

(A) Differentiated instruction, including the development and implementation of explicit curricula to effectively support and deliver differentiated instruction to students. As used in this subparagraph, the term 'differentiated instruction' means instruction that demonstrates a teacher's recognition of students as individuals in terms of their abilities, achievement, learning styles, and needs, including but not limited to at-risk students, English language learners, students with special needs, and gifted students, and that gives greater emphasis to individualization in teaching by making adjustments to curricula, materials, learning activities, and assessment techniques to ensure that all...
students in a mixed-ability classroom can have equal access to appropriate avenues for processing new information and developing skills; and

(B) Instruction related to the development of fundamental reading skills, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and reading comprehension;

(3) Approval of programs of alternative certification; and

(4) The creation of innovative programs designed to increase the number of minority teachers entering the profession, including, but not limited to, programs designed to promote increased student enrollment in and completion of teacher education programs offered at historically black colleges and universities in this state."

SECTION 5.

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