

Fall 2017 Legislative Update
Georgia Association of School Psychologists

2018 Legislative Session:

Legislation which failed to pass this year is eligible to pass during the 2018 session. Education-related legislation which falls into this category includes:

- HB 32, by Rep. Joyce Chandler (R-Grayson), regarding sexual contact between educators and students.
- HB 217, by Rep. John Carson (R-Marietta), legislation seeking to increase the cap on tuition tax credit private school vouchers.
- HB 273, by Rep. Demetrius Douglas (D-Stockbridge), mandating recess in grades K-5.
- HB 415, by Rep. John Meadows (R-Calhoun), aimed at reforming the Georgia High School Association.
- HB 423, by Rep. Valencia Stovall (D-Forest Park), allowing state charter school access to unused local school facilities.
- HB 500, by Rep. Patty Bentley (D-Butler) relating to school nepotism laws.
- HR 319, by Rep. Bubber Epps (R-Dry Branch), allowing the levy of sales tax for school maintenance and operation.
- SB 3, by Sen. Tippins, the Creating Opportunities Needed Now to Expand Credentialed Training (CONNECT) Act.
- SB 30, by Sen. Vincent Fort (D-Atlanta), seeking to create a community school program in Georgia.
- SB 139, by Sen. Hunter Hill (R-Atlanta), seeking to create new career pathways.
- SB 152, by Sen. Emanuel Jones (D-Decatur,) limiting the amount of time a student can be assigned to alternative school.
- SB 188, by Sen. Donzella James (D-Atlanta), seeking to prohibit students from being forced to take psychotropic medication.
- SB 235, also by Sen. James, strongly encouraging school football participants be equipped with four star-rated helmets.
- SR 192, by Sen. John Wilkinson (R-Toccoa), a proposed constitutional amendment seeking to allow local communities to vote to elect their school superintendents and appoint their school boards via grand jury.
- Recommendations from Gov. Deal's Education Reform Commission.
 - Recommendations contained in the ERC Final Report were not acted upon during the 2017 session. Notably, this inaction includes proposed reforms to Georgia's school funding formula

Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Highlights:

- Ongoing austerity cut to Georgia's Quality Basic Education (QBE) school funding formula of more than \$166 million.
- First time since the 2008-2009 school year, it contains a dedicated pay raise for educators. The 2 percent raise is included on the state salary schedule and is therefore expected to make it to educators, though it is possible that local school districts could use their flexibility contracts to divert the funding elsewhere.
- Increase in state spending to fund the employer share of Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) from 14.27 percent to 16.81 percent.
- \$1 million for implementation of HB 338.
- \$1,269,950 increase in funding for personnel for Positive Behavior and Intervention Support (PBIS) specialists to convert part-time staff to full-time staff.
- Transfer funds from GaDOE testing program to GOSA, including \$1,231,900 in existing innovation grant funds to provide one AP STEM exam for every student taking an AP STEM course.
- \$250,000 increase in funds for concordant models as prescribed in SB 211

Resources:

NASP Advocacy Action Center

Provides more targeted and intentional advocacy resources. This site tells you your local, state, and federal elected officials contact information and shows how to contact and encourage them to support public policy issues that are of importance to school psychologists.

<http://cqrcengage.com/naspweb/home>

NASP Advocacy Tools and Resources Page

General Information, tool kits, guides, and research summaries to help you advocate.

<https://www.nasponline.org/research-and-policy/advocacy-tools-and-resources>

Page Legislative Overview

Provides a collection of all the bills being discussed during the current legislative session. Via color code tells which bills PAGE supports, is opposed to, is watching, and/or is asking to be amended.

http://ciclt.net/sn/leg/l_main.aspx?ClientCode=page&L_Session=&L_Prior=&L_State=sc&StateName=

PAGE District Look Up

Another website to help you find your elected officials contact information.

http://www.ciclt.net/sn/pol/po_districtlookup.aspx?ClientCode=page&State=ga