

**SENATE EDUCATION & YOUTH COMMITTEE  
2007 SESSION MEMBERS**

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**SENATE EDUCATION & YOUTH  
COMMITTEE RULES**

**2007 – 2008**

- 1. Quorum of the Committee shall be six (6).**
- 2. The Chairman shall determine which bills and resolutions are to be considered and the order in which said measures are considered.**
- 3. The Chairman shall have the authority to refer bills and resolutions to subcommittees for study. Such subcommittees in turn shall have the authority to make recommendations on such measures to the full Committee.**
- 4. The Committee shall convene, recess, and adjourn upon the order of the Chairman.**
- 5. Any member or members of the Committee who disagrees with the Majority report of the Committee shall be privileged to fill a minority report if they so desire.**
- 6. These rules may be amended upon a motion duly made and subsequently approved by two-thirds of the members of the Committee.**
- 7. A bill, resolution, or other matter will be considered only after presentation by its principal author or a legislator whom he has designated to do so. In the event more than one member of the General Assembly has signed a measure, the principal author shall be the one whose name appears first in the list of authors.**
- 8. Where these rules are silent on a specific issue, the Rules of the Senate, as adopted, shall govern.**

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMITTEE**

**JANUARY 22, 2007**

A joint meeting of the House and Senate Education and Youth Committee was held on January 22, 2007, in Room 606 of the CLOB. The Chairman of the House Education and Youth Committee, Representative Brooks Coleman, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Members of the Senate Education and Youth Committee present included Chairman Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, Vice Chair Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>.

(Late arrivals were Senator John Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Senator Vincent Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>.)

House members present included Chairman Coleman, 97<sup>th</sup>, Vice Chair, Millar, 79<sup>th</sup>, Secretary Benton, 31<sup>st</sup>, Carter, 175<sup>th</sup>, Casas, 103<sup>rd</sup>, Dickson, 6<sup>th</sup>, Doug Holt, 112, Everson, 106<sup>th</sup>, Floyd, 99<sup>th</sup>, Jamieson, 28<sup>th</sup>, Kaiser, 35<sup>th</sup>, Keown, 173<sup>rd</sup>, Maxwell, 17<sup>th</sup>, Alisha Morgan, 39<sup>th</sup>, Reece, 11<sup>th</sup>, Reese, 98<sup>th</sup>, Sellier, 136<sup>th</sup>, Sims, 151<sup>st</sup>, Stanley-Turner, 53<sup>rd</sup>, Talton, 145<sup>th</sup>, Teilhet, 40<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, E. Williams, 79<sup>th</sup>, and M. Williams, 178<sup>th</sup>.

House Chairman Coleman also recognized at this time Legislative Counsel and Aides and asked that they introduce themselves.

At this time Chairman Coleman called the meeting to order and gave a big welcome to our new Senate Chairman, Senator Dan Weber.

House Chairman Coleman asked for introduction of members (House and Senate.) He also recognized that seven (7) members of the IE were present.

Chairman Coleman recognized Albert Coleman with Communities in Schools to speak to the committee briefly and he introduced Neil Shorthouse to speak on behalf of Communities in Schools.

**Chairman Coleman asked if there were any questions and Representative Morgan, 39<sup>th</sup>, inquired as to what was their involvement.**

**Representative Freddie Sims, 151<sup>st</sup>, was recognized to speak and directed a question to Chairman Coleman and he responded.**

**Chairman Coleman addressed the committee by saying he wanted everyone to pay very close attention to what they are about to hear regarding this program. There has been a task force in operation now for a couple of years and the committee will hear about it today.**

**Chairman Coleman introduced Dean Alford, who is in charge of driving this force, chairing it and keeping the team on task.**

**There was a short presentation by the Communities in Schools about their work in Learning Centers, graduation coaches and their thoughts of expanding these programs. He presented to the committee and audience the charts to illustrate their goals and plans.**

**The committee heard the PowerPoint Presentation from Dean Alford over the work of the IE2 strategic partnership with the state in hopes of creating models of how much it will cost to give Georgia's children an excellent education. The organization looked at Best Practices in Elementary, Middle and High Schools in their model of 600 students.**

**Representative Millar, 79<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and directed a question to Alford by saying one of the things he talked about was looking at the cost and this is a different formula. The first two weeks they were down at the Capitol this year they had been given at least three different methods of trying to reform taxes in this state and his question was their committee, when they are done with the cost, whether it is so much per student, no matter what they come up with by elementary, high school etc., will he be recommending a particular method of financing, obviously it would be property taxes. They are hearing a lot from many people, the House in particular about looking at our tax structure, would they have a recommendation for the method of financing for charter schools when they are done with it? Alford responded by saying no, that was not within their chart and not what they will be looking at. They would be looking at this as to what**

it's going to cost and this is what that partnership should do. What would have to be considered is where you are going to make available, by the state and local systems, the resources to do this new formula? He thought it was important to know what that cost should be before you determine how much money to have to spend. We are not there relative to that. He was asked is it more or less and stated that he truly did not know.

Representative Jamieson, 28<sup>th</sup>, was recognized, and she stated with the systems around the state, and bearing in mind that the state is under a legal challenge for failure to meet our fair share of the local cost of public education, what are the thoughts of the local systems, what kind of feedback did he get from them as far as what funding mechanism they feel comfortable with or be willing to purpose? Alford responded by saying what he was hearing was tell us what you want us to do, be loud and clear on it. What is the outcome you want and how do you measure that success? Give us the resources that we need relative to do that. Every system he had met with expressed to hold us (the systems) highly accountable, they were not afraid of that and he believed that. The formula that is important there is to give them the money that they need to the uniqueness of that we have. The part that is a struggle is that they have no two systems alike. The reality being, that most of their systems have less than 2,000 students, and a handful of systems have over 50,000 students. What they want to do is develop a formula and system, one that fits the unique needs of all and he does not believe you can do that.

Representative Doug Holt, 112<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and he thanked the organization for their work. He asked if their best practices research included anything about how to provide incentives or other needs to get parents involved, if they were considering parental involvement in educational excellence? The organization encouraged the committee to check out the detailed work at [www.ie2.org](http://www.ie2.org) and stated that one of the Best Practices schools had a staff person whose whole job was to involve and engage the parents. Alford responded by saying they invited all parents. There is somebody whose job is to do that.

Chairman Coleman recognized Representative Reese, 98<sup>th</sup>, to speak. He asked if the research in the organization went beyond the great state of Georgia. The organization responded that Georgia has some very stellar schools and then some

really bad schools. The reality is that there are three unique problems in every school and need unique management systems to keep everything efficient. Alford responded to his question by saying yes, they had gone beyond Georgia. Some are great schools and then there are those that are not performing and need a lot of work.

Chairman Coleman recognized Representative Alisha Thomas-Morgan, 39<sup>th</sup>, to speak and directed a question to Alford by asking if the mandatory school age and the age allowable to drop out have been considered in this cost model – Alford responds by saying the way they are tracking this is they are assuming to have so many in a class room so they would be costing it out that way. The cost is what it would cost to educate that child. They have not dealt with what the cost would be to not educate that child. Representative Thomas, 39<sup>th</sup>, responded back with a question. We talk about raising the drop out age to 17 but I am hearing it will cost a lot of money and that is why it has not changed. She was curious as to whether it was a consideration. What would it cost to consider kindergarten into this in terms of our cost in education? Alford responds by saying their methodology does not assume any particular total population size, they are doing this as a business unit; that of being a school and determining the cost per child based on that situation.

Chairman Coleman recognized Representative Jameson, 28<sup>th</sup>, to speak. She directed a question to Alford by saying assuming that when these models for excellence in education are completed and she understands that one model will not fit every system and therefore you may have five models based on the size of the school and the geographic location and the guidelines for achieving that excellence are developed, are they then going to leave those guidelines in place long enough for those local systems to gain some traction in achieving this excellence in education or did he see them continuing every year to hand down a new set of guidelines every two years so the local systems don't get a toe hold on what they are trying to achieve until some new guideline comes along. She thought that was a true concern. Alford responded by saying that was a very fair question and he thought the response that is of how they institutionalize that it does not happen; he felt the way you get it institutionalized is when they know what it is they want the systems to do and you can become comfortable that there is a high degree of accountability when that is not being done. Right now the temptation is, in all

fairness, is when you sense that is not being done and the temptation is to pass another law and another program. There is no other way of getting it. If it is not getting done then they need to develop a plan B.

Chairman Coleman recognized Senator Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, and he directed a question to Alford by saying Representative Holt had asked a question about parental involvement and referred to the hand outs that were on their desks. He wanted to know what he could share with the committee about the role that the committee felt that person would play and how important is it in putting together this elementary model? Alford responded by asking if he was talking about the physical education and Carter responded yes. Alford said when they looked at those schools, those elementary schools forming the best practices they had brought into their schools to achieve excellent results, one of the things that was definitely there, was physical health which was something that could not be ignored. They have recognized that energy and kids with healthy conditions learn better, and that is what that reflects. The committee saw that as a consistent variable as we looked at those best practice schools good health was there and that appears to have made a difference.

Chairman Coleman recognized Representative Amy Carter, 175<sup>th</sup>, she wanted to mention that she was not a foreign language teacher at a high school, but does respect it. She continued by saying she had struggled for years understanding why it is done at a certain level only. She went through Leadership Georgia and learned that the actual time to learn a foreign language is 8 to 13 years old. She commended him for putting a part-time foreign language teacher in the elementary school but she wanted to ask about the middle schools and high schools for foreign language. Alford responded by saying he did not have those recommendations. It would not surprise us if that did come forward.

Chairman Coleman recognized Representative "Coach" Williams, 89<sup>th</sup>, for questions. He directed his 2 questions to Alford and he wanted to follow-up on the health issue - the physical education teacher, being one himself. He wanted to know if that was one of the same or two people since he had a dash there (referring to his hand outs) - he wanted clarification. Alford responded that it was the same person. Representative Williams wanted clarification. Rep. Williams continued by asking the organization how the model would

**help larger schools like DeKalb County with 1,500 students. The organization said they will be making a cost curve from their research and from that curve they should be able to judge the larger systems.**

**Chairman Coleman recognized Representative Kaiser, 59<sup>th</sup>, to speak and directed comments to Alford and he responded.**

**Chairman Coleman recognized Representative Fran Millar, 79<sup>th</sup>, and she asked if there would be something to put all this data together with the ways of funding the ideas ascertained from the study. The organization stated that they will be around to help with the framework of fixing educational issues but would encourage others to work toward a solution. The organization encouraged the legislature to have a new outlook and a clean way of working through education shortfalls in the hopes of clearing the way for new programs and initiatives.**

**Chairman Coleman recognized Representative Maxwell, 17<sup>th</sup>, to speak and he directed a question to Alford asking if they would be doing a Best Practice Model for county systems and county offices. Alford responded to his question.**

**Representative Freddie Powell Sims, 151<sup>st</sup>, and Representative Mark Williams, 178<sup>th</sup>, were recognized and spoke briefly.**

**Chairman Coleman addressed Dean Alford by asking him to please introduce all members of his committee and he introduced them as follows:**

**Mr. David Fields with Savannah/Chatham County Public Schools**

**Ms. Holly Robinson with the Georgia Public Policy Foundation**

**Ms. Wanda Barnes with Education**

**Ms. Sandra Neil, Retired Superintendent**

**Mr. Ed Callier, working with IBM Cost Model as a Consultant**

**Mr. Steve Owen, serves on Partnership for Excellence in Education**

**State Superintendent of Schools, Kathy Cox**

**Representative Dixon, appointed by the Governor**

**Senator Dan Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>**

**At this time Chairman Coleman turned the meeting over to Senator Dan Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, Chairman of the Senate Education Committee. He thanked them for an excellent presentation**



**and thanked the Task Force members for being at the meeting.**

**Chairman Coleman addressed the audience and committee members and stated what a good meeting it was. Senator Weber announced that he wanted to put out an invitation to the Task Force members regarding legislation he and the Lt. Governor had been working on. This legislation is in regards to the Charter System.**

**With no further business, Chairman Coleman adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**/s/ Senator Don Thomas, Secretary**

**/s/ Barbara Landrum, Recording Secretary**

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMITTEE**

**JANUARY 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

**A meeting of the Senate Education and Youth committee was held on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in Room 307 CLOB. Chairman Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Members present included Senators Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, Chairman, Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Vice Chairman, Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Secretary, Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>.**

**Chairman Weber announced the first order of business was an organizational matter to vote on the Rules that govern the committee since it is the first Senate Education and Youth Committee meeting for the 2007 legislative session.**

**The Roll was noted and recorded.**

**At this time Chairman Weber asked that the committee members look at their folders and refer to last years rules and asked for a motion on the rules. Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, moved to adopt the Rules as printed, the motion was seconded by Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, and the Rules were adopted. At this time Balfour was recognized and he wanted to know the number of members on the committee. Chairman Weber responded by stating there are 10 members. Balfour commented that quorum was usually a majority which would be 6 not 5. He continued by saying the Rules had been adopted and he would like to make a motion based on rule number six that says we can amend the Rules by two-thirds of a vote. He asked that they amend the Rules which would require two-thirds of the vote, change the quorum from 5 to 6 which he thought technically was the correct number. Chairman Weber asked for a motion. Balfour made the motion, Douglas seconded and the Rules were adopted and amended. The vote was unanimous.**

**Chairman Weber announced to the committee that Senator Moody had arrived and joined the committee and at this time he introduced the members of the committee. In particular he wanted to recognize Senator Moody, since as most who are familiar with this committee know, he chaired this committee last year and had done an outstanding job. Chairman Weber felt that it was an honor to be following in Senator Moody's footsteps.**

**Senator Dan Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and apologized for being late.**

**Next, Chairman Weber introduced the Vice Chairman of the committee, Senator Joseph Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Secretary of the Committee, Senator Don Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, and after that the Chairman asked that the members introduce themselves.**

**At this time Chairman Weber recognized his staff and moved on to the next point of business.**

**The following bills were considered:**

**[SB 10 \(Johnson, 1<sup>st</sup>\): Relating to elementary and secondary education; to enact the "Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Act"](#)**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Eric Johnson, 1<sup>st</sup>, to speak to the bill.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Holly Robinson and asked if she was prepared to speak on SB 10. Holly Robinson with the Georgia Public Policy Foundation spoke to the bill.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Dr. Adam White, Superintendent from Butts County Schools to speak.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, for a question regarding inclusion and directed his questions to Dr. Adam White.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, to speak to the bill. Dr. White responded to the questions.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, to speak.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Regina Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, to speak.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, to speak and he directed his question to Holly Robinson. His question was regarding Public Policy Foundation and he asked if they supported vouchers generally. Ms. Robinson replied that it would depend on the program.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Ashley Widener, a parent who supports this legislation.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Sally Fitzgerald with the Georgia PTA to speak.**

**Chairman Weber asked if there were any questions for Ms. Fitzgerald and there were none.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Kathy Everett, Special Education Teacher/parent to speak.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Regina Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, for a question and she directed her question to Kathy Everett. Ms. Everett responded to the question.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Mr. Randy Grayson with Autism Society America/parent to speak. He addressed the committee by saying he was here as a board member representative of the Autism Society of America-the Greater Georgia Chapter and also a parent of a 5-year-old girl with autism in the Fulton County schools.**

**Senator Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and he directed a comment to Mr. Grayson. Mr. Grayson responded. Chairman Weber addressed Mr. Grayson and asked if he would be willing to put in writing his recommendations and he responded yes.**

**Questions were put forth by Senators Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Regina Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Weber addressed the committee regarding testimony material.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Jamie Self with the Georgia Family Council to speak. Senator Fort was recognized for a question directed to Jamie Self and she responded.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Diane Starkovich with the Archdiocese of Atlanta to speak. She addressed the committee. Senator Tate was recognized and directed a question to Ms. Starkovich and she responded.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Don Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, who directed comments to Ms. Starkovich and she responded.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>. He directed a question to Ms. Starkovich. She responded.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Don Rooks with GSBA (Georgia School Boards Association) to speak.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>. He directed comments to Mr. Rooks.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Debbie Gay, Executive Director of Special Services of DeKalb County.**

**Senator Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and directed a question to Ms. Gay.**

**Chairman Weber addressed the committee by asking if there were any more questions and Senator Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, was recognized for a question directed to Ms. Everett. Ms. Everett responded.**

**With no further questions from the committee, Chairman Weber asked Senator Johnson, 1<sup>st</sup>, to return and address any of the concerns presented by the presenters.**

**Senator Johnson, 1<sup>st</sup>, addressed the committee.**

**Senator Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, also addressed the committee.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, for a question directed to Senator Johnson, 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, to speak and he referred to Ms. Gay who indicated that this bill would result in segregation if the bill was implemented and becomes Georgia law. He asked that Senator Johnson, 1<sup>st</sup>, address this. Senator Johnson responded. Senator Douglas asked a follow-up question which was responded to by Johnson, 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Regina Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, to speak.**

**Senator Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, was recognized.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>, for a question.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Don Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, to speak briefly to the committee.**

**Chairman Weber, at this point thanked Senator Eric Johnson, 1<sup>st</sup>, for coming back for final remarks.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Dan Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, to speak.**

**With no further questions or discussion, Chairman Weber addressed the committee. He encouraged everyone present to submit written suggestions as to specific changes they would like to see in the legislation and why, which would then be taken into consideration.**

**Chairman Weber, at this time opened up the floor of the committee to entertain a motion. Senator Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, made a motion and was seconded by Senator Dan Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, to DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE [SB 10](#).**

**Chairman Weber asked for a show of hands for those in opposition of the bill. Those opposed were: Senator Ronald Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>, Senator Regina Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Senator Horacena Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, and Senator Vincent Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>. Those in favor of the bill were: Senator Dan Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, Senator Joseph Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Senator Don Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Senator Don Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, Senator John Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Senator Dan Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>.**

**SB 10 passed out of committee by a vote of 6 in favor of and 4 against, with the majority vote met. SB 10 therefore DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE.**

**SB 10 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE**

**Chairman Weber announced to the committee that SB-39 will be taken up at our next meeting with a full hearing, but asked that the committee stay as there will be a brief presentation to introduce that legislation. Of the long list of people who signed up today, there are three individuals signed up to speak on [SB 39](#); Angela Palm with GSBA, Jocelyn Whitfield, GAE, and Margaret Price Ciccarelli with PAGE. He asked that they come back to our next scheduled meeting.**

**SB 39 HELD OVER**

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**/s/ Senator Don Thomas, Secretary**

**/s/ Barbara Landrum, Recording Secretary**

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMITTEE**

**January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

A meeting of the Senate Education and Youth Committee was held on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in Room 310 CLOB. Chairman Weber called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Members present included Senators Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>.

Late Arrival: Senator Vincent Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, arrived at 3:10 p.m.

Chairman Weber called the meeting to order and asked the Secretary of the Senate Education and Youth Committee, Senator Don Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, to call the roll.

The following bills were considered:

**[SB 39](#) (Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>) Relating to the Charter Systems Act**

Chairman Weber proceeded with a presentation and asked Vice Chairman Carter to act as Chair while he did his presentation.

Senator Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, author of SB 39 started by presenting **[SB 39](#)** which is the Charter Systems Act. He presented two slides to the committee. He felt the Charter Systems Act would be the first step in making some real change in Education in Georgia. He shared the Lt. Governor's vision and passion for what they are trying to accomplish. This bill is about local control of the schools, local control in a true sense of the word. The bill focuses on a high degree of flexibility for the school systems and each of the schools in that system to become a charter school system. In exchange for flexibility of the school system we will enter into a charter with the state, the State Board in particular, for greater needs in performance standards. Accountability of integration is also a key focus of the bill. It authorizes the state and local boards to enter into a partnership and the petitions that would be allowed into this legislation would be limited to 5 in the first year, which means the Board of Education will petition to the State Board for a charter status and the school in that system will then become



a charter school. The idea is to empower teachers, parents and principals at the local school level to make decisions at the local school level. He continued to explain and go over the charts with the committee.

Senator Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, addressed the Chairman by saying he would take any questions.

Senator Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Acting Chairman, recognized Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>. She had a question but stated she would like to delay her question for now.

Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and he asked about personnel decisions and the fair dismissal process. Weber, 40<sup>th</sup> responded to his question. Fort, 39<sup>th</sup> continued by saying another issue he was concerned about was class size. Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, responded by saying as a general observation he thought they should be careful. The concept was to provide flexibility.

Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and he followed up on Senator Fort's questions regarding class size. Weber, 40<sup>th</sup> responded to his questions and clarified that they would have governing councils at the local school level that would self-regulate class size.

Chairman Weber was recognized to speak; he suspects there is a good possibility next year at this time they will need to take another look at this legislation based on the experience at that time with the Charter Advisory Committee. There are a number of local boards who are ready and very interested in this and have indicated they would like to petition for charter status.

Chairman Weber began presiding over the committee at this time and recognized Superintendent Kathy Cox and Stewart Bennett. Also present was Representative Coleman, Chairman of the House Education Committee.

Chairman Weber announced that the committee would hear from several young people whose lives have been directly affected by charter schools today and Ms. Irene Munn from the Office of Lt. Governor would help coordinate the presentation. At this time Irene Munn spoke by saying on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Casey Cagle, thank you all for letting them be here today and allowing them to present this legislation. You are going to hear from a lot of different people today, from the

**Superintendent of Education, to a Superintendent of a Local Board of Education, down to a principal. She introduced four students. Tina Kirkland, an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at Kippways Academy in Atlanta, a Charter School that was opened in 2003. Michael Jones, a 10<sup>th</sup> grader at Tech High, a Charter School started in 2004 and is now Atlanta's top performing academic high school. Mary King Tatum, a graduate of Central Educational Center (CEC) in Newnan, Georgia. Mary King is now a graduate of CEC and is a freshman at Georgia State working on a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. We also have Christina Dodd, graduate of CEC who is now a junior at Georgia State University working on a degree in Interior Design. She asked them to take a few minutes to talk to the committee about what Charter Schools mean to them and how Charter Schools have allowed them to reach their educational goals. They all spoke on their experiences with Charter Schools and all felt they would not be where they are today if not for Charter Schools.**

**At this time Irene Munn introduced David Jernigan, founding Principal of Kippways Academy, who wanted to take a few minutes to talk about this legislation and asked the committee to support the legislation.**

**Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and directed a question to Jernigan and he responded. Senator Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, was recognized and directed comments/questions to Jernigan.**

**With no further questions, Irene Munn introduced Kathy Cox, Superintendent of Schools and John Ahman, member of the Decatur City Schools' Board of Education, and William Schofield, Superintendent, Hall County Schools.**

**Superintendent of Schools, Kathy Cox speaks on the reasons they are in full support of both pieces of legislation ([SB 68](#) and [SB 39](#)).**

**Chairman Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, recognized John Ahman to speak. He stated that he was one out of five elected board members of the City Schools of Decatur. He spoke in full support of this legislation.**

**Chairman Weber recognized William Schofield, Superintendent of Hall County Schools to speak. He, too, spoke in favor of the legislation.**

**Chairman Weber recognized committee members Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, for questions directed to Superintendent Kathy Cox and she responded to them.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Ron Jackson, Director of Technical and Adult Education and he spoke in favor of the legislation.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Mark Whitlock, CEO, Central Education Center in Newnan and he spoke in favor of the legislation.**

**Superintendent Kathy Cox and Ron Jackson each spoke briefly.**

**Senator Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>, was recognized for a question and Chairman Weber responded.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Angela Palm with the Georgia School Boards Association to speak and she spoke in favor of the legislation.**

**Judy Grogan with the Georgia Association of Educators was recognized and she spoke in favor of the legislation.**

**Margaret Price with PAGE was recognized and she spoke in favor of the legislation.**

**Jim Jess, former Governor Board Member, was recognized and he passed out literature in support of SB 39.**

**There was a 5 minute break and the meeting reconvened.**

**Chairman Weber entertained a motion for the Committee Substitute to SB 39. Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, moved and Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, seconded the motion to DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE SB 39. Those opposing were Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, and Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>. The majority vote carried.**

**[SB 39 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE](#)**

**[SB 68 \(Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>\) Relating to Technical and Adult Education; to provide for the disbursement of funds by the State Board of Technical and Adult Education for career academies established as charter schools.](#)**

**Chairman Weber informed the committee that since we have heard all testimony and questions on SB 68 we are ready for a motion. Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, moved and Carter 13<sup>th</sup>, seconded the motion to DO PASS SB 68 with Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup> and Fort, 39<sup>th</sup> opposing. The majority vote carried.**

**SB 68 DO PASS**

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**/s/ Senator Don Thomas, Secretary**

**/s/ Barbara Landrum, Recording Secretary**

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMITTEE**

**February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

The Senate Education and Youth Committee meeting was held on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2007, in Room 307 CLOB. The meeting was called to order at 2:14 p.m. by Senator Don Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Secretary. Senator Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, will be the Acting Chairman for this meeting. Members present included Senators Don Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Joseph Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Vice-Chairman, Don Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, John Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Vincent Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Dan Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, Horacena Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>.

The following bills were considered:

**SB 72 (Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>): Relating to organization of schools under the “Quality Basic Education Act”**

At this time, Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, announced to the committee that the first order of business would be to take up the substitute to SB 72 by Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Thomas recognized the author of the bill, Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>, to speak to the bill.

Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>, spoke to the bill. He explained that this bill is brought about by conversations with the School Superintendent, Kathy Cox and her visiting with some schools in Great Britain whereby they have as a model of a school, a business manager that runs the day-to-day operations of the schools. Their local schools have a little more autonomy. The idea behind the bill was to give the school board the right to hire in place of an Assistant Principal, a Business Manager. The hope is that it will free up the Principal to actually be more involved in the instruction of the courses. He explained that he had a substitute before the committee and two amendments; one is to correct a typographical error and on line 15 page 2 Superintendent is misspelled. In conversation with GAE they asked that we put some sort of qualifications on the school business manager and they also asked that we add on line 12 after determined by the local board with a minimum requirement of a bachelor’s degree and he was agreeable to that. He continued by saying he felt that most boards would be interested in someone having a business degree or accounting degree or some experience in the

business world and he was happy to put that in as a requirement. If you consider the bill as a do pass it would be by substitute. He realized there was no quorum at this time. Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, announced that the bill would be heard and a vote would be taken when quorum was met.

Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, asked if anyone from the audience wished to speak – there were no questions from the audience, but Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, recognized Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, who directed a question to the author of the bill, Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>. Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>, responded.

Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, recognized Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, to speak. The comments she received from her local school board have to do with a business manager and assistant principals. Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>, responded.

Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, for a question directed to Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, recognized Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, for comment. In our educational administration she did not want one to think that they are not trained in a particular field.

Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, asked if there were any further questions. There being none and now having a quorum, he asked for a motion. Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, moved on the bill and was seconded by Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, to do pass by substitute. Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, wanted on record that he voted in favor of this bill. The vote was unanimous.

**SB 72 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE**

**SB 9 (Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>): Grade Integrity Act; provide ethical violation; statutory construction**

Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, recognized Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>, to speak to the bill. Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>, addressed the committee by saying this would be a substitute to SB 9. This bill passed out of this committee and managed to pass out of the Senate unanimously and actually out of the House unanimously with a couple of changes and once it got in Conference Committee last year the House saw fit to add Hope Scholarship language. It is basically the same bill that was voted on last year and simply states that a teacher cannot be required, coerced,

intimidated or disciplined into changing a student's grade. If a local school administrator wants to change a grade they may do so, it is just that they have to know that they are in fact the person who has changed it. He continued by saying the reason he had offered a substitute was it was part of an agreement that GAE and the PAGE Association wanted to add on Page 1 line 18 – however this subsection shall not apply when a teacher has failed to comply with the policy of rules adopted by the local Board of Education. Where the written procedures are established by an individual school they are applicable to the teacher or the grade in process.

Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, recognized Jocelyn Whitfield with GAE to speak to the bill. She asked for favorable consideration of the bill.

Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, recognized Margaret Price with PAGE to speak. She addressed the committee by saying they also support the bill and thanked the committee for bringing it forward. They totally support it and asked for favorable passage of the bill.

Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, recognized Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Vice-Chairman of the Committee to speak. He directed his question to Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>. He had concerns regarding the additional language. Ms. Whitfield was recognized to comment. She began by saying she understood his concerns. It was also a concern of theirs too because it does speak to the rule pertaining to the teacher or the grading process and that is where there could be the possibility of being coerced and forced if they are in violation of policy that applies to the teacher. Discussion on changes to the substitute followed. Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>, moved on the amendment to the substitute and Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, seconded it and the amendment to the substitute passed unanimously. Motion made on the Substitute to SB 9 was made by Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, and seconded by Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, to DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE. Chairman Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, asked for a show of hands and the vote was unanimous to DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE.

**SB 9 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE**

**There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:31 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**/s/ Senator Don Thomas, Secretary**

**/s/ Barbara Landrum, Recording Secretary**



**Minutes of the  
Senate Education and Youth Committee**

**February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007**

A meeting of the Senate Education and Youth Committee was held on February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in Room 310 CLOB. Chairman Weber called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Members present included Senators Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>.

The following bills were considered:

**SB 123 (Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>): Relating to local boards of education, to require that twins or other multiples are placed in the same classroom if the parent or guardian requests.**

Chairman Weber announced to the committee that Senator Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>, author of SB-123 had requested that his bill be removed from the agenda and be placed on the next scheduled meeting agenda.

**SB 123 HELD OVER**

**SB 122 (Hill, 32<sup>nd</sup>): Relating to annual performance evaluations, so as to require that the annual evaluation is signed by the evaluator and provided to the certificated person.**

Chairman Weber announced to the committee that SB 122 would be held over as the author of the bill was unable to present the bill today.

**SB 122 HELD OVER**

**SB 85 (Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>): Relating to other educational programs, so as to provide that home school students and private school students may participate in extracurricular activities of public schools.**

**Chairman Weber announced that this bill will be a hearing only today and no vote will be taken. It will be carried over to the next meeting.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Senator Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, author of SB 85 to speak to her bill and announced that a substitute to SB 85 has been handed out.**

**Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, began by explaining her substitute to SB 85. It will allow children who are home schooled to participate in extracurricular activities sponsored by the public schools the student would otherwise attend. There are approximately 36,400 home school students in Georgia. There are 1.1 million home school students nationally now and that seems to be growing. The Act is known as "Equal Access to Extracurricular Activities Act". The extracurricular activities include athletics, athletic teams, music, dance, art, drama and other fine arts in such areas as drawing and painting and individual and team competition. There are certain requirements; for instance, the bill will call upon a child who is home schooled to pay any activity fee equal to the fee public school students pay. The home school student shall also adhere to the same standards of behavior, responsibility, performance and conduct as any other participant. The home school child shall also adhere to the same academic standards as other participants. This can be confirmed by records or documentation provided by the student for verification on his part, saying that he/she is passing his/her core subjects. There is to be no discrimination against home school students and the activities. No public school team or group shall be hindered from competing against any other public or private team or group because the team utilizes or has students who are being home schooled. Learning should be tailored to each student; therefore, there are now 17 (seventeen) states with these joint usage laws. Our neighboring state of Florida has a very successful program, a joint usage program. Pennsylvania is the latest state to pass this kind of legislation. She shared with the committee some of the states who already have this into law: Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Vermont, Washington and Wyoming. All have passed this joint usage law.**

**Chairman Weber asked Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, to summarize what the differences are between the substitute and the original bill.**

Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, began by saying the change between the original and the substitute is that private schools have been removed from the bill on the second page. It means that paragraph C was removed and paragraph D is now paragraph C. It removed the entire paragraph on private schools.

Chairman Weber addressed the committee by saying that before proceeding with [SB 85](#), the author of [SB 122](#) is not going to be available to present his bill today and the committee will take it up at the next scheduled Education and Youth Committee meeting.

At this point Chairman Weber opened up for questions for Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Weber recognized Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>. He addressed his comments and questions to Schaefer by saying he wanted to address his questions to the language in the substitute. As he read line 21, it says a student who assumes a course of home school study may participate and I read that phrase to not create an opportunity for eligibility, but to create the right to participate and he wanted her to explain why it doesn't say – may be eligible to participate – as he felt there was a major distinction between those two things. Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, responded by saying she thought “may participate” is better because the child then would have to show the documentation that he is eligible. Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, responded again by saying that in addition as he looked at line 23, it talks about that he may participate at the school where he would otherwise attend if not pursuing the home study course. What about those situations, and they are many, where students attend out of county at no cost? Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, addressed his concern by saying she thought most children, most families know where the public school is where the child should be attending. Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, responded, so you are trying to limit this to the county where the child lives and she responded that was correct. Discussion continued between Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, and Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Weber recognized Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, to speak and he directed his questions to Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>. In many instances there are funds used to finance athletic operations of high schools that are not local money or state money. Schaefer responded by saying many home school parents participate in booster clubs, etc. They support the local teams. Schaefer continued by saying every home school student would have to verify his/her grades and especially core subjects before

participating in any extracurricular activities. Discussion continued between Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, and Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Weber recognized Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, for a question directed to Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>. She directed attention to page 2 line 5 – No public school shall discriminate against a student in a selection of teams. Schaefer responded by saying it just meant that if a child was participating in athletics in a school that the school would not discriminate against the home school student that wants to play. Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, continued with a follow-up question by saying if a student being home schooled decided they wanted to go to and play athletics with a school outside their district, would that have any relevance at all? Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, responded by saying they would not be able to do that.

Chairman Weber recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, to speak. He stated in all fairness he felt she had reiterated that the parents of home schooled children still pay school taxes. He continued with questions and Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, responded. Lastly, Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, offered a recommendation on wording in the bill and Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, agreed to his recommendation.

Chairman Weber recognized Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, for questions directed to Schaefer. He had to assume that she believed that the coach could cut someone from the team. He had trouble with the wording in one part of the bill, but he understood what she was saying. He continued that he had concerns with the eligibility part.

Chairman Weber recognized Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, who had concerns with eligibility.

At this time, the meeting was turned over to Senator Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, to act as Chairman as Chairman Weber had to leave for another committee meeting.

Chairman Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, recognized Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, to speak. She had a concern regarding how a coach could discipline a home school student but wanted to defer and wait to hear from some of the audience because with the Georgia High School Athletic Association, there is a rule that if you transfer to another public school you can't play sports for that school. She wanted to know how that would affect the rules that they have on this.

**Chairman Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, who wanted to discuss eligibility again and referred a question to Schaefer and she responded.**

**Chairman Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, recognized Ralph Swearndin with the Georgia High School Association to speak and he spoke in opposition of the bill.**

**Senator Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, was recognized to speak. He asked if he could talk about some of the opportunities that some of the home school children would have.**

**Chairman Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, recognized Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, with follow-up and some clarification.**

**Chairman Carter recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, who directed a question to Swearngin and he responded.**

**Discussion continued with recognition for questions from Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, and Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, directing comments to Swearngin and he responded.**

**Chairman Carter recognized Don Rooks with the Georgia School Board Association to speak. His organization opposes the bill.**

**Chairman Carter recognized Jocelyn Whitfield with GAE to speak and she had a question regarding the language of the bill, but was in support of the bill.**

**Chairman Carter recognized Judy Teasley with PAGE and also a classroom teacher to speak in opposition of the bill.**

**Chairman Carter recognized Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, and Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, for comments.**

**Jim Puckett with GAEL was recognized and his organization was in opposition of the bill.**

**Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, was recognized to make closing comments.**

**[SB 85 NO ACTION TAKEN](#)**

**With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:19 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**/s/ Senator Don Thomas, Secretary**

**/s/ Barbara Landrum, Recording Secretary**

**Minutes of the  
Senate Education and Youth Committee**

**February 27, 2007**

A meeting of the Senate Education and Youth committee was held on February 27, 2007 in Room 310 CLOB. Chairman Weber called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Members present included Senators Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>.

With all members present, Chairman Weber called the meeting to order and announced to the committee that [SB 85](#), authored by Senator Nancy Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, would be removed from the agenda since Senator Schaefer has come down with an illness.

The following bills were considered:

**[SB 168](#) (Smith, 52<sup>nd</sup>): Relating to educational programs under the “Quality Basic Education Act”; to enact the “Deaf Child’s Bill of Rights Act”**

Smith, 52<sup>nd</sup>, presented his bill to the committee. Cave Spring, which is in his District, is one of Georgia’s two schools for the deaf. One is in the Atlanta Area and one is in Cave Spring.

Senator Smith, 52<sup>nd</sup>, was joined by Kimberly McGuinness and her daughter Julia, who is a student at the Georgia School for the Deaf in Cave Spring. Kimberly came to Senator Smith, 52<sup>nd</sup>, late last year and brought with her a very well prepared copy of information that she had worked on a long time, laying out information about Georgia’s law concerning deaf and hearing impaired children and things that we could do to improve that. As if she were appearing before the committee already, she anticipated questions he would ask and she answered them with material that she gave him including information about how other states have dealt with the subject. The purpose of SB 168 is to create a Deaf Child Bill of Rights Act.

Senator Smith, 52<sup>nd</sup>, asked, with the Chairman’s permission, to have Ms. McGuinness address the committee.

Ms. McGuinness addressed the committee by saying one of the important things she wanted to say is that she was here to represent all the deaf and impaired children in the State of Georgia not just her own. She could not articulate enough how important this bill is for the children of our state. She continued by saying what an improvement her child has made since moving here from Florida.

Chairman Weber opened up the committee for questions for Senator Smith, 52<sup>nd</sup>. Chairman Weber recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, for a question directed to Ms. McGuinness and she responded.

With no more questions, Chairman Weber asked if any who had signed up were in opposition to the bill – There were none.

A motion was entertained by Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, and it was seconded by Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, to DO PASS SB-168. Vote was unanimous.

#### **SB 168 DO PASS**

**SB 170 (Smith, 52<sup>nd</sup>): Relating to educational programs under the “Quality Basic Education Act,” so as to provide that American Sign Language can be used to fulfill the foreign language requirements for a college preparatory diploma for any student.**

Chairman Weber recognized Smith, 52<sup>nd</sup> to present his bill, SB 170, before the committee.

**SB 170** is something of a companion bill. It could have been rolled into **SB 168** but he felt it represented a different subject matter. The bill will allow American Sign Language to be accepted as a foreign language credit towards a college preparatory diploma for any student. Currently, only deaf students and hearing-impaired students who have permission and have identified hearing loss, that affects their ability to learn another foreign language, are allowed to use American Sign Language in a limited way as a substitute for a foreign language. He continued to explain the reasons for introducing SB 170. He also wanted the committee to know he received a great deal of help on both of these bills from Senators Butler, 55<sup>th</sup>, Seay, 34<sup>th</sup>, and Reed, 35<sup>th</sup>. He announced to committee that he had two (2) suggested changes to the bill. He did not



realize that Senator Regina Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, had worked on this as well and also had a strong interest in helping in this. He and Senator Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, worked together and she has a section of her bill, SB 206, which basically says that the General Assembly finds that American Sign Language is a fully developed autonomous natural language with distinct grammar, syntax, and symbols. It is one of hundreds of sign languages of the world. American Sign Language is one of the most commonly used languages in the United States and Canada. The American Sign Language is recognized as the official state language of the deaf community in Georgia. That was a part of [SB 206](#) and Senator Smith, 52<sup>nd</sup>, was willing to incorporate that section into SB 170.

Chairman Weber addressed Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, by asking if she would like to share some comments with the committee as she has a similar bill. She felt that the sponsor of SB 168 and SB 170 had done an excellent job in explaining his two bills and SB 206 was a result of Christopher Merritt with American Sign Language emailing her. That was before she knew about SB 170. When he reviewed both bills, he had asked could we incorporate Section 2 of SB 206 into SB 170 and it would give them exactly what they would like to have. She thanked the sponsor for his willingness to do that because they all want the same thing.

Chairman Weber recognized Rose Crews to speak and she spoke in favor of SB 170. She was a Cobb County school teacher who uses American Sign Language and also a former Secretary of the Georgia American Sign Language Teacher Association. She spoke in favor of the bill. Chairman Weber recognized Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, for a question directed to Rose Crews and she responded to his question.

Chairman Weber consulted with Legislative Counsel, Betsy Howerton, for legal counsel on the language of the bill. He wanted to know what the best way to incorporate Section 2 of Senator Thomas' bill, SB-206, into Senator Smiths' bill, SB 170. Betsy Howerton gave her recommendations on incorporating the two bills.

Chairman Weber recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, for a question. His question was directed to Chairman Weber regarding the new language and Chairman Weber went over the changes.

Chairman Weber recognized Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, for comments. Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, made a motion and Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, seconded the motion to DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE SB 170. The vote was unanimous.

**SB 170 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE**

**SB 206 NO ACTION TAKEN**

(This bill was incorporated into SB 168)

**SB 123 (Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>): Relating to local boards of education, so as to require that twins or other multiples are placed in the same classroom if the parent or guardian requests**

Chairman Weber called on Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>, to speak to the bill. This bill will affect a lot of people and parents' concerns. This bill deals with parents who have twins or multiples. The bill is simply saying that a parent may in fact request that their twins or multiples remain in the same classroom, and that they may make this request at the beginning of school.

Chairman Weber asked if there were any questions and Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, was recognized to speak and directed a question to the author of the bill, Senator Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>. He responded to the question.

Chairman Weber called on Ms. Randy Bieniek with American Sign Language Teachers to speak. She spoke in support of the bill and introduced her children to the committee.

Chairman Weber recognized Nan Cooper, a parent, to speak. Ms. Cooper spoke in favor of the bill.

Chairman Weber recognized Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, to speak and Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, asked that he be recognized to speak and Chairman Weber responded to his question.

Chairman Weber asked the author of the bill, Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>, if he was suggesting that the other parents here are in support of SB 123 and do not wish to speak. He replied yes, as they do not want to lose a quorum.

Chairman Weber recognized Jim Puckett, with GAEL, who indicated opposition to the bill. He addressed the Chairman with one concern, which is the way that this bill is written precludes any reason for separation, including class size issues. There are circumstances in which twins may come to school to be enrolled and there is only one space in the classroom not two and this would put the principal in a situation of perhaps having to move a child who has already been there into another classroom so that those children could be placed together. He suggested, with the sponsor's approval, to include the term, "space available".

Chairman Weber addressed Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>, author of the bill, if this would be an amendment he would like to make. Rogers, 21<sup>st</sup>, replied he would like to leave that up to the wisdom of the committee.

Chairman Weber asked if there were any questions from the committee to be addressed to Mr. Puckett, and Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, was recognized for a question directed to Mr. Puckett.

Chairman Weber recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, and he directed a question to Mr. Puckett dealing with class size. He wanted to know that if we changed the bill the way he suggested it, would it not open a loophole in the bill that the school systems could use to say well I'm sorry but it will mess up our class size so we can't put them together. Puckett responded by saying he did not feel that it did. The State Department of Education requires that those class sizes be reported.

Chairman Weber recognized Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, to speak. He directed his comment to Chairman Weber by saying they should act on this bill or they will lose a quorum.

Chairman Weber entertained a motion and Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, made a motion and Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, seconded the motion to DO PASS SB 123. Vote was unanimous.

**[SB 123 DO PASS](#)**

**With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**/s/ Senator Don Thomas, Secretary**

**/s/ Barbara Landrum, Recording Secretary**

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMITTEE**

**March 14, 2007**

A meeting of the Senate Education and Youth Committee was held on March 14, 2007 in Room 307 CLOB. Chairman Weber called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Members present included Senators Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, Douglas 17<sup>th</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Moody 56<sup>th</sup>, Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The following bills were considered:

Chairman Weber announced to the committee that there had been a late arriving substitute for SB 85 which would take the place of the prior sub which Schaefer had offered and is now available if anyone was interested in picking up a copy.

**SB 85 (Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>): Relating to other educational programs, so as to provide that home school students and private school students may participate in extracurricular activities of public schools.**

Chairman Weber announced to the committee that there were three (3) parents joining the committee today who would like to speak to SB 85. Chairman Weber asked that Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, come up and explain to the committee what is different about her committee substitute.

Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, author of SB 85 spoke to her bill. The substitute to SB-85, the correct number that you should have on your bill is LC 28 3628S. It has one small change and that is the change made in a hearing at a previous meeting.

Chairman Weber asked that in the interest of time he would like to move forward as we have already had a hearing on the bill. Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, commented that most of the people here in this meeting were also present in the hearing and the bill simply says it will allow home school children to participate in extracurricular activities sponsored by the public schools which the student would attend if not being home schooled.

**Chairman Weber recognized Carol Robertson to speak and she stated she was in opposition to SB 85. As a home school mother, she chose to put her child in my care. She had the choice of having her in softball or symphony. Those may not be school related things, they may be home school activities, but that is the choice she made for her child.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, for comments. He began by directing his comment to Ms. Robertson.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Carolyn Cook, a home school mother who was in opposition to the bill. Her reasons for opposing SB 85 were that she felt it was unfair to our public servants who work in the schools, who do everything they can for the students to not place undue burden on them.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Mandi Bell, home school mother, and she spoke in opposition to SB 85.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, for a question. She directed her question to Ms. Bell by asking if there was a home school organization or association. She responded by saying there were tons of them. Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, continued by asking if she was a member of any of them? She replied that she was a member of one and there were a lot of co-ops where you could take classes outside of the home. They supplement the home schooling that we do at home.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Jim Puckett with GAEL and he stated his group opposed SB 85. He responded that everything they had to say about this bill was stated in the last session and with the Chairman's permission he would like for the committee to take a look at some of the comments made at the last hearing.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Mike Olson with HEIR (President of Home Education Information Resource) who spoke in opposition to SB 85.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, to speak to the bill. At this point there was discussion between Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, and Mr. Olson. Chairman asked Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, if she would like to share any other closing comments at this time. Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, addressed the committee.**

Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, began by saying that 17 other states have passed this legislation and it is working great in those other states.

Chairman Weber recognized Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, who addressed a question to Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>.

Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, moved that the substitute be amended to create a new committee substitute and Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, seconded. This was a unanimous vote.

Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, was recognized to speak and addressed his comment to Schaefer. She responded and added again that she feels this is a good bill and seeks a committee substitute.

With no more questions, Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, made a motion to do pass the committee substitute as amended. There was no second to the motion and as there was no vote, this bill was therefore tabled.

**SB 85 TABLED**

**SB 122 (Hill, 32<sup>nd</sup>): Relating to annual performance evaluations, so as to require that the annual evaluation is signed by the evaluator and provided to the certificated person.**

Chairman Weber recognized Hill, 32<sup>nd</sup>, to speak to his bill. This bill was brought to him by his local school board association and addresses an issue that is in current law and the current law is not specified. The teachers that go by the original evaluation performance sometimes are given an evaluation and nothing is put in the file or the file is not handed to them. The written evaluations are often a trigger to the mechanism for appealing evaluations and sometimes pay raises and this legislation would require that they receive a written evaluation by April 1<sup>st</sup>, so that they would have a chance to look at it and be able to comment on it as well. Hill, 32<sup>nd</sup>, addressed Chairman Weber by noting a change to his bill.

Chairman Weber recognized Jocelyn Whitfield with GAE to speak and she spoke in support of SB 122.

Chairman Weber recognized Margaret Price with the Professional Association of Educators (PAGE). Her organization also supports the bill.

Chairman Weber addressed the committee by saying Senator Hill, 32<sup>nd</sup>, suggested they do an amendment on line 12 to change a word. Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, made a motion and was seconded by Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Weber asked if any opposed, and Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, was recognized to speak. She had a question regarding language. Chairman Weber referred her question to Legal Counsel and they agreed to a change. They would not need to do a second amendment.

Chairman Weber entertained a motion for the substitute as amended. Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, moved by recommending the committee do pass the committee substitute as amended and was seconded by Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, to Do Pass by Substitute. Vote was unanimous.

**[SB 122 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE](#)**

**[SB 277 \(Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>\): Relating to juvenile proceedings, so as to prohibit universal mental health testing and psychiatric or socioemotional screening of juveniles; to provide that a local school system cannot use the refusal of a child's or student's parent, guardian, or custodian to consent to the administration of psychotropic medication or psychiatric or mental health screening, testing evaluation, or examination as grounds for prohibiting the child or student from attending classes or participating in school-related activities.](#)**

Chairman Weber addressed the committee by saying he was unaware there had been a study committee on this bill and had scheduled this today only for a hearing, but felt now that he would allow it to go for a vote today.

Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, was recognized to speak to her bill. She explained in 2006 she introduced [SB 430](#), which required that no mental health screening be given to children in schools in Georgia without prior written parental consent. Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, asked at this time to have Sue Ella Deadwyler come forward and speak to the bill. She began by talking about mental screening.



**Chairman Weber recognized Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, for a question directed to Sue Ella and she responded to his question. Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, then directed a question to Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, and she responded.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Albert Murray, Commissioner of Juvenile Justice to speak and he spoke in opposition to the bill.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Rick Harrison, Director of the Department of Behavioral Health to speak and he spoke in opposition to the bill.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Amy Howell, Director of Community Services, and she spoke in opposition to the bill.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, to speak and he asked if they had any suggestions on the bill. Albert Murray addressed Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, to satisfy his question. Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and directed a question to Albert Murray who responded.**

**At this time there was a brief recess due to the Appropriations Committee meeting. After Appropriations met, the meeting resumed.**

**Chairman Weber announced to the committee that there was a quorum and the meeting would continue. (Reconvened at 3:32 p.m.) Now that we have a quorum of six: Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, and Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, Chairman, the meeting continued.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Jocelyn Whitfield with GAE to speak to the bill.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, to speak and he directed his question to Whitfield and she responded.**

**Schaefer, 50<sup>th</sup>, spoke on comments from Whitfield and she went over the changes she could make in the language of the bill.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Alan White with GSSA to speak and he spoke in opposition to the bill.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Margaret Price with PAGE to speak and she spoke in opposition to the bill.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Dr. Robert Schmidt with the Citizens Commission on Mental Rights (CCHR) to speak and he spoke in favor of SB 277.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, to speak and he made a motion to table the bill and Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, seconded the motion to Table SB 277.**

**[SB 277 TABLED](#)**

**[SB 257 \(Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>\): Relating to school attendance in elementary and secondary education, so as to enact the "Dropout Deterrent Act."](#)**

**Chairman Weber recognized Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, to speak to his bill. He spoke briefly to his bill and Chairman Weber announced to the committee that SB 257 was to have a hearing only and therefore, no vote would be taken on SB 257.**

**[SB 257 HEARING ONLY](#)**

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**/s/ Senator Don Thomas, Secretary**

**/s/ Barbara Landrum, Recording Secretary**

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMITTEE**

**April 10, 2007**

A meeting of the Senate Education and Youth committee was held on April 10, 2007 in Room 307 of the Coverdale Legislative Office Building. Chairman Weber called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. (regular scheduled time was 3:00 p.m.) This occurred due to late adjournment of the Senate. Members present included Senators Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>.

Roll Call was noted and checked by the Recording Secretary, Barbara Landrum.

The following bills were considered:

**HB 375 (Collins, 27<sup>th</sup>): Pages of the General Assembly shall be credited as present by the school in which enrolled.**

This bill requires that children who serve as pages of the General Assembly be credit as present by their school of enrollment in the same manner as an educational field trip. Furthermore, such participation as a page must not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused.

Chairman Weber recognized Representative Doug Collins, 27<sup>th</sup> to speak to his bill. This bill strikes the language that says granted excused absences and replaces and says shall be credited as present by the school in which is enrolled in the same manner as an educational field trip, and such participation as a page shall not be counted as an absence, either excused or unexcused.

Chairman Weber asked if any members of the committee had any questions.

Chairman Weber recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, for comments to the committee.

Chairman Weber recognized Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, for comment.

At this time Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, moved to do pass and was seconded by Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, to DO PASS. Vote was unanimous.

**HB 375 DO PASS**

**HB 208 (Jones, 46<sup>th</sup>): Relating to operation of school councils, so as to provide that the parent members make up a majority on the school council.**

This legislation provides that a majority of the members of a school council must be composed of parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school with at least two of such parents/guardians being businesspersons. The chairperson of the school council must be a parent member. In addition, other businesspersons from the local business community may serve on the school council and must be selected by other members of the council.

Current law provides that a school council include at least two parents or guardians and two businesspersons. In addition, current law states that if the number of members of the council exceeds seven, the number of parent members must be equal to the number of teacher members.

Chairman Weber announced to the committee that there were two versions of HB 208. The first version is LC 33 1938S which is the version that passed out of the House and then there is another committee substitute that has been prepared, LC 33 2084S and this committee substitute contains substantial additions. One addition deals with a bill that the majority leader had and the Senate had passed and is now in the House Rules Committee and the other provision deals with **SB 39** which passed in the Senate and is the Charter Systems Act. He has three (3) people who will present this.

Chairman Weber recognized Representative Jones, 46<sup>th</sup>, to speak to her portion of **HB 208**. Chairman Weber announced to the committee that Senator Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>, could not be at the meeting so he has asked Josh Willis to speak to his portion.

At this time Representative Jones, 46<sup>th</sup>, spoke to her bill. HB 208 changes the makeup of the local school council. She continued to explain to the committee the changes she made in the current law.

**Chairman Weber asked if there were any questions from the committee and also explained to the committee that they were dealing with a committee substitute of Section one (1) and Representative Jones, 46<sup>th</sup>, was recognized by saying yes and Section one (1) – two (2) by Senator Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Josh Willis to speak on behalf of Senator Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>, Senate Majority Leader. Chairman Weber asked that Willis explain the language and he responded.**

**For Senator Williams, 19<sup>th</sup>, Willis stated that page 4 (four), Part 1 (one), line 10 is the same substance of language as SB 72 which passed unanimously out of this committee, and added if there were any questions on the language he would be happy to address them. Chairman Weber asked that he explain a little more. Willis responded by saying the language in effect allows for a Board of Education from the local school district to have 7 (seven) assistant principals to hire school managers. Some school districts have a far greater need for people that have business skills more so than educational skills. His belief is that the rationale is based on the English system which basically puts the principal of the school as the principal educator. They have people that work for them that can handle the administrative end. The bill requires a bachelors' degree and that person reports directly to the principal which keeps them in line with current code and ultimately allows the principal to do what they do best, which is educating the children, and allow the school manager to do what they do best, which is manage.**

**Chairman Weber asked if there were any questions from the committee and recognized Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, to speak. Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, directed a question to Willis by asking if he said this was exactly how we passed [SB 72](#), no changes? Willis responded by saying yes.**

**Chairman Weber spoke briefly to the last part of the bill which is the SB 39 version, the Charter Systems Act, which previously passed this committee in the Senate and then passed the House Rules Committee. This is the language that the House Education Committee, the Lt. Governor's Office and I agreed to. There were some changes made. He stated that Irene Munn, from the Lt. Governor's Office, could answer any questions about what changes have been made since it passed out of the Senate.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, to speak and he asked if this was as it passed out of the Senate and Chairman Weber responded by saying that it was as passed out of the House Education Committee with agreement in the Lt. Governor's Office and all other organizations.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, for a question. He addressed the Chairman by asking if the House Education Committee did this substitute bill and Chairman Weber replied yes, they created some amendments to the Senate version and added a committee substitute. The language you have before you is the House Committee substitute.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, to speak and she asked Chairman Weber to go through the changes addressed in the House substitute.**

**At this point Irene Munn, from the Lt. Governor's Office is recognized and she continued to explain the changes in the bill.**

**Chairman Weber explained that the basic thrusts of the bill remain the same, which is to try and maximize school level governments.**

**Chairman Weber recognized Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>, to speak and he asked if this version will continue to waive Title 20 provisions for educators and Chairman Weber replied that it does.**

**Chairman Weber asked if there were any further questions and there were none. Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, entertained a motion and Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, seconded the motion to DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE. Chairman Weber asked for a show of hands. Opposed were Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>, and Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>. The vote being 5 YEAS and 3 NAYS, and having met the majority vote, HB 208 was a DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE.**

**[HB 208 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE](#)**

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**/s/ Senator Don Thomas, Secretary**

**/s/ Barbara Landrum, Recording Secretary**

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE EDUCATION AND YOUTH COMMITTEE**

**April 12, 2007**

A meeting of the Senate Education and Youth Committee was held on April 12, 2007 in Room 310 Coverdell Legislative Office Building. Chairman Weber called upon Senator Joseph Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, the Vice Chairman of the Committee to Chair the meeting as he had a very important piece of legislation in another meeting at this time. Vice-Chairman Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. Members present included Senators Carter, 13<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>.

Vice Chair Carter called on Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, to open the meeting with prayer.

Roll call was noted and checked by the Recording Secretary, Barbara Landrum.

The following bills were discussed:

**[SR 487](#)** (Wiles, 37<sup>th</sup>): **Creating the Senate Study Committee on the Teacher Complaint/Grievance Procedure.**

Vice Chair Carter called on Wiles, 37<sup>th</sup>, to speak to his bill. He begins by saying this Resolution is a result of his work last year with the teachers in Georgia trying to find a way to resolve the Teacher Complaint/Grievance Procedure as they would like to study it more and talk about it.

Vice Chair Carter asked if there were any questions from the committee and Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, was recognized to speak.

Vice Chair Carter asked if there were any questions from the committee and there were none. He recognized Jody Grogan with GAE to speak and he spoke in support of the bill. Jody Grogan continued by saying they had no objection to the change, but asked if they could include in the language that a PTA member be appointed by the Lt. Governor. Balfour recognized and pointed out to Vice Chair Carter that on Page 1 (one)-122 after, his/her designee, they insert "and a PTA



member appointed by the Lt. Governor.” Vice Chair Carter and the committee’s Legislative Counsel, Betsy Howerton, review the changes.

Vice Chair Carter recognized Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, to speak and he directed his question to the author of the amendment, Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, by asking why would they not make it the President of the PTA? Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, responded by saying he was not opposed to that, he was just saying that maybe the President of the PTA isn’t interested in it or isn’t allowed to do it and it would leave it more open for the Lt. Governor to appoint someone who would be involved.

Vice Chair Carter recognized Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, to speak and he directed a question to Sally Fitzgerald with GPTA by asking if they changed presidents each year. Fitzgerald responded by saying yes they do, but in light of the way it was written for the other organizations, she would feel more comfortable with it being the Georgia PTA President or his/her designee. Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and said he would be willing to change his amendment to do that, which would say after the designee and the President of the Georgia PTA Association or his/her designee.

Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and moved on the amendment and Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, seconded. Vice Chair Carter recognized Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, for a question directed to Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, and he responded.

Vice Chair Carter recognized Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, to speak.

Vice Chair Carter asked if the author was comfortable with the language and responded that he liked the language presented by Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>. Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, asked for clarification of the language and for Legislative Counsel to read over the changes in the language again by saying on line 18 the word 9 would be replaced with the word 10 and on line 22 after designee, you would add the language “the President of the Georgia PTA or his/her designee.”

Vice Chair Carter entertained a motion to pass as a committee substitute and Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, made a motion and Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, seconded to DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE SR-487. Vote was unanimous.

**[SR 487 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE](#)**

**SR 426 (Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>): Creating the Senate Study Committee on Quality of Child Care in Georgia.**

The committee will be composed of five members of the Senate appointed by the Lieutenant Governor. The chairperson will be designated by the Lieutenant Governor from among the appointees.

It is in the best interests of the state to create a system that will inform parents about the quality of care their child receives while the parent is at work or in school and to create a system that will improve the quality of child care that thousands of Georgia's children receive daily.

Vice Chair Carter, recognized Irene Munn of the Lt. Governor's Office to speak to the bill. She stated that in order to look at and study quality system indicators for early childhood education, she thought this was a good resolution and the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning has already begun this study to be indicators to provide parents with a better knowledge of what kind education and child care that they are receiving at preschools and day care centers.

Vice Chair Carter asked for a motion and Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup> moved and Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, seconded the motion to DO PASS SR 426. Vote was unanimous.

**SR 426 DO PASS**

**HB 559 (Kaiser, 59<sup>th</sup>): Relating to health insurance plans for teachers and other school personnel in elementary and secondary education, so as to provide for teachers and employees of charter schools to be considered employees for purposes of participating in the health insurance plans for teachers and other school personnel.**

Vice Chair Carter recognized Representative Kaiser, 59<sup>th</sup>, to speak to her bill. She began by saying she was here to ask for the committee's support and she was looking at LC 33 2008S, the substitute to HB 559. This bill will allow the start of charter schools in the State of Georgia to participate in the State Health Benefit Plan.

Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, was recognized to clarify the LC number and Irene answered.

Vice Chair Carter clarified to Tate, 38<sup>th</sup>, and other committee members that in their folders was another substitute with LC 33 2083S, and he asked Irene Munn to speak to this substitute.

The Lt. Governor has asked Senator Weber, 40<sup>th</sup>, to place his SB 39, which is the Charter System, back onto this legislation.

Vice Chair Carter asked whether the substitute included all of Representative Kaiser's language from the original bill and Irene replied yes to his question.

Vice Chair Carter asked if there were any questions from the committee and he then recognized Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and she directed a question to Irene by asking what page [SB 39](#) began on. Irene responded by referring to the committee substitute starting on page 3 of the bill, part 2, Section 2-1 Charter Systems Act. Everything following that is the exact same bill that was passed out of the Senate with the changes that the House Education Committee made. Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, continued by asking if there were any changes besides SB 39 text in this? Irene replied that from the Senate version, yes, there are changes that the House Education Committee made and she could go over each one of those. The changes were placed in the definition section of the bill. Vice Chair Carter thought it would be good to review the changes. Irene reviewed the changes. There was one change from the House, which is that they are making this entire bill effective on July 1, 2007. The Senate passed this out to make everything effective on July 1, 2007.

Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, wanted to know if the funds would be available on July 1, 2007 and Irene responded that the bill would go into effect on that date but the bill states "subject to availability of funding".

Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and he stated he had concerns on page 12 and directed those concerns to Irene. One of his concerns was giving up the school board giving over its authorities to the governing councils and whether or not giving away of that authority was in fact constitutional. He asked if the change on page 12 beginning on line 27 spoke to that change or is there any other place in the legislation where change has been made to speak to that issue? Irene responded by saying there had been changes made to speak to that issue.

Vice Chair Carter recognized Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>, to speak and his question was where is the line of demarcation between the maximizing that the local school boards granted to the governing council.

Vice Chair Carter recognized Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup> to speak and he said at the appropriate time he would like to move to do pass on the bill, and Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, was recognized and he announced at the proper time he would like to second that motion to do pass.

Vice Chair Carter recognized, Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, to speak. The teachers that will be at these charter schools, will they have the same certification as the teachers in the public schools? Jocelyn Whitfield with GAE responded by saying the teachers of charter schools have to be highly qualified, they don't all have to be certified, but different dollar amounts would be available to them for the state health. Schools are already receiving state health benefits monies for insurance.

Vice Chair Carter recognized Thomas, 54<sup>th</sup>, he moved and Douglas, 17<sup>th</sup>, seconded the motion to DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE HB 559.

Vice Chair Carter recognized Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, for a question directed to Whitfield.

Vice Chair Carter announced that the committee had a motion and a second and all in favor signify by saying I, and opposed signify by saying no, with Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Tate, 38<sup>th</sup> and Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, opposing. The chair breaks the tie 5 to 4 and HB 559 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE.

**[HB 559 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE](#)**

**[HB 332 \(Coleman, 97<sup>th</sup>\): Relating to program weights, maximum class size, and reporting requirements under the "Quality Basic Education Act," so as to delay the implementation of certain maximum class size requirements.](#)**

Vice Chair Carter recognized Representative Coleman, 97<sup>th</sup>, also Chairman of the House Education and Youth Committee to come forward to speak to his bill.

**Coleman, 97<sup>th</sup>, began by stating that he is bringing to the committee a bill he feels is very important. He was speaking to the substitute of HB 332 which was LC 33 2087S. Years ago under HB 1187 they passed a law that said they would lower class sizes in grades K-12 over a period of three to four years. They went ahead under the original legislation and reduced class sizes for K-3, but were unable to go to 4-12. Last year, as you remember, we had funds and lowered class sizes in 4-8. The law states that this year, we must go ahead and complete grades 9-12.**

**Vice Chair Carter recognized Melanie Stockwell from the Pro Tempore's office to speak. She addressed LC 33 2093S. Vice Chair Carter asked that she point out the major changes to Section 2 of the bill. He asked if he understood her to say on Page 2 where it says 40% that they would need to amend that to make that 39% and she responded that if this was in Chairman Coleman's substitute then they were fine with that. Melaine Stockwell reviewed the changes.**

**Vice Chair Carter asked if there were any questions from the committee and Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, was recognized for a question regarding anti-discrimination law and Ms. Stockwell responded to his question.**

**Jocelyn Whitfield with GAE, was recognized and stated her concerns regarding the bill.**

**Angela Palm with GSBA was recognized and stated that her organization supported HB 332 as passed in the House.**

**Margaret Price with PAGE was recognized and stated their opposition to the bill as well as SB 10.**

**Jim Puckett with GAEL was recognized and stated their support of the bill.**

**There was a motion made by Balfour, 9<sup>th</sup>, to DO PASS LC 33 2093S as amended and was seconded by Moody, 56<sup>th</sup>, DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE. Vice Chair Carter announced that the committee had a motion and a second and all in favor signify by saying I, and opposed signify by saying no, with Ramsey, 43<sup>rd</sup>, Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, Tate, 38<sup>th</sup> and Thomas, 2<sup>nd</sup>, opposing. The chair breaks the tie 5 to 4 and HB 332 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE.**

**HB 332 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE.**

**SR 483 (Harp, 29<sup>th</sup>): Encouraging the effective teaching of social studies in Georgia's public schools and urging the State Board of Education and each local Board of Education in this state to ensure that certain tenets for effective social studies teaching and learning are followed.**

Vice Chair Carter spoke to SR 483 and very briefly explained the purpose of the bill.

Douglas moved on SR 483 to do pass and Fort, 39<sup>th</sup>, seconded the motion to DO PASS SR 483. Motion carried unanimously.

**SR 483 DO PASS**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Don Thomas, Secretary

/s/ Barbara Landrum, Recording Secretary

**April 26, 2007**

**Mr. Bob Ewing  
Secretary of the Senate  
Room 353 State Capitol Building  
Atlanta, Georgia 30334**

**Dear Mr. Ewing:**

**Along with the minutes of the Senate Education and Youth Committee, I am returning the following Bills:**

**[SB-85](#)  
**[SB-206](#)  
**[SB-257](#)  
**[SB-277](#)  
**[SB-297](#)**********

**Respectfully submitted:**

**/s/ Barbara Landrum  
Recording Secretary  
Senate Education and Youth Committee**

**/bl**