**Gold Dome Re-Cap: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly for Education in 2025**

1. **School Choice Bills:**
   * **SB 82—Charter School Incentive Grants**
   * **SB 63—PSAT, SAT, PreACT, ASVAB, or AP exam parity for homeschool students**
   * **SB 123—Allows for compulsory attendance in school between the ages of 6-16 to be satisfied in public school, private school, or a “home study program.”**
     + Kids cannot be expelled solely based on absences (but. . .see below).
   * **HB 217—Georgia Promise Scholarship Program income verification in conjunction with the Dept. of Revenue**
2. **School Safety Bills:** 
   * **HB 268—Response to Apalachee H.S. shooting**
     + Mobile panic alert system for schools by July 1, 2026
     + School mapping data re: all public and private schools
     + Establishing clearer jurisdiction for education for students who are in custody of the state
     + Monies for “Student Advocacy Specialists” to coordinate identification and facilitate interventions of students with mental health concerns (one per 18,000 students/district)
     + Making sharing of student records between jurisdictions and schools/criminal justice system easier
     + Training on positive behaviorial supports for “high need schools.”
     + Mechanism for forcing parents to cooperate with behavioral meetings and disclosure of school records, punishable by a fine of $500 or contempt of court.
     + All public school personnel and school students grades 6-12 shall receive training in youth violence and suicide prevention.
     + Anonymous reporting system at each local school board level for reporting of threatening activity.
     + Relationship of law enforcement officers to schools
     + 30-day absence/withdrawal rule
     + Ability to try kids ages 13-17 as adults if they engage in a “terroristic act upon a school.” This can be a threat or an action and is a felony conviction if the person is found guilty.
   * **SB 20/HB 56—Memorial Fund for School Teachers/Employees Killed in the Line of Duty**
   * **HB 340—prohibits use of cell phones in K-8 classrooms from bell to bell during the school day.**
3. **Educator Compensation:** 
   * **HB 235: Educators can take up to 30 days of paid leave for organ donation and 7 days of paid leave for bone marrow donation.**
   * **HB 37: Notification to educators about withholding of Social Security taxes from their pay and allows extension of dental and vision coverage to families of educators in districts where this is provided.**
4. **Absenteeism:**

* **Both houses created study committees to study this problem**
* House: House Study Committee on Student Attendance in Pre-K-12 Education
* Senate: Senate Study Committee on Combating Chronic Absenteeism in Schools

1. **School Board Ethics**
   * **SB 4: require local school boards to adopt a model code of ethics allowing citizens over the age of 18 to file ethics complaints against local school board members.** 
     + The bill would also limit training requirements to new school board members and members of districts designated by the Department of Audits and Accounts as high-risk.
     + Finally, the legislation outlines what could and could not be covered or stated during board trainings.
2. **Civil Rights**
   * **SB 1: Transgender student athlete participation**
     + Designation of separate, sex-specific athletic teams and sports is necessary
     + Prohibits AFAB[[1]](#footnote-1) individuals from competing on male-only sports teams and AMAB individuals from competing on female-only sports teams.
     + Defines “male” and “female” according to people who produce human ovum vs. people who produce sperm.
     + Sex may not be determined by self-identification but clinically verified at birth.
   * **SB 1: Transgender student athlete participation (cont.)**
     + Exception for AFAB people to compete on a male designated team if that sport if a female team for that sport is not available (e.g. football).
     + Any student can participate on a co-ed team.
     + Restrooms, changing rooms, sleeping facilities🡪 must be designated male or female only, but there must be a reasonable accommodation space for those unwilling or unable to use a multi-occupancy facility.
3. **Literacy and Reading:**
   * **HB 307: Three-cueing reading instruction cannot be primary means of instruction (e.g. Fountas and Pinnell system)**
     + GaDOE must publish a yearly dyslexia handbook;
     + GaDOE must develop training for teachers on science of reading.
   * **SB 93: Educator preparation programs must be aligned with science of reading.**
   * **HR 145: Prioritization of hearing and vision screenings to remove this barrier to child literacy.**
4. **A bill that did not pass yet (but might still in 2026)**
   * **SB 120: defined “DEI” as when schools have special benefits or treatment for individuals of a certain race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc., and when colleges and universities hold official positions on a number of topics, including systemic oppression, “Anti-racism,” allyship, neopronouns and racial privilege.**

1. AFAB: Assigned Female at Birth; AMAB: Assigned Male at Birth [↑](#footnote-ref-1)