



# Georgia 2019 Legislative Session Update

## Key bills that passed:

**HB 218:** extends the HOPE Scholarship eligibility period from 7 years after high school graduation to 10 years after high school graduation.

**Purpose of the bill:** This bill helps Georgia meet its workforce needs and the growing demand for Associates degrees and Bachelor's degrees, improve Georgia's education attainment rates.

### **Data:**

- Georgia has seen a 33% increase in job postings since 2014.
  - However, job postings for entry-level positions requiring a bachelor's degree or an associate degree have grown at a faster rate of 59% and 120% respectively.
- 42 percent of Georgians age 25 and older don't have a postsecondary degree.
  - This ranges from a low of 24 percent in Forsyth County to a high of 78 percent in Taliaferro County.
- 17 percent of University System of Georgia students (52,744) are older than 25.
- 44 percent of technical college associate degree students (19,448) are over 25.

**Team effort:** with help from GBPI.

**SB 108:** Provides funding and a timeline for every middle and high school to offer a computer science course(s) within 5 years, K-6 grades are optional.

**Purpose:** Computer science is integral to our current and future workforce. SB 108 increases the number of high schools that offer computer science includes math, logic and other curriculum in addition to programming and intro to computer science courses Most of the funding focuses on training/re-training current teachers - from computer science and other subjects - in teaching a current computer science course.

**Funding:** the budget included \$1 million for this upcoming fiscal year - this will add about 450 computer science teachers across the state by focusing on upskilling and re-training current teachers.

**Coalition effort:** Code.org, the College Board, ExcellnEd, Georgia-CAN, Project Lead-The-Way, the Georgia Department of Education, the Georgia Chamber and the National Math & Science Initiative participated in the coalition. MAC co-chaired and led this coalition along with the Technology Association of Georgia's Education division.



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## **Data:**

- In 2018, there were just over 42,000 IT job postings in GA that required a B.S. in Computer Science and the average annual wage for those positions was \$94,000.
- There is a 3 to 1 gap in job postings requiring computer science and the people to fill those jobs.
- Less than 1% of high school students take a computer science course.
- Only 49% of Georgia high schools offer a computer science course of any kind.
- When you look at the landed companies and projects from MAC's Economic Development team, a large portion of those companies list IT and Computer Science skills as the #1 primary job-related function.

## **Budget Items that Passed:**

- \$1 million for SB 108
- \$500,000 for DOE CTAE Capital & Equipment Grants included in 2018 CONNECT Act
- \$3,000 teacher pay raise "down payment"

## **Items that didn't pass:**

**HB 444 - Dual Enrollment** - joint credit for high school and college courses - this is an instrumental program that has scaled quickly - the growth in popularity of this program has also caused the cost to grow to levels that are not sustainable.

- HB 444 proposed some modifications to the original Move on When Ready bill to maintain costs and ensure the sustainability of the program for the long term.
- There is still some work to be done to ensure that highly successful apprenticeship programs that directly align with workforce needs are not negatively impacted by these changes.

**HB 301/SB 173 - School Vouchers** - establishes criteria for parents to direct the state portion of their child's public education funds to offset the costs of qualified expenses like tuition to a private school or other providers for textbooks, transportation or tutoring. The final version of the bill required that the student must meet certain eligibility requirements, including students with special needs, students from families up to 150% of the poverty limit, children of active duty military parents, students adopted from foster care and students with a documented case of being bullied, to qualify for the voucher.