NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS
SPIRIT | PRIDE | EXCELLENCE
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Legislative Summary



Dr. Ashante Everett

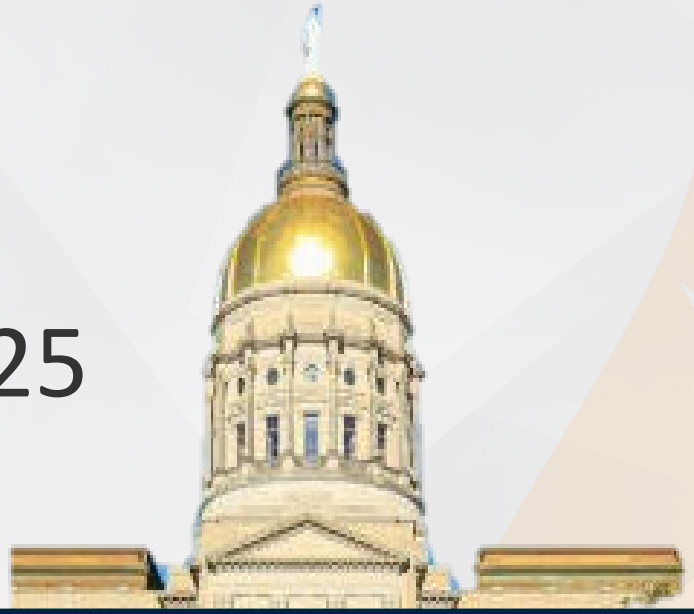
Director of Student Services

May 13, 2025

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Georgia General Assembly 2025 Legislative Session



The Georgia General Assembly, composed of the House of Representatives and the Senate, meets from January until late March to set the state's annual operating budget and to propose laws on a variety of topics.

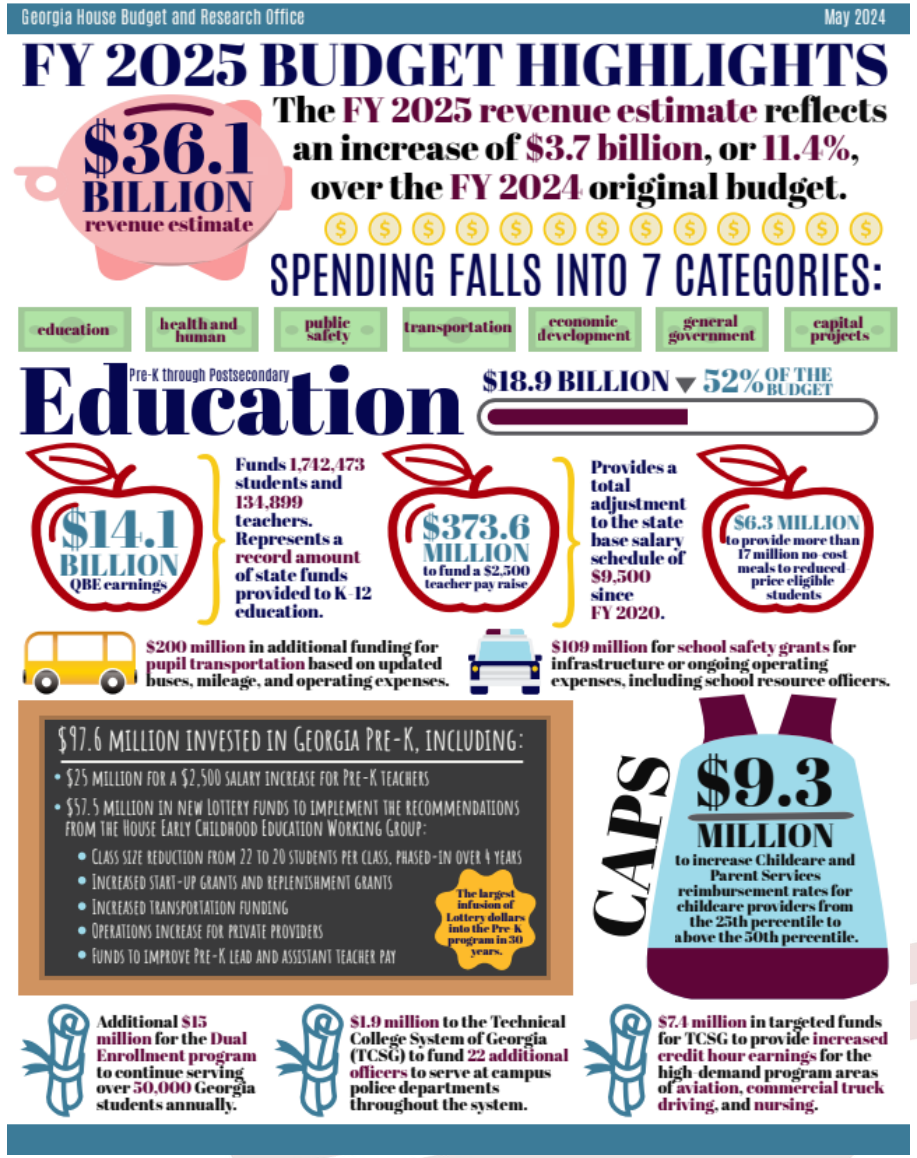
NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

Capitol Watch

Safety

Literacy

School Choice



NEWTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

HB 92: Postpone Date for Opting Out

Summary	Impact	Required Action
A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Code Section 48-5-44.2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to base year homestead exemption, so as to postpone the date by which local governing authorities are authorized to opt out of such homestead exemption; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.	Moves the opt-out deadline for HB 581 (2024 session) back to its current deadline of March 1, 2025. If a local board of education opts out of HB 581, it must complete the notification, public hearings, opt-out resolution, and all other requirements and provisions regarding hearings and advertising by March 1, 2025.	✓ **Comply with notices specifically outlined in the bill every year until December 31, 2029** ✓ **Conduct the opt-out process once more in 2027 for it to remain effective** ✓ **If NCS chooses to rescind the decision to opt out, do so by 2029** ✓ **Certify rates with the tax assessors & commissioner no less than 15 days prior to notice of assessment**

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HB 268: Safety, Health, & Well-being of Students

Summary	Impact	Required Action
Relates to elementary and secondary education, so as to provide for the safety, health, and well-being of students and school communities; to create an Office of Safe Schools within the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency; to provide technical assistance for local school systems to develop policies and procedures for their threat management teams	Requires schools to have up-to-date mapping and mobile panic alert systems, requires student records to be transferred within five school business days so dangers can be addressed quickly, provides for a Student Advocacy Specialist grant program to reimburse districts for hiring, requires local boards to offer anonymous reporting program, and creates the offenses of “terroristic threat”	✓ **Develop a process for student records to be transferred within five school business days** ✓ **Offer an anonymous reporting program** ✓ **Create the offenses of “terroristic threat of a school” and “terroristic act upon a school”**

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HB 307: Quality Basic Education Act (Dyslexia)

Summary	Impact	Required Action
Relating to educational programs under the "Quality Basic Education Act," so as to include provisions for students significantly at risk of not achieving grade level reading proficiency or with characteristics of dyslexia; relating to screening for dyslexia and related disorders, training and professional development, pilot program evaluating early intervention, and data	Amends the “Georgia Literacy Act” by ensuring the Georgia Professional Standards Commission adopts rules for state-approved teacher preparation programs that are aligned to the “Science of Reading.”	✓ **Distribute information relevant to dyslexia and the characteristics of dyslexia** ✓ **Prohibit the three-cueing systems model from high-quality instructional materials or structured literacy for students in grades K-3** ✓ **Prohibit instructional materials/practices/ interventions that utilize the three-cueing system**

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HB 340: Distraction-Free Education Act

Summary	Impact	Required Action
Requires local school systems and public schools to enact policies and procedures for use of personal electronic devices at school and school sponsored events by students in kindergarten through eighth grade; to provide for permissible student use of personal electronic devices	Requires local school systems and public schools to enact policies and procedures regarding using personal electronic devices at school and school-sponsored events by students in grades K- 8	✓ **Remove access to personal devices or personal electronic devices at school-sponsored events and during school hours, "bell-to-bell," for students in grades K-8** ✓ **By January 1, 2026, each local school system and public school shall adopt policies and procedures**

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SB 1: Fair and Safe Athletic Opportunities Act

Summary	Impact	Required Action
Provides for competitively fair and safe student participation in middle school, high school, and college sports; to promote fair and safe competition; to provide for equal athletic opportunities and safety; to provide for specific designations of teams operated or sponsored by local school systems	Prohibits males from participating in interscholastic competitions on teams designated as female; prohibits females from participating in competitions on interscholastic teams designated as male in middle school, high school, and college sports and requires multiple occupancy restrooms, changing areas, and sleeping quarters to be designated for use exclusively by one gender	✓ **Adopt and publish grievance procedures for complaints** ✓ **Designate multiple occupancy restrooms, changing areas, and sleeping quarters for use exclusively by one gender**

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SB 82: Local Charter School Authorization & Support Act

Summary	Impact	Required Action
Provides for local boards of education to reconsider the denial of local charter school petitions; to require the Office of Charter School Compliance to prepare guidelines for local boards of education for the evaluation of charter school petitions; to revise reporting; to provide for related matters; to provide for legislative findings and intent; to provide for an effective date	Requires the Office of Charter School Compliance to prepare guidelines for local boards of education to evaluate charter school petitions. If a local board denies a petition, it must provide a written statement of denial to the charter petitioner, the State Board of Education, and the Office of Charter School Compliance, stating the reasons for denial within 20 business days	✓ **Evaluate charter school petitions** ✓ **Provide a written statement of denial to the charter petitioner, the State Board of Education, and the Office of Charter School Compliance, specifically stating the reasons for denial and listing all deficiencies within 20 business days**

District Priorities

Prioritize an equitable funding formula that ensures resource distribution consistent with school district's unique needs.

Modernize the QBE formula to account for: 1. Safety and Security funding 2. Poverty, and 3. Updated funding weights for classified employees and mental health support personnel (i.e. school psychologists, social workers, and school counselors)

Teaching and Learning	Mental Health and Wellbeing	Safety and Security
Advance legislation that enables a balanced accountability system and prioritizes growth/progress model for student achievement using multiple measures for student and teacher performance.	Advocate for measures that expand access to mental healthcare, including training for teachers and other education professionals to better support student needs.	Introduce and/or advocate for legislation that strengthens penalties for threatening conduct directed towards students, school-based personnel, or conduct that may otherwise result in substantial disruption to normal school related operations.
Advocate for legislation that advances digital equity; providing resources that guarantee high-speed internet access for all students. This includes funding for infrastructure improvements in underserved areas.		Advocate for the allocation of resources to school districts to assist with identifying and thwarting cyber threats.