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Sine Die!

EDUCATION

HB1084 limits how race can be discussed in K-12 grades. However, it now includes the creation of a school athletics oversight committee to study and decide whether transgender students should be able to play high school sports that align with their gender identity. The Georgia High School Association has the ultimate say. Rep. Matthew Wilson (D-80, Brookhaven), a strong opponent, apologized for the measure. "It is so hard to reconcile being in a state that hates people for who they are with the love I have for us," he said. An earlier bill, SB435, which would have banned transgender students from participating in any sport except those that match their birth gender, did not get a hearing.

HB1, also known as the FORUM Act, prevents colleges and universities from limiting who can set up free-speech zones on campus. Students testified that it would make it easier for extremist groups to speak on campus while supporters claimed that conservative organizations were being prevented from exercising their right to free speech.

SB226, the final version of multiple bills advocating for everything from parental control of school library holdings to the outright banning of books, passed. School principals will now have seven days to decide whether to remove books deemed "harmful to minors" by parents or school boards.

SB345, the so-called vaccine passport, bans state and local agencies, schools and government from requiring COVID-19 vaccines. Government agencies will be able to require vaccines if the state loses its legal challenge to President Biden's requirement that all federal workers be vaccinated. The bill, of course, does not mention any of the long list of vaccines that workers and students have been quietly accepting for generations.

HB1283 makes school recess mandatory. This has been introduced in every session for the last three years. The sponsor, Representative Demetrius Douglas (D-78, Stockbridge) has been dogged in his determination to get the bill passed. Removing the provision that made it illegal to withhold recess as a punishment seemed to do the trick.