



REPORT FROM THE CAPITOL

Presented by

Georgia School Superintendents Association

This publication will provide the reader with a synopsis of various educational bills tracked by GSSA during the 2011 session of the General Assembly. "Report from the Capitol" can also be viewed on the GSSA website at www.gssanet.org.



GSSA's mission is to be the chief advocate for Georgia's public school children.

GSSA 2011 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

NOTES FROM THE FY2011 AND FY2012 BUDGETS:

The most fitting way to describe the final budgets for FY2011 and FY2012 are by using the words: "It's bad, but it really could have been worse." The practice of including "austerity cuts" first introduced by Governor Perdue in 2003 continued for the eighth and ninth consecutive years, and those cuts could only be described as "massive" (over \$1.1 BILLION each year). In addition, other cuts continued (and, were increased) while, in FY2012, the federal dollars that had been part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act disappeared. All that said, however, it really could have been worse. The highlights and lowlights follow:

In the FY2011 Amended Budget, the following occurred:

- Small cuts (relatively speaking) were made to agriculture education, charter schools (facility and planning grants), Communities in Schools, the Governor's Honors Program, and to the sparsity grant program.
- Larger reductions were made to the DOE central office (\$700,000), the Special Needs Scholarship Program (\$2 million), migrant education (\$250,000), school nutrition (\$1.4 million in state funds), the pre-school handicapped program (\$1.4 million), RESA's and ETC's (\$360,000), school nurses (\$1 million), and the technical and career education program (\$640,000).
- No additional, mid-term austerity cuts were made, but the \$1.1 BILLION austerity cut that was part of the initial FY2011 Budget remains in place.
- A limited number of additions were made to the mid-term budget, and those included funds for charter schools (\$1.9 million), funds for additional pay for math and science teachers (\$12.6 million to comply with HB280 from the 2010 session of the General Assembly), dollars for enrollment growth (\$83 million), GALILEO funds (\$125,000 to "save" the program from elimination), and bonds for buses (\$25 million).

The FY2012 Budget included the following:

- The carryover of the \$1.1 BILLION in austerity cuts with another \$60 million added.
- The underfunding of the equalization grant program by approximately 1/3.
- Local Five Mill Share (LFMS) funds still exceeding the 20% cap mandated in statute.
- The elimination of \$140 million in ARRA funds, which were exhausted in the previous fiscal year.
- Cuts to agriculture education (4%), DOE central office (an additional \$2.4 MILLION, leaving many to wonder if anyone will be left at DOE!), the Georgia Virtual School (\$200,000), alternative sparsity grants (\$298,000), testing programs (\$250,000), the Special Needs "scholarship" (\$1.7 million), and the migrant education program (\$250,000, which eliminates state funds for this program).

- Even further cuts to various programs, including school nutrition (\$2.5 million in state funds), the pre-school handicapped program (\$575,000), pupil transportation (\$8.3 MILLION, placing more responsibility on local school systems to pay for this vital service), RESA's (\$482,000), math mentor funds (\$143,000), and the school improvement program (\$858,000).
- A series of cuts to various programs that differed greatly from the Governor's recommendations, including \$592,000 to career and technical education (Governor had recommend a cut of \$1.29 million), \$38,000 to residential treatment centers (Governor had sought \$700,000 in cuts), only \$120,000 to ETC's (Governor had recommended complete elimination), only \$1.1 million to the school nurse program (Governor had recommended \$2.8 million in cuts), and a cut to the program for severely emotionally disturbed students of \$1.3 million (Governor had sought only half that amount). Note: All of these changes survived the Governor's veto pen and were included as part of the final budget document.
- Actual ADDITIONS to the budget, including funds for anticipated enrollment growth (\$61 million), funds for training and experience along with monies to continue to pay early-career math and science teachers their extra pay (\$30 million), monies dedicated to the Move on When Ready Act (\$524,000), bonds for school buses (\$25 million), and full funding of all capital outlay programs (except the "exceptional growth" category, which was funded at the \$40 million entitlement level).

In summary, it is clear to see that the pattern of cutting state funds for public education continues (as it does for all other state agencies) with little relief in sight. The Governor had started the session by stating that his budget for the contained "no furloughs and a full year of school for students;" the realities of the budget and the economy, however, have prevented that declaration from coming to pass as systems all across the state plan for a 2011-12 year of less than 190 days for teachers and, in many cases, fewer than 180 for students. The "funding cliff" that had been predicted for FY2012 is here, and systems (and, the state) are left to deal with it as best they can while hoping than any fiscal "light at the end of the tunnel" is not too far away.

HOUSE BILLS PASSED BY HOUSE AND SENATE AND NOT VETOED:

HB 186: Expand Career Pathway Options

This bill amends Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A. to expand career pathway options, minimize the need for remediation in post secondary institutions, to embed core standards in CTAE courses, to provide EOCT's for those CTAE courses, to allow credit for demonstrated proficiency, to provide for dual credit requirements as well as student counts for those in such programs, and to bar waivers of individual graduation plans. It also amends Chapter 14 of Title 34 of the O.C.G.A. to provide for the establishment of soft skills certification by the Governor's Office of Workforce Development.

Requirements:

- Local school systems will have to provide every student choices aligned to high-demand, high-wage career fields and to postsecondary career and technical pathways leading to advanced credentials or degrees.
- The SBOE, BOR, and the BTAE will have to work together so that academic courses embedded in CTAE courses carry appropriate academic credit in high school and are recognized at the postsecondary level.
- Teachers will have to be provided professional development to ensure that academically rigorous standards are met in relevant, project-based coursework.
- Students should understand dual coursework options and the state should fund those options.
- All agencies will have to work toward students participating in at least 6 dual credit courses, and toward all students graduating with credits in postsecondary dual coursework
- Georgia's strategic industries will have to partner with secondary and postsecondary schools to ensure that students are properly prepared for success in the workforce.
- High schools will have to incorporate many different types of assessments and certificates into their programs so that skills are assessed in ways that are meaningful and contribute to postsecondary success.
- Students will have to understand that a high school diploma and some kind of postsecondary credential are necessary in order to earn a living wage.
- No schools or systems will be able to receive a waiver of the individual graduation plan requirement.
- The State BOE, working with the BOR and the BTAE will have to establish college and career readiness competency standards in reading, writing, and mathematics aligned with the core curriculum with the level of performance necessary to meet college-readiness standards in the state's technical colleges, community colleges, state colleges, and universities and in other advanced training programs.
- DTAE post-secondary institutions will have to accept credit in those courses for admission beginning the fall of 2012.
- It removes the responsibility of the General Assembly to establish a uniform reporting system to be used for admission to postsecondary institutions.
- By July 1, 2012, the DOE will have to develop, and the SBOE will have to approve, a long list of 16 programs of study with model curricula (plus others, if desired). The focused programs could be combined in related clusters.
- CTAE courses will have to contain competencies embedded in academic courses taught by a highly qualified career, technical, and agricultural education teacher who has completed a state-approved training program to strengthen academic content and has passed a state-approved exam for demonstrating mastery of academic content; or by a team made up of a highly qualified teacher in the academic content and a highly qualified career, technical, and agricultural education teacher working together to teach the courses—English, science, mathematics and social studies.

- Students will be able to take the EOCT for those core subjects upon completion of the CTAE courses that had the required competencies embedded in them.
- State guidelines will limit the number of academic credits that a student can earn through CTAE courses with embedded core competencies to three (3). They will also ensure that those credits earned will count toward acceptance to a DTAE postsecondary institution. Those CTAE courses can count toward high school graduation only once unless the courses require extra class time to include CTAE competencies in addition to the core competencies.
- High School credit can be earned based on a demonstration of subject area competency instead of, or in combination with completion of the class. State guidelines will delineate how that credit can be earned and what demonstration of performance mastery will be accepted. Locals may submit plans for SBOE approval. The plan will have to include a method for recording such credit on transcripts, and all requirements will have to be in place by the 2012-2013 school year.
- Students will be able to earn credits through:
 - The completion of courses; or
 - The testing out or otherwise demonstrating mastery of the course content.
 - The state board shall identify assessments, including various commercial assessments, for immediate use for students to demonstrate subject area competency, which may include, but not be limited to:
 - Advanced placement exams;
 - ACT course assessment;
 - Industry-specific certificates and credentials for career, technical, and agricultural education courses;
 - College Level Examination Program (CLEP) exams; and
 - Nationally recognized foreign language performance assessments.
- Commercial assessments will have to be reviewed by the SDOE and all credit by performance would be limited to 3 courses. The practice of awarding such credit will have to be reviewed and could be eliminated if student performance is not found to be at least equal to regular course completion.
- The bill lists extensive expectations for the SBOE, the BOE and the BTAE to work together to establish cooperative policies and guidelines to implement the intention of the bill.
- Charter schools cannot waive the requirement for individual graduation plans for students.
- Local boards and charter schools will be required to implement the policies and guidelines of the SBOE, BOR, and BTAE and are prohibited from setting policies to negate the plan or otherwise inhibit them.
- The Governor's Office of Workforce Development will be authorized to establish certification in soft skills such as punctuality, ability to learn, and ability to work as a team to complement the current assessment system utilized in Georgia to assess knowledge in applied math, reading for information, locating information, etc.
- Upon graduation, students will have both a diploma and certification in soft skills and work readiness.

HB192: Education Finance Study Commission, Extension of IE2 Deadline, and Temporary Teacher Contract Deadline Extension

This bill amends Article 6 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A. to establish the State Education Finance Study Commission to evaluate QBE. It also amends sections of the O.C.G.A. relating to the extension of school systems' deadlines to enter contracts with the state for improving student performance (IE2) or becoming charter systems, the extension of expenditure controls, maximum class size waivers, and the extension of the temporary allowance for teacher contract deadlines through 2014-2015. It allows all configurations of grades 6-8 to qualify for middle school funding, as long as the middle school program guidelines are followed, some of which are slightly amended here.

Requirements:

- Members of the commission should have “good working knowledge of education and education finance” and must “agree to balance the educational needs of children and the resources provided by the citizens of Georgia;”
- Membership of 20, will be composed of:
 - The following members, appointed by the Governor:
 - A local school superintendent;
 - A principal or other administrator;
 - A teacher;
 - A member of a local board of education;
 - A member of the State Board of Education;
 - A representative from the System Office of the University System of Georgia;
 - A representative from the Technical College System of Georgia;
 - A representative from the Professional Standards Commission;
 - A school finance officer; and
 - One representative from the business community;
 - The State School Superintendent;
 - The chief financial officer of the Department of Education;
 - Four members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, including the chairperson of the House Committee on Education; and
 - Four members of the Senate, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, including the chairperson of the Senate Education and Youth Committee
- The education committees' chairs would serve as co-chairs of the commission.
- Others with knowledge of the QBE formula may serve as non-voting members.
- Chairs could appoint a steering committee to keep the task on track.
- The Commission is charged with examining the effectiveness of the QBE formula and its varied parts and for needed updates:
 - Evaluate the various components of the formula, including teacher salaries, maintenance and operations, and textbooks, and determine whether adjustments are needed;
 - Consider whether new components should be added to the formula, such as technology;

- Consider whether other programs that have been proven successful should be added to the formula, such as graduation coaches; and,
- Review other areas within the QBE Act that relate to or impact school funding, such as maximum class sizes and expenditure controls, and whether local school systems should continue to be given flexibility in these areas.
- Consideration must be given to:
 - **State and local funding partnership:** Examine the requirement that school systems must levy 5 mills in order to draw down state QBE funding and whether the current method should continue or whether school systems should be required to pay a certain percentage of the formula or for certain expenditures;
 - **Equalization:** Examine the equalization grant to determine if the purpose of the grant is being met and whether revisions are needed;
 - **Student transportation:**
 - Review the current formula for student transportation; and
 - Review other safety issues related to student transportation, such as funding bus monitors and seat belts;
 - **State schools funding:** Examine funding for the three schools for blind and deaf children operated by the state to identify needed changes in the funding method, whether additional funding for residential, medical, and other costs unique to the schools should be provided, and whether local school systems should be contributing to the cost of educating these children; and,
 - **Capital outlay:**
 - Review the capital outlay programs for which school systems may be eligible to ensure that each program is effective and adequately funded; and
 - Because the program is currently scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2015, recommend whether and how long the program should be extended.
- If time permits, the following issues may be considered:
 - Charter Schools process and funding;
 - Funding mechanisms for CTAE, dual enrollment and virtual schools;
 - Teacher pay, including the possibility of performance pay, how it could be sustained long-term, and how Race to the Top requirements could force the issue.
 - Non-QBE grants (categorical patches such as school nutrition and school nurses) and funding updates that may be needed;
 - Other Title 20 revisions that should be reviewed, revised or eliminated.
- Support and consultation for the Commission will come from the DOE, OPB, the House, The Senate, the Office of Legislative Counsel with an individual designated as staff director for the Commission.
- Assistance may come from a variety of state agencies and organizations to include professional education organizations such as GSSA, GSBA, GAEL, GAE, PAGE, and SREB, as well as others.
- Meetings will have to commence no later than June 30, 2011.
- Final recommendations are required by September 30, 2012.
- Proposed legislation that results, if any, will be due December 31, 2012.

- Final recommendations will have to include priorities with indications of funding needed or not needed and with a timeline for implementation; each recommendation's estimated cost and the target year for budget inclusion will have to be noted.

The bill also incorporates several matters imported from other proposed legislation:

- It postpones the deadline for systems to submit an IE2 contract or to become a charter system to June 30, 2015.
- It extends the waiver for expenditure controls for direct instruction, media centers, and professional development through 2014-2015 and will be repealed on that date.
- It extends the maximum class size waiver currently in existence through 2014-2015.
- The waiver for expenditure controls on additional days of instruction is extended through 2014-2015.
- The provision for teacher contract notification is extended from April 15 to May 15 through 2014-2015.
- The bill allows any configuration of grades 6-8 to qualify for middle school program funding, as long as the middle school program is followed.
- It removes the statutory requirement for remedial instruction for students who have not performed on grade level.
- It removes the possibility of a waiver of the 5 hour instructional requirement (formerly 4.5 hours if the school has met AYP).

HB 227: Authorization of Self-Medication with Epinephrine

This bill amends Part 3 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A. which already authorizes students to carry and self-medicate with auto-injectable epinephrine (if a parent or doctor's annual statement is on file requesting that the school store and medicate the student according to specific instructions). As a result of this amendment, local BOE's now must have a policy to permit employees to *administer epinephrine to any student who appears to be having an allergic reaction, whether such student has a prescription for the drug or not*, as well as to provide information for teachers and administrators on the administration of the medication and on how to recognize signs of adverse reactions. Legal immunity is provided to educators and nurses related to administration of the medication, if done in good faith.

HB254: Videos for Overtaking School Buses

This bill amends Code Section 40-6-163 of the O.C.G.A. to provide for video images to be used in enforcement of a violation of passing a school bus while stopped for loading or unloading. It includes fines of \$300 for first offense, \$750 for a second offense, and \$1,000 for each subsequent offense in a five-year period. The offender will be notified by mail not later than 10 days after the alleged violation with charges, an image from the video, and a law enforcement officers' sworn statement that the code was violated from his/her view of the video. Purchase of the equipment is not required of local systems and would have to be added at the school system's expense, but fines received may be transferred to the school system to help offset costs.

HB285: Clearance certificates for educators

This bill amends Part 6 of Article 6 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A. to “clean up” errors made when enacting a previous version of this statute dealing with “clearance certificates” for all educators. (Note: The original intent was to require *all* educators who work with public school students to pass criminal background checks, and the language originally enacted was murky, at best.) This bill was amended to include requirements that the PSC develop rules (by 2015) that will require the impact of professional learning by educators be considered as part of the certificate renewal process along with a requirement that the PSC and DOE develop an online course on educator ethics (emphasis on test administration).

HB 314: Jessie’s Law (Compulsory Attendance)

This bill amends Subpart 2 of Part 1 of Article 16 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A. to provide that any foster care student who attends court proceedings related to the student’s foster care shall be counted present at school.

HB 325: School Scholarship Organizations

This bill amends Titles 20 and 48 of the O.C.G.A. to revise the student scholarship organizations provisions.

Requirements:

- Once students are deemed eligible, they will continue to qualify until they graduate, turn 20, or return to a public school.
- The bill adds Pre-K programs to “qualified school or program.”
- Each scholarship organization must:
 - Obligate (not award) donations for scholarships or tuition grants at least 90% of its annual revenue from donations (previously the organizations were tied to a flat 90%);
 - Award scholarships that do not exceed the average amount of state and local funding per student for public schools (based on fall count);
 - Have an independent board of directors of at least 3 members;
 - Transfer funds to another student scholarship organization if dissolved;
 - Conduct an audit to verify that at least 90% of donations were obligated for scholarships or grants.
- Scholarship Organizations will have to add the following to their annual reports to the DOR, which would have to be posted on the DOR website:
 - The total number and dollar value of individual contributions and tax credit approved, including single individual, head of household or joint returns;
 - The total number and dollar value of corporate contributions and tax credits approved;
 - The total number and dollar value of scholarships awarded to eligible students;
 - A copy of the audit.

- All of the reports will be confidential taxpayer information, whether the information relates to the donor or the student scholarship organization.
- A scholarship organization that fails to comply with the law will be given written notice and have 90 days to correct deficiencies. If not corrected, the scholarship organization will:
 - Be removed from the approved list;
 - Cease to operate and transfer all funds to an approved operation within 30 calendar days;
 - Have all applications for tax credits on or after the date of removal rejected;
- Any scholarship organization that does one of the following may be dissolved in the manner listed above if it:
 - Awards a scholarship to a specific student at the donor's request; or
 - Encourages or facilitates taxpayer actions prohibited by law.
- Any officer or director found in violation of and of the above offenses will be guilty of a misdemeanor.
- A donor who contributes before the scholarship organization dissolves will not be penalized for his/her donation by revocation of the tax credit.
- The current annual cap on the aggregate amount of tax credits allowed is \$50 million. However, the maximum will be adjusted annually until January 1, 2018, based on the most recent annual percentage change in the Consumer Price Index.
- The commissioner will have to notify the taxpayer of approval or denial of the tax credit application in writing within 30 days of its submission, and no notarized documentation will be required. The approval may appear in a web-based approval process that would be required.
- The taxpayer will have to make the donation within 60 days (up from 30) of the approval.
- The DOR will have to maintain a list on its web site of the amount of tax credits available.

HB 326: HOPE and Pre Kindergarten Revisions

This bill amends Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A. to provide comprehensive revisions to HOPE and Pre-K.

Requirements:

- Removes "advanced degree" from definitions;
- Removes "approved teacher education program" from definitions;
- Removes "public" from definition of "certificate" or "diploma" in reference to post-secondary institutions;
- Adds out-of-state, accredited schools to the list of eligible high schools;
- Revises list of approved accreditation entities so as to eliminate "The Accrediting Commission for Independent Study;"
- Adds a definition of "factor rate" –a % amount established by the General Assembly in annual appropriation acts against which the previous year HOPE award amount is multiplied;

- Adds “HOPE award rate” to definitions—equal to previous academic year HOPE tuition payment multiplied by the factor rate divided by 15 with possible exceptions delegated to GSFC;
- Adds “HOPE award amount” for eligible students to definition:
 - At a public post-secondary institution, equal to HOPE award rate multiplied by the number of credit hours up to a max of 15, in which an eligible student is enrolled with stipulations that include no awards for remedial and developmental courses. or
 - At a private post-secondary institution, equal to HOPE tuition payment multiplied by the factor rate for full-time students and one-half of the HOPE the HOPE tuition payment multiplied by the factor rate for half-time students. No awards will be granted for five or fewer credit hours and for remedial and developmental courses.
- Eliminates “HOPE teacher’s scholarship” from the definitions.
- Adds “HOPE tuitions payment” to definitions to mean:
 - For public post-secondary institutions, the amount paid for tuition only based on undergraduate full-time tuition rate for 15 hours; or
 - For private post-secondary institutions, the amount appropriated by the General Assembly in its appropriations act;
- Removes definition for “mandatory fees;”
- Removes definition for “PROMISE teacher’s scholarship;”
- Adds definition for “remedial and development courses” to include courses that do not count toward a degree or diploma;
- Adds definition for “tuition” to eliminate all fees;
- Adds “Zell Miller Scholar” to definitions to mean a student that is eligible for HOPE **and holds the following further qualifications:**
 - As an incoming freshman:
 - Has a high school GPA of at least **3.7** calculated by law and has a minimum of 1200 combined critical reading and math school on the SAT or a composite on the ACT of at least 26 (*in a single administration of the test*) and has graduated; or,
 - Has graduated from an eligible high school as valedictorian or salutatorian; or,
 - Has completed an eligible home study program with a 1200 on the ACT or a composite on the ACT of at least 26 (*in a single administration of the test*) and a GPA of 3.3 at the end of the first fully-enrolled quarter or semester with the HOPE paid retroactively at the end of the freshman year; and
 - As a sophomore, junior senior, or first professional student has a GPA of 3.3 at the standard checkpoints;
 - Students entering as freshmen between July1, 2007, and June 30, 2011, who have met the qualifications above may become a Zell Miller Scholar as a sophomore, junior, senior, or first professional student.

- A student who loses eligibility to be a Zell Mill Scholar for any reason may again qualify if he/she qualifies at any of the standard checkpoints.
- The bill revises eligibility for residency:
 - Classified as a legal resident of GA
 - as established by the GSFC;
 - as a graduate of high school or home study program--would have to meet GSFC requirements within 12 months prior to first day of classes for the scholarship;
 - If not a resident at the time of graduation, will have to meet GSFC requirements within 24 months prior to first day of classes for the scholarship; or
 - Active duty military service personnel or spouse or dependent child stationed in GA or lists GA as home of record.
- If attending a public post-secondary institution, students will have to (in addition to residency requirements):
 - At the end of 45, 90, or 135 quarter hours of 30, 60, or 90 semester hours have a GPA of 3.0 or better with the remaining checkpoint requirements retained as in the original law;
- Students who lose the HOPE will be eligible to regain it only one time.
- Students generally eligible will receive the appropriated amount.
- Students eligible for the Zell Miller Scholarship will receive that amount plus the difference of the standard award and the current academic year standard undergraduate tuition amount at the institution attended in the public post-secondary system.
- Students eligible for the Zell Miller Scholarship at private post-secondary institutions would be eligible for the full standard award.
- HOPE Scholarships will end when:
 - A degree or first professional degree is earned;
 - An accumulation of 190 quarter hours or 127 semester hours is reached; or
 - Beginning with students receiving HOPE for the first time after July 1, 2011, seven years has passed since graduation from high school or the equivalent with exceptions for military service;
- HOPE Grant eligibility includes
 - Residency requirements as listed above;
 - A GPA of 3.0 or better at the end of 30 semester or 45 quarter hours toward a diploma or certificate, including remedial or developmental courses; and
 - No one with a baccalaureate degree, its equivalent or higher.
- HOPE GED vouchers in the amount of \$500, subject to appropriations by the General Assembly, will be available once to each GED graduate if enrolled within 24 months from the date of GED issuance; and, vouchers would only be valid for costs of attendance.
- No HOPE scholarship or grant will be able to exceed costs of tuition.
- The GSFC will be responsible for managing HOPE scholarships and grants no longer in effect as of this act and will have the authority to set new rules regarding them.
- The GSFC will have the authority to monitor each post-secondary institution to ensure they have followed the requirements of the act with timelines and stipulations in the act.

- Should students holding student loans meet HOPE eligibility while attending post-secondary institutions, the student loan interest rate would drop to 1% for the coursework completed while under that loan, subject to funding.
- Service cancellable loans will be available for teachers in a public school in Georgia in science, technology, engineering, or math at the elementary, middle or secondary level. One year of service for each academic year as a student would be the rate of repayment.
- Rules of qualification for schools not addressed as public institutions or approved private institutions are included.
- Beginning with high school graduates on or after May 1, 2015, eligibility for the HOPE scholarship will require credit in at least 2 courses from the following categories (each course would count only once):
 - Advanced math,
 - Advanced science,
 - AP courses in core subjects, or
 - Advanced foreign language courses.
- Beginning with high school graduates on or after May 1, 2017, 4 courses from the categories will be required to receive the HOPE scholarship, plus the category of IB courses in core subjects.
- New requirements are placed on employee bonuses and on replenishing the shortfall reserve, should it fall below a prescribed level.
- Programs started with lottery funds will be eligible to be continued with general funds, but they would then no longer be eligible for lottery funds in whole or in part.
- The compensation to lottery retailers will be limited to no more than 6% of gross sales and possible incentives will be included.

HR113: School Bus Safety Study Committee

This House-only resolution creates a study committee to study issues related to school bus safety, including but not limited to the use of seat belts on school buses.

HR497: Urging Local School Systems to Make their Facilities Tobacco-free

This House-only resolution urges local school systems to establish policies that prohibit the use of tobacco products on their campuses and in their facilities and to create educational curriculums to inform students of the risks of tobacco use.

SB 79: Four-Year Terms for LBOE Members and Board Size Limits

This bill amends Article 3 of Chapter 2 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A. to require LBOE members to serve terms of at least 4 years in length beginning January 1, 2012 unless longer terms are achieved by Local Act or Constitutional amendment. Certain LBOE's must have no more than 7 members as provided by local act, unless local legislation was passed prior to July 1, 2010; should they revise the size by local legislation, it cannot not exceed 7 members. Phased-in implementation of required staggered 4-year terms is provided. Local law could result in term limits for LBOE offices.

The bill also allows the SBOE to conduct a hearing when a school system has been placed on a level of accreditation immediately preceding loss of accreditation and does not attain full accreditation by July 1, 2011. The SBOE may recommend to the Governor to suspend all members of the LBOE with pay. If so, the Governor would then consult with the SBOE to appoint temporary replacement members qualified to serve as members of the board. An appeal process is outlined.

SB 161: Partnerships with Post-secondary Institutions for Career Academies

This bill amends Article 2 of Chapter 4 of Title 20 of the O.C.G.A. to provide for college and career academies, to establish the Office of College and Career Transitions, to provide partnerships with postsecondary institutions to establish college and career academies at charter schools, to provide funding, certification, data collection, eligibility criteria, requirements and procedures, annual reporting, and advisement. It also creates another route for charter school approval through the Office of College and Career Transitions, but final approval will rest with the SBOE. The BTAE will have to establish eligibility criteria, requirements and procedures for the disbursement of funding to the academies and has to require active support from and a partnership with local business and community leaders.

Requirements:

- Definitions include:
 - “Board” to mean the State Board of Technical and Adult Education
 - “Certification” to mean a formal process established by the newly formed Office of College and Career Transitions and approved by the BTAE in which college and career academies successfully demonstrate appropriate student achievement levels, community sustainability, workforce development and school level governance.
 - “Charter petitioner” to mean a LBOE, a group of LBOE’s, a private individual, a private organization, a state or local public entity, or any group of these, that submits a petition for a charter in cooperation with a postsecondary institution(s).
 - “Charter school” to mean the same as elsewhere in the law.
 - “College and career academy” to mean a specialized charter school established by a partnership by any or several of the above mentioned individuals and/or groups and approved by the SBOE.
 - “Start-up costs” to mean initial operating or capital costs, including costs of improving real property.
 - “Supplemental funding” to mean funds for purposes other than startup costs.
- The OCCT will be established within the TCSG to coordinate efforts of the SBOE, the USGA, the TCSG and other not-for-profit postsecondary institutions accredited by SACS in professional development, curriculum support, and the development of such academies.
- The BTAE is authorized to allocate funds from state, federal and general obligation debt, as well as any other available funds to the academies for startup costs or other purposes based on grants.

- Petitioners may apply for startup funds once a petition is in the draft process, but the funds cannot not be released until the charter is approved.
- Once the charter petition is certified by the OCCT, it will be submitted to the SBOE as a positive recommendation for review, and further information may be requested by the SBOE.
- Requirements for desired outcomes related to workforce competencies will be required in the petition.
- The OCCT will be responsible for various data collection on the charter schools in cooperation with the Office of Charter School Compliance.
- The BTAE will establish guidelines for disbursement of funding based on the strength of the partnerships involved and may establish a matching funds requirement.
- Recipients of the funds for college and career academies must file annual reports with specific data required.
- Advisors from business, industry, civic and governmental agencies and educational organizations are required to advise the BTAE on matter pertaining to certification and governance of the academies.