



## Board of Education Newsletter: Legislature Report 2014

### **Bills that passed both House & Senate:**

[SB 301](#): allowing wooden school buildings.

[HB 60](#): expands the locations where Georgians may carry firearms. The bill authorizes local boards of education to designate employees who hold carry permits to carry firearms in schools, on school buses, and at school functions.

[HB 826](#): expands the legal definition of school safety zone to include school buses and bus stops. The legislation also modifies the school zero tolerance weapons law, redefining prohibited weapons (excluding firearms) and giving school administrators more discretion in enforcement of zero tolerance provisions.

[HB 914](#): requires child protective services to acknowledge within 24 hours, in writing to educators making required reports of suspected child abuse, that child protective services has received the report. Within five days of a completed investigation of reported abuse, protective services will acknowledge, in writing to the school counselor or principal, whether child abuse was confirmed or unconfirmed.

[HB 697](#): creates the Zell Miller Scholarship Scholars program, covering the entire cost of tuition for Georgia's high-achieving technical college students.

[HB 810](#): drops ACT and SAT achievement requirements from the 85th percentile to the 80th percentile for home school students, for the purposes of determining HOPE eligibility.

[HB 405](#): requires governance training for charter school boards.

[HB 766](#): The Work-Based Learning Act, updates Georgia's Youth Based Apprenticeship Program, allowing students age 16 and up to participate, and authorizes the GA Department of Education to establish related rules and guidelines.

[SB 281](#): requires the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) to offer at least one high deductible option with a health savings account.

[HR 1186](#): encourages schools to adopt Skills for Success financial literacy education.

[SR 1200](#): creates a study committee on school discipline tasked with examining racial disparities in student expulsion and alternative school assignment.

[SR 875](#): creates the Joint Study Committee on the Property Tax Digest Impact on Education Funding which will study the impact of local property taxes on school equalization funding and the five mill share.

### **Failed Legislations:**

Anti-Common Core Bill

[SB 167](#): related to Georgia's use of the Common Core Standards

Proposed Constitutional Amendments

[HR 486](#): an amendment allowing recently-incorporated cities in the metro-Atlanta region to create new school systems, also failed.

[HR 1109](#): a resolution allowing local communities to levy an ESPLOST for some school operating expenses.

[HB 123](#): allowing parents to vote to convert traditional public schools to charter schools.

[HB 964](#): allowing businesses and municipalities to create their own charter schools authorized by the [GA Charter School Commission](#), did not gain enough traction to pass both chambers.

[HB 897](#): Title 20 Rewrite Bill, Charter provisions doomed the bill to failure in the Senate.

[SR 782](#): TRS Study Committee Bill did not move through the committee process. The resolution would have created a study committee on the Teacher Retirement System. The bill did not mention specific proposed changes the committee might study, but across the country, states are considering substantial changes to traditional pension programs— moving some from defined proposed changes the committee might study benefit to defined contribution programs and broadening pension investments to include higher risk venture capital investments.

**For more information you can Ctrl- click on the blue bill number and it will take you to the bill.**

**What a difference an election year can make!!**

Legislators walked softly and spoke very little on the important issues that really make a difference in education. The budget did give us a little money for the upcoming year, but the question is will it be there when it is not an election year?

Please remember that your vote makes the difference in who stays and who goes!

**Early voting begins April 28<sup>th</sup>**

**Primary is May 20<sup>th</sup>** The primary is where you can send your message to the ones that govern what you do every day in the world of education.

**Please encourage everyone to vote.**