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# MAKE GEORGIA STUDENTS' DREAMS A REALITY

Did you know that GA has the **lowest** home-state college attendance rate in the Southern region? And that GA is one of only two states in the nation without a need-based aid program? *It is time to take bold action!*

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Governor Kemp's proposed amended FY26 state budget seeks to establish our state's first need-based aid for Georgia students — the Dedicating Resources to Educationally Advance More Students (DREAMS) Scholarship Program.

**Pass the proposed \$325 million to enable students enrolling during Fall 2026 to benefit from this historical opportunity**

- **\$25 million** for direct scholarships
- **\$300 million** for the DREAMS Scholarship endowment

## Why do we need the DREAMS Scholarship Program?

The HOPE, Zell Miller and REACH Scholarships all have GPA eligibility restrictions. This program seeks to meet the needs of low-income students pursuing higher education.

A comprehensive, need-based program in Georgia would ensure cost does not determine if students can achieve their full potential.

## Prioritize High-Need Students

Investment from the state and/or funds raised by the University System of Georgia (USG) Foundation for need-based aid should go to students who have the most financial need — those with the lowest Student Aid Index based on FAFSA.

## Eliminate Work Requirements

Eligibility criteria for the need-based aid grant should sensibly and effectively target aid to those who need it without erecting unnecessary barriers to access. Like the HOPE and Zell Miller Scholarships, the need-based aid program in Georgia should not include a work requirement.

## Support All Educational Expenses

Allow awards to be used flexibly across a student's full cost of attendance — non-tuition costs of attendance are rising across the state and represent a significant portion of the unmet financial need that students face.

## Ensure Transparency

Require annual public reporting on eligibility requirements, allocations, demographics of recipients, and student outcomes so policymakers and families can easily assess impact and guide future improvements.