

House Bill 131 (AS PASSED HOUSE AND SENATE)

By: Representatives Clark of the 101st, Coleman of the 97th, Kaiser of the 59th, Jones of the 47th, Taylor of the 173rd, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 3 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to educational programs, so as to define a certain term; to provide that
3 dual credit courses shall be treated in the same manner as advanced placement and
4 international baccalaureate courses for purposes of determining eligibility for the HOPE
5 scholarship; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

7 **SECTION 1.**

8 Part 3 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
9 relating to educational programs, is amended by revising Code Section 20-2-157, relating to
10 uniform reporting system for certain purposes and academic eligibility requirements to
11 receive HOPE scholarship, as follows:

12 "20-2-157.

13 (a) It is the intent of the General Assembly to establish a uniform reporting system to be
14 used as one of the criteria to determine eligibility of students seeking educational
15 scholarships, grants, or loan assistance administered by the Georgia Student Finance
16 Commission pursuant to Article 7 of Chapter 3 of this title.

17 (a.1) As used in this Code section, the term 'dual credit course' shall have the same
18 meaning as in Code Section 20-2-159.5.

19 (b) Each school system and private school shall adopt the reporting system described in
20 this subsection for purposes of identifying and qualifying graduating seniors for the HOPE
21 scholarship program and other programs identified in this Code section:

22 (1) Each school system and private school shall transmit, in a manner and at times
23 prescribed by the Georgia Student Finance Commission, an electronic transcript of
24 courses and course grades for each graduating senior that reflects the complete high
25 school academic record of the student, including scores on any state tests required for
26 graduation, the grading scales used by the school system or private school for the time

27 periods referenced by the transcripts, and any other pertinent information as determined
 28 by the Georgia Student Finance Commission. Each grade reported by a school system
 29 or private school to the commission for the purpose of calculating the grade point average
 30 for HOPE scholarship eligibility shall be the actual grade earned by the student, with no
 31 weighting or addition of points by the local school system or private school;

32 (2) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for
 33 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship from these electronic
 34 transcripts and shall notify students of their eligibility and high schools as to the
 35 eligibility of students;

36 (3) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling as freshmen students in eligible public
 37 or private postsecondary institutions for the first time on May 1, 2007, or thereafter,
 38 except as otherwise provided in paragraph (3.1) of this subsection, the Georgia Student
 39 Finance Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for
 40 the HOPE scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section as follows:

41 (A) For students receiving a college preparatory diploma, each grade for a student in
 42 attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign
 43 language that would, if successfully completed, satisfy a core graduation requirement
 44 for the college preparatory curriculum shall be equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such
 45 that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0,
 46 and a grade of 'F' = 0; or

47 (B) For students receiving a career/technical diploma, each grade for a student in
 48 attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, and social studies that would,
 49 if successfully completed, satisfy a core graduation requirement for the career/technical
 50 curriculum shall be equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a
 51 grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0.

52 Grades for coursework that is classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or
 53 international baccalaureate shall be weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance
 54 Commission in calculating the overall grade point averages for students, provided that
 55 the weighting of such course grades is uniformly applied to all students in ~~the~~ this state
 56 taking the specified coursework. The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the
 57 number of course grades, adjusted for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0
 58 scale;

59 (3.1) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time
 60 during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, the Georgia Student Finance
 61 Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for the HOPE
 62 scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section by equating each grade
 63 for a student in attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies,

64 and foreign language during the student's ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade year to
65 a grade on a 4.0 scale, such that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' =
66 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0. Grades for coursework that is classified
67 as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international baccalaureate shall be
68 weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in calculating the
69 overall grade point averages for students, provided that the weighting of such course
70 grades is uniformly applied to all students in ~~the~~ this state taking the specified
71 coursework. The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the number of course
72 grades, adjusted for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale; and

73 (4) Qualification for the HOPE scholarship shall be determined from the grade point
74 average calculated either as set out in paragraph (3) of this subsection or as set out in
75 paragraph (3.1) of this subsection for students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first
76 time in a Georgia public school during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter.
77 Beginning May 1, 2007, students with grade point averages equal to or in excess of 3.0
78 on the 4.0 scale with a college preparatory diploma shall meet achievement standards for
79 the HOPE scholarship; students receiving a career/technical diploma shall meet
80 achievement standards for the HOPE scholarship with a grade point average equal to or
81 in excess of 3.2 on a 4.0 scale. For students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time
82 in a Georgia public school during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, such students
83 with grade point averages equal to or in excess of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale shall meet
84 achievement standards for the HOPE scholarship. This paragraph shall apply regardless
85 of when a student graduated from high school and regardless of such student's eligibility
86 status prior to May 1, 2007.

87 (c)(1) Beginning with the school year beginning after May 1, 2011, each school system
88 and private school shall adopt the reporting system described in this subsection for
89 purposes of determining potential eligibility for freshman, sophomore, and junior high
90 school students for the HOPE scholarship program and other programs identified in this
91 Code section.

92 (2) Each school system and private school shall transmit to the Georgia Student Finance
93 Commission, in such manner and at such times as the commission may prescribe, an
94 electronic transcript of courses and course grades for each freshman, sophomore, and
95 junior high school student that reflects the complete high school academic record of the
96 student, including scores on any state tests required for graduation, the grading scales
97 used by the school system or private school for the time periods referenced by the
98 transcripts, and any other pertinent information as determined by the Georgia Student
99 Finance Commission. Each grade reported by a school system or private school to the
100 commission for the purpose of calculating the grade point average for potential HOPE

101 scholarship eligibility shall be the actual grade earned by the student with no weighting
102 or addition of points by the school system or private school.

103 (3) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for
104 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship from these electronic
105 transcripts and shall notify students of their potential eligibility and high schools as to the
106 potential eligibility of students.

107 (d) Beginning with students graduating from high school on or after May 1, 2015, in order
108 to be eligible to receive a HOPE scholarship, a student shall receive credit in at least two
109 courses prior to graduating from high school from the following categories:

110 (1) Advanced math, such as Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry, Math III, or an
111 equivalent or higher course;

112 (2) Advanced science, such as Chemistry, Physics, Biology II, or an equivalent or higher
113 course;

114 (3) Advanced placement courses in core subjects;

115 (3.1) Dual credit courses in core subjects;

116 (4) International baccalaureate courses in core subjects;

117 (5) Courses taken at a unit of the University System of Georgia in core subjects where
118 such courses are not remedial and developmental courses, as defined in Code Section
119 20-3-519; or

120 (6) Advanced foreign language courses.

121 Students may take one or more courses in each category; provided, however, that a course
122 may only be counted one time. The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall be
123 authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the intent of this
124 subsection.

125 (e) Beginning with students graduating from high school on or after May 1, 2016, in order
126 to be eligible to receive a HOPE scholarship, a student shall receive credit in at least three
127 courses prior to graduating from high school from the following categories:

128 (1) Advanced math, such as Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry, Math III, or an
129 equivalent or higher course;

130 (2) Advanced science, such as Chemistry, Physics, Biology II, or an equivalent or higher
131 course;

132 (3) Advanced placement courses in core subjects;

133 (3.1) Dual credit courses in core subjects;

134 (4) International baccalaureate courses in core ~~courses~~ subjects;

135 (5) Courses taken at a unit of the University System of Georgia in core subjects where
136 such courses are not remedial and developmental courses, as defined in Code Section
137 20-3-519; or

138 (6) Advanced foreign language courses.
139 Students may take one or more courses in each category; provided, however, that a course
140 may only be counted one time. The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall be
141 authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the intent of this
142 subsection.

143 (f) Beginning with students graduating from high school on or after May 1, 2017, in order
144 to be eligible to receive a HOPE scholarship, a student shall receive credit in at least four
145 courses prior to graduating from high school from the following categories:

146 (1) Advanced math, such as Advanced Algebra and Trigonometry, Math III, or an
147 equivalent or higher course;

148 (2) Advanced science, such as Chemistry, Physics, Biology II, or an equivalent or higher
149 course;

150 (3) Advanced placement courses in core subjects;

151 (3.1) Dual credit courses in core subjects;

152 (4) International baccalaureate courses in core ~~courses~~ subjects;

153 (5) Courses taken at a unit of the University System of Georgia in core subjects where
154 such courses are not remedial and developmental courses, as defined in Code Section
155 20-3-519; or

156 (6) Advanced foreign language courses.

157 Students may take one or more courses in each category; provided, however, that a course
158 may only be counted one time. The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall be
159 authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the intent of this
160 subsection."

161 **SECTION 2.**

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