

9-1-1988

## EDUCATION Quality Basic Education Act: Amend Provisions

C. Christie

Follow this and additional works at: <https://readingroom.law.gsu.edu/gsulr>

 Part of the [Law Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

C. Christie, *EDUCATION Quality Basic Education Act: Amend Provisions*, 5 GA. ST. U. L. REV. (1988).  
Available at: <https://readingroom.law.gsu.edu/gsulr/vol5/iss1/27>

This Peach Sheet is brought to you for free and open access by the Publications at Reading Room. It has been accepted for inclusion in Georgia State University Law Review by an authorized editor of Reading Room. For more information, please contact [mbutler@gsu.edu](mailto:mbutler@gsu.edu).

## EDUCATION

### *Quality Basic Education Act: Amend Provisions*

CODE SECTIONS:	O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-282 (amended), 20-2-320 (amended)
BILL NUMBER:	SB 588
ACT NUMBER:	1447
SUMMARY:	SB 588 amends the Quality Basic Education Act to provide information concerning individual student profiles and school system profiles to the public and to governmental offices. All data will be encoded into the state-wide comprehensive educational information network to maintain the confidentiality of individual students.
EFFECTIVE DATE:	July 1, 1988

#### *History*

In 1985, the Georgia General Assembly passed the Quality Basic Education Act (QBE).<sup>1</sup> The objectives and purposes of the Act are to provide quality basic education in public schools throughout the state by, among other things, establishing and maintaining standards for learning, providing staff development and incentive programs to teachers and local school systems, distributing information concerning the quality of education to parents and the public, and establishing appropriate educational facilities, particularly in sparsely populated school districts.<sup>2</sup>

The primary goal of the Act is to achieve: (1) an increase in the percentage of students mastering mathematics, reading, and other subjects; (2) a decrease in the number of students who fail the tenth grade State Basic Skills Test; (3) an increase in Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores; (4) a decrease in the number of students who drop out of school prior to graduation; (5) an elimination of both waivers for teaching outside of a declared specialty and emergency teaching certificates; and (6) a reduction in the percentage of teachers who leave the profession because of job dissatisfaction.<sup>3</sup> The Act also includes provisions for

---

1. O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-130 to -322 (1987 & Supp. 1988).

2. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-131 (1987).

3. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-132 (1987).

financing,<sup>4</sup> grants,<sup>5</sup> capital outlay funds,<sup>6</sup> conditions of employment,<sup>7</sup> and staff development.<sup>8</sup>

To improve the effectiveness of education programs, the legislature provided for comprehensive evaluations of regional agencies, public schools, and local school systems,<sup>9</sup> and for a QBE program task force and state-wide educational information network.<sup>10</sup>

Originally, O.C.G.A. § 20-2-282 required that comprehensive evaluations of education systems be performed once every five years.<sup>11</sup> A variety of criteria were analyzed including the extent to which the school system had implemented a uniformly sequenced core curriculum, the school's compliance with state laws and board-prescribed standards, the effectiveness of the school's program compared with programs involving demographically similar student bodies, the accuracy of fiscal and student accounts, and the school's procedures for annual personnel evaluation.<sup>12</sup> Further, the Act detailed which individuals would conduct the evaluations and outlined implementation of both the rating system and the manner in which information was to be disseminated to the public and the legislature.<sup>13</sup> The legislature made several technical changes to the section in 1987.<sup>14</sup>

In 1985, the legislature also enacted O.C.G.A. § 20-2-306,<sup>15</sup> redesignated as § 20-2-320,<sup>16</sup> providing for a QBE task force and a state-wide comprehensive educational information network. The task force was to include members from the Department of Education, Office of Planning and Budget, Department of Audits, Department of Administrative Services, and Legislative Budget Office.<sup>17</sup> The Act also required the development and maintenance of an information network by which the QBE information could be stored and made available to the Government and the House and Senate Appropriations and Education Committees.<sup>18</sup>

---

4. O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-160 to -168 (1987 & Supp. 1988).

5. O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-250 to -254 (1987).

6. O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-260 to -261 (1987).

7. O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-210 to -216 (1987 & Supp. 1988).

8. O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-230 to -232 (1987 & Supp. 1988).

9. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-282 (Supp. 1988).

10. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320 (Supp. 1988).

11. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-282(a)(1) (Supp. 1988).

12. 1985 Ga. Laws 1657.

13. *Id.*

14. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-282 (1987).

15. 1985 Ga. Laws 1657.

16. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320 (Supp. 1988).

17. 1985 Ga. Laws 1657 (formerly found at O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320(a) (1987)).

18. 1985 Ga. Laws 1657 (formerly found at O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320(b), (c) (1987)). The network was to be completed by July 1, 1989. *Id.*

*SB 588*

SB 588 amends Code sections 20-2-282 and 20-2-320. The amendments, as introduced, provided technical changes to both Code sections and heightened the level of accountability required of school systems.<sup>19</sup> The purpose of the amendments is to facilitate the government's assessment of the needs and progress of schools and to help educators make decisions concerning the future direction of their education programs.<sup>20</sup>

The Senate Committee on Education offered a substitute to SB 588,<sup>21</sup> which was adopted by both the House and Senate.<sup>22</sup> The final version requires the State Board of Education to "publish annual profiles of all public schools and local school systems."<sup>23</sup> These annual profiles would enable educators to compare rural and suburban systems and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing programs.<sup>24</sup> The task force designated by O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320 will recommend which information should be included in the profiles.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, the final version lists types of information to be collected, maintained, and disseminated by the state-wide comprehensive educational information network.<sup>26</sup> The adopted version also requires that all information collected be made available to the public through the Department of Education and public libraries<sup>27</sup> to increase public awareness of the state's educational progress.<sup>28</sup>

SB 588 amends O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320 by expanding the list of representatives assigned to the educational task force; the representatives have discretion to determine the types of data to be collected and stored in the information network.<sup>29</sup> Data collected concerning individual students is to be encoded through identification numbers to protect confidentiality.<sup>30</sup> This facet of the Bill was considered crucial to many legislators who were concerned about the unauthorized disclosure of confidential information.<sup>31</sup> The information will be available only to authorized educational agencies for the purpose of comparing rural and suburban educational systems and charting changes in student development through the analysis of achievement test results and other demographic data.<sup>32</sup>

19. SB 588, as introduced, 1988 Ga. Gen. Assem.

20. Telephone interview with Senator John Foster, Senate District No. 50 (Apr. 20, 1988) [hereinafter Foster Interview].

21. SB 588 (SCS), 1988 Ga. Gen. Assem.

22. O.C.G.A. §§ 20-2-282, -320 (Supp. 1988).

23. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-282(d) (Supp. 1988).

24. Foster Interview, *supra* note 20.

25. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320(a) (Supp. 1988).

26. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-282(d) (Supp. 1988).

27. *Id.*

28. Foster Interview, *supra* note 20.

29. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320(a) (Supp. 1988).

30. O.C.G.A. § 20-2-320(c) (Supp. 1988).

31. Foster Interview, *supra* note 20.

32. *Id.*

The original QBE Act has been highly criticized by teachers. They blame the Act for time-consuming documentation which shortens the hours previously spent with students.<sup>33</sup> According to a survey of the Professional Association of Georgia Educators and the Georgia Association of Educators, more than ninety percent of those polled feel the paperwork burden is worsening and could preclude the QBE Act from accomplishing its goal.<sup>34</sup> According to the sponsor of SB 588, Georgia has ranked approximately forty-eighth academically in comparison with all other states.<sup>35</sup> Although the cost of education in Georgia has increased dramatically in the last several years, SAT scores have dropped an average of ninety-three points.<sup>36</sup> The QBE Act is designed to increase teacher and school system accountability so that Georgia may "provide our children with the very finest educational opportunities available."<sup>37</sup>

*C. Christie*

---

33. Laccetti, *Teachers Blame QBE For Paperwork Avalanche*, Atlanta J. & Const., Jan. 24, 1988, at 1B, col. 4.

34. Foster Interview, *supra* note 20.

35. *Id.*

36. *Id.*

37. *Id.*