

Overview: Georgia's 2021 Fiscal Year Budget for Higher Education

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Governor Brian Kemp's proposed 2021 budget allocates \$2.58 billion for the Board of Regents and \$373 million for the Technical College System of Georgia. This budget includes money for enrollment growth and a \$1,000 raise for full-time employees earning \$40,000 or less.

University System of Georgia

The proposed 2021 budget increase of \$10 million for the university system is an increase of 0.4 percent from last year. About \$69 million was transferred from the Teaching budget to the Regents Central Office program to reflect increased centralization of information technology resources and services from individual institutions to the university system.

Funding for the Teaching portion of the university system's operating budget is set to increase by \$10 million to \$2.3 billion. Major changes include:

- \$78 million for formula-funded enrollment growth and operating costs
- \$3.6 million for a \$1,000 pay raise for employees making \$40,000 or less

The formula-funded Teaching program, which covers the vast majority of the Board of Regents' budget, was shielded from budget cuts. All other programs saw decreases of \$14 million total for the AFY 2020 budget and \$16 million, or 6 percent, for the FY 2021 budget. These include research and service programs like the Agricultural Experiment Station, Cooperative Extension Service and Public Libraries.

The budget includes \$175 million in bonds for new construction, major improvements and renovations within the university system.

The state has maintained investment in the university system while the economy is relatively strong. Steady restoration and maintenance of colleges' budgets have allowed the university system to keep tuition increases minimal over the past several years.

Technical College System of Georgia

The proposed 2021 budget for the technical college system is \$373 million in state general funds, essentially flat from last year. Most of the budget, \$310 million, goes to technical education. The budget adds \$3.5 million to reflect a small increase in credit hours. It also includes \$1.5 million for a \$1,000 pay raise for employees with salaries under \$40,000.

Other programs under the technical college system saw cuts of about 6 percent. These include Adult Education, which provides services for adult students with low English literacy skills or no high school diploma.

The budget includes \$69 million in bonds for new construction, major improvements and renovations for technical colleges.

Georgia Student Finance Commission

The Georgia Student Finance Commission administers state funds for the REACH Georgia Scholarship and Dual Enrollment program. The REACH Scholarship uses both public and private funds, and state appropriations stayed at \$5.4 million.¹ Dual Enrollment allows eligible high school students to take college courses at no cost to them. No funding change for these programs were included for FY 2021.

Dual Enrollment funding is flat from last year to total \$100.8 million. The allocation assumes restrictions to the program in [House Bill 444](#), which limits students to 30 state-funded credit hours and limits most courses to 11th and 12th-graders.²

Endnotes

¹ For more information about REACH Georgia, see reachga.org.

² For GBPI's bill summary and analysis of HB 444, see "Dual Enrollment Restrictions Designed to Limit Cost Growth" <https://gbpi.org/2020/dual-enrollment-restrictions-designed-to-limit-cost-growth/>.