
Digital Learning Task Force

Gov. Nathan Deal

Tuesday, November 20th, 2012
9:00 am – 12:00 pm
Georgia State Capitol, Room 107

“So long as we insist on teaching all students the same subjects in the same way, progress will be incremental. But now for the first time it is possible to individualize education—to teach each person what he or she needs and wants to know in ways that are most comfortable and most efficient.”

-Dr. Howard Gardner, HGSE, Foreign Policy, 2009

Review & Discussion of Important Documents

Meeting Goals

- Ensure task force members have a common understanding of digital learning in Georgia and the scope of the task force
- Set tentative future meeting dates and structure
- Develop clear and targeted questions about digital learning in Georgia that will guide discussion in future meetings and lead to policy recommendations

Review & Discussion of Important Documents

Executive Order Charge

- Provide recommendations to prepare the state to effectively improve the educational achievement and attainment of students through the creation of robust digital learning environments, which may include the transition to digital textbooks and the effective use of wireless mobile devices
- Provide recommendations and support the state's position in research and development related to and arising out of the integration of wireless technology into K-12 classrooms, including an examination of the experiences of other states and schools districts

Review & Discussion of Important Documents

Scope of Task Force

- The Executive Order does not set a time limit for the task force.
- The Governor's Office has set the goal of providing legislative recommendations for the 2014 legislative session.
- To meet this goal, we should finalize recommendations by late fall 2013.

Review & Discussion of Important Documents

Proposed Meeting Structure

- Presentation or tour related to topic
- Overview of Georgia's current implementation
- Discussion of what would be “ideal”
- Discussion of what barriers prevent implementation
- Discussion of how or to what extent the state can accomplish the “ideal”
- Determination of recommendations

Question

Should we keep a running document of recommendations from consensus at each meeting instead of finding consensus at the end of the task force?

Review & Discussion of Important Documents

Document Management & Communication

Beginning in early December, I will post meeting resources on the GOSA website (once the new site is launched).

Questions

- Is email the best way to communicate?
- What should I print for each meeting?
- Should I email meeting notes to members after each meeting for your review?

Defining Digital Learning

Digital learning is “learning facilitated by technology that gives students some element of control over time, place, path, and/or pace.”

Digital Learning requires more than simply infusing technology into classrooms or a student’s home. It requires a combination of technology, digital content, and instruction.

Source: Digital Learning Now!, *Roadmap for Reform*

Discussion Format

Three 40-minute discussions on three “buckets” of topics:

- Options & Access
- Quality
- Infrastructure

Goal: Develop clear and targeted questions to guide discussions at future meetings and lead to policy recommendations.

Structure: For each discussion, I will provide a short overview of topics in that “bucket” and high-level information related to them. Then, I will open floor to additional topics and guided question development.

Discussion I: Access & Options

This category may include (not as exhaustive list):

- Models of Virtual & Blended Learning
- Competency-Based Learning
- Personalized Learning (eg: adaptive technology, diagnostics)
- Digital Content
- Class Size Requirements

Discussion I: Access & Options

*Legislative Actions in 2012**

SB 289: “The Digital Learning Act”

- By 2013-14, all LEAs must offer 3rd-12th grade students virtual learning options and maximize the number the high school students who take at least one online course before graduation.
- LEAs cannot prevent students from enrolling in virtual learning courses.
- By December 1, 2012, the GaDOE must produce a report that identifies ways for LEAs to access affordable digital learning, identifies criteria to differentiate between providers, and examine ways to increase student access to digital learning.
- The GaDOE must approve digital learning providers using criteria, which I will describe in Discussion II.

**Not tied to funding.*

Discussion I: Access & Options

*Legislative Actions in 2012 (continued)**

HB 175: “The Online Clearinghouse Act”

- The GaDOE must create a clearinghouse where LEAs and charter schools can offer online courses to students in other systems.
- The GaDOE must ensure courses meet state standards and are taught by highly qualified teachers.

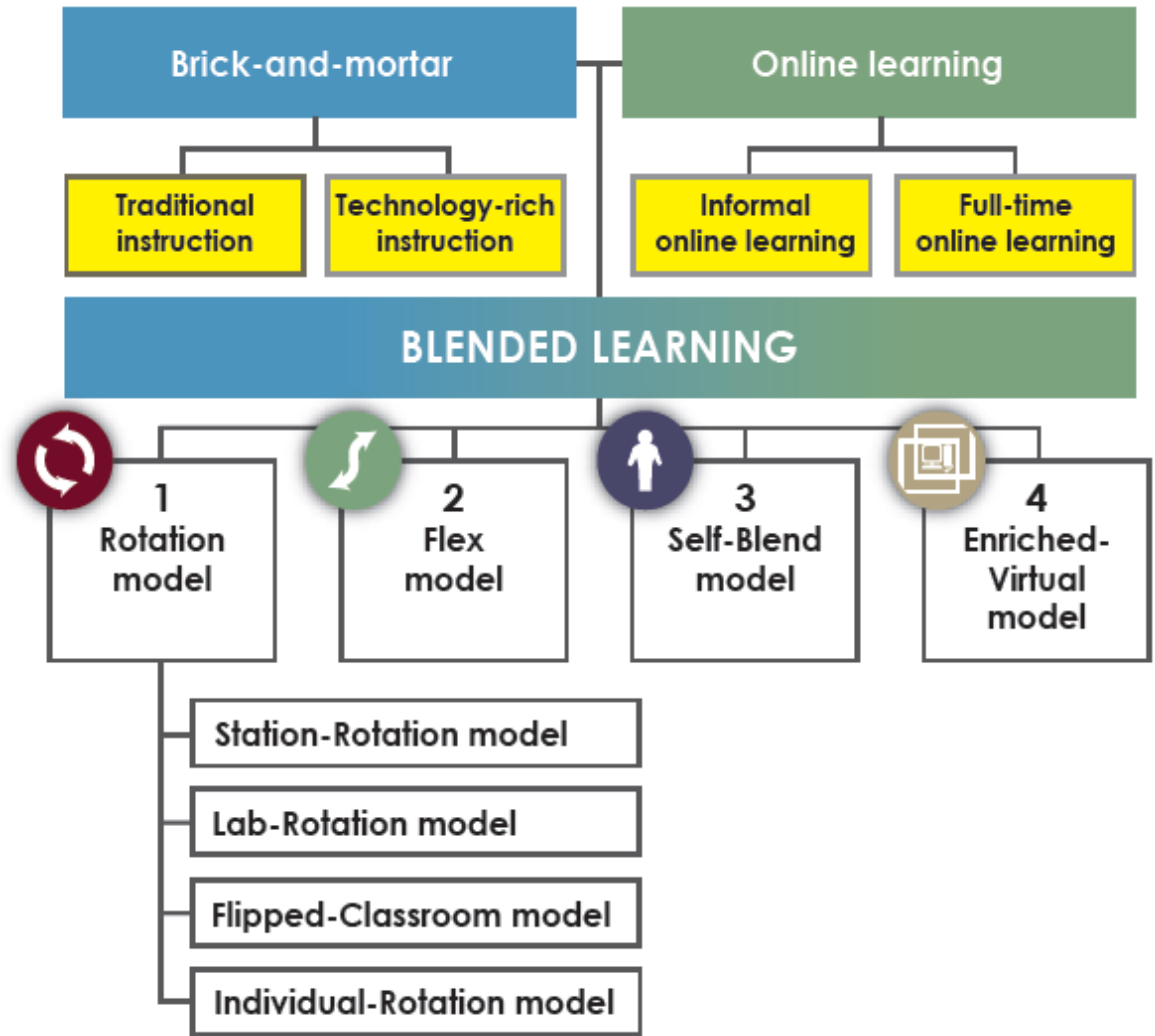
SR 646

- This resolution states the Senate’s commitment to align future digital learning legislation with Digital Learning Now!’s Ten Elements of High Quality Digital Learning.

**Not tied to funding.*

Discussion I: Access & Options

Defining Blended Learning

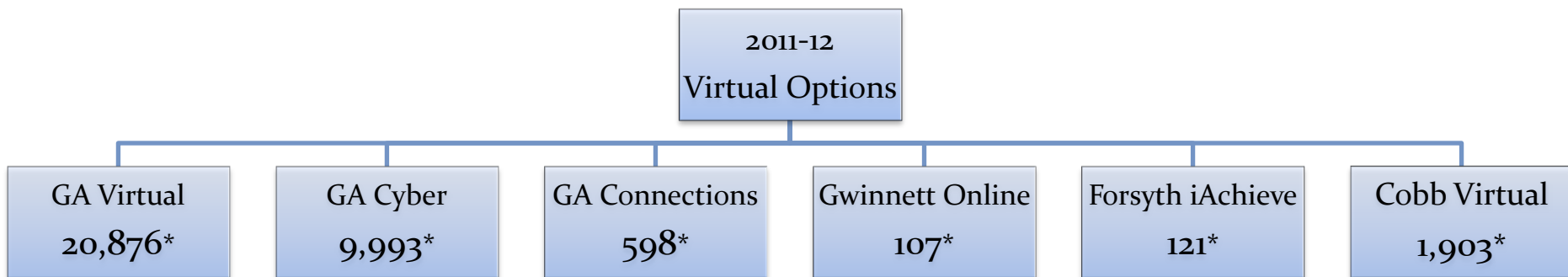


Source: Heather Staker & Michael Horn, "Classifying K-12 Blended Learning," Innosight Institute, 2012.

Discussion I: Access & Options

Virtual Learning in Georgia in 2011-12

- For Georgia Virtual School (GAVS), students can enroll in summer schools courses but must pay tuition (\$500 per Carnegie unit).
- Forsyth & Gwinnett counties allow out-of-district students to pay tuition during school year.
- Gwinnett’s courses are in 8-week “mini-mesters” while Forsyth’s are semester-long.



*Number of enrollments, not number of individual students.

Source: Evergreen Education Group, *Keeping Pace with K-12 Online & Blended Learning*, 2012.

Discussion I: Access & Options

GaDOE Resources through the Tunnel

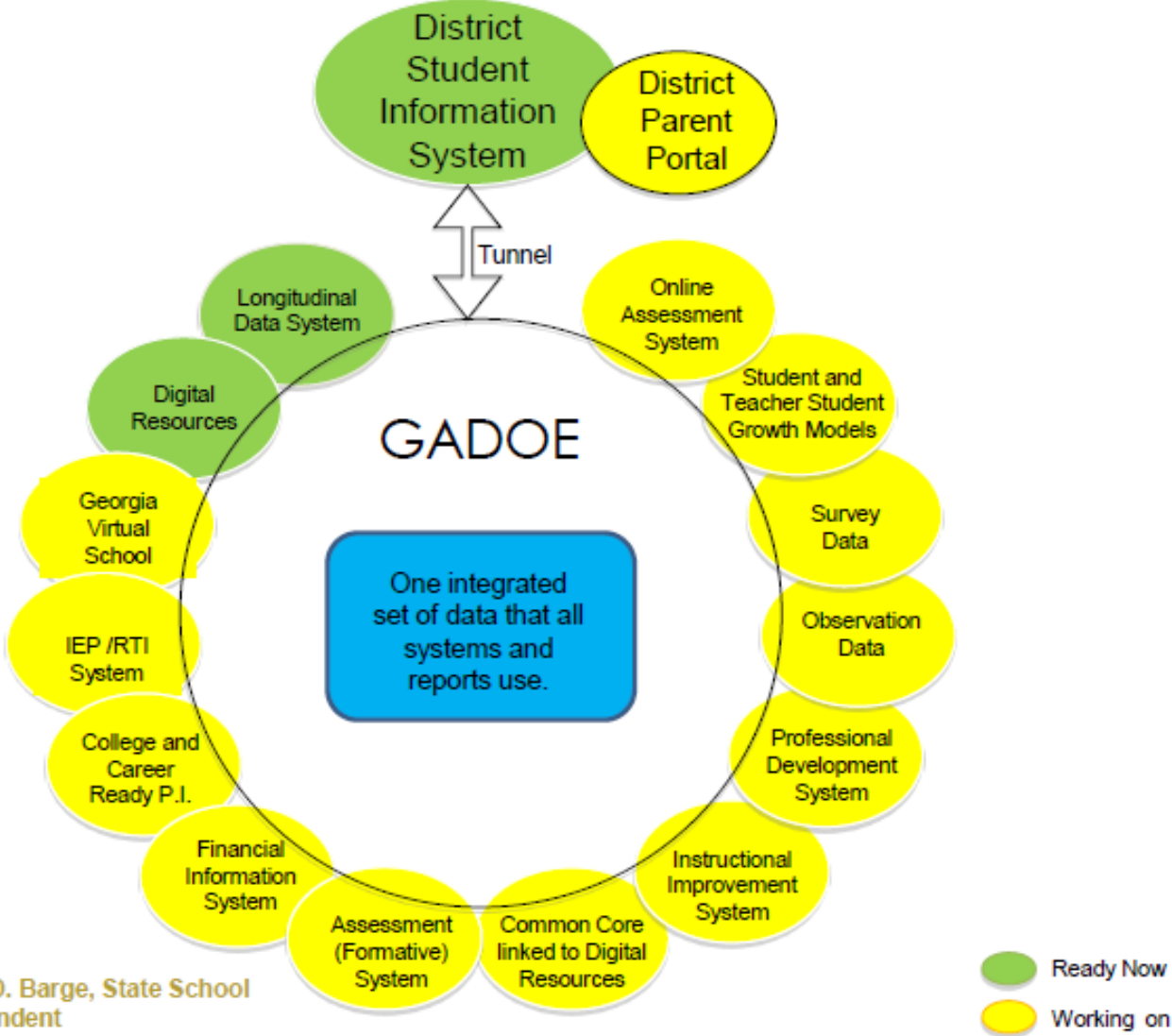
Longitudinal Data System

- Allows teachers to use one login to access all current students' records (test scores, attendance, special education status)

Teacher Resource Link

- Uses the same login to provide teachers with access to vetted digital resources aligned with state standards

LEA Access to Integrated GADOE Systems



Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
"Making Education Work for All Georgians"
www.gadoe.org

● Ready Now
 ● Working on

Discussion I: Access & Options

This category may include (not as exhaustive list):

- Models of Virtual & Blended Learning
- Competency-Based Learning
- Personalized Learning (eg: adaptive technology, diagnostics)
- Digital Content
- Class Size Requirements

Discussion II: Quality

This category may include (not as exhaustive list):

- Provider Quality Measurement
- Content Quality Measurement
- Assessments
- Teacher Certification
- Professional Development
- Teacher Preparation Programs

Discussion II: Quality

Provider & Content Quality

- There is limited research to date on virtual learning quality in Georgia beyond comparing test scores.
 - For example, GAVS and GA Cyber Academy have higher test scores than the state average across all subjects, but is the relationship causal?
- SB 289 also set out the following criteria for the GaDOE to approve providers for up to five years:
 - Prior success
 - Detailed curriculum and accountability plan aligned to standards
 - Commitment to publish enrollment and completion data, school policies/procedures, teacher certification, teacher-student ratios, and performance accountability outcomes

Discussion II: Quality

Assessments

- In 2014-15, Georgia will transition its EOCTs and CRCTs to PARCC online assessments in math and ELA along with 23 states.
- SB 289 also requires GaDOE to make all end-of-course assessments available online by 2015-16.

Teacher Certification

- The Professional Standards Commission provides an Online Teaching Endorsement that requires three courses on e-learning and a practicum through a USG institution.

Discussion II: Quality

This category may include (not as exhaustive list):

- Provider Quality Measurement
- Content Quality Measurement
- Assessments
- Teacher Certification
- Professional Development
- Teacher Preparation Programs

Discussion III: Infrastructure

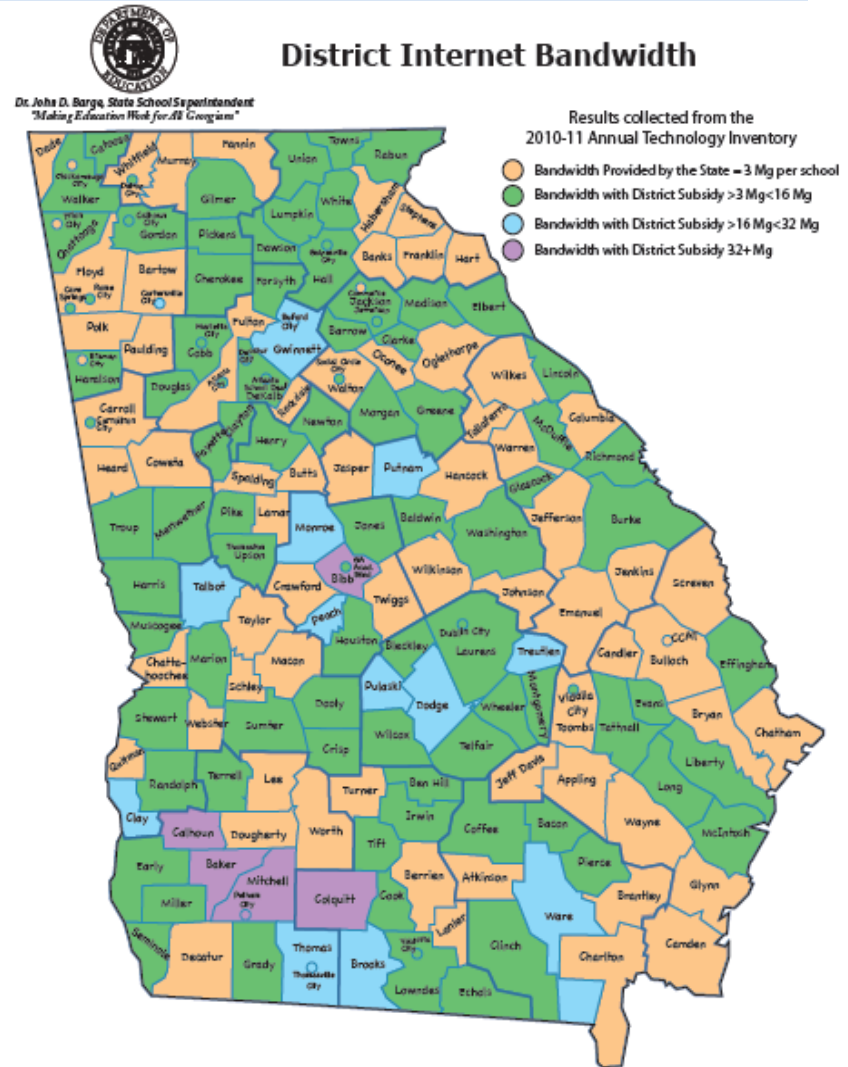
This category may include (not as exhaustive list):

- Internet Availability (in and out of school)
- Device Availability (in and out of school)
- Technology
- Funding Structure

Discussion III: Infrastructure

Internet Availability

- Bandwidth varies significantly across the state.
- In September 2012, the K-12 Education Finance Study Commission recommended that the state extend PeachNet or other systems to more districts.
- Comcast Internet Essentials offers home internet to low-income families for \$9.95/month (plus tax) wherever Comcast provides service.



Georgia Department of Education
Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent

April 18, 2012

Discussion III: Infrastructure

Device Availability and Technology

- GaDOE takes an annual technology inventory and publishes school-, district, and state-level reports. In 2011-12, the statewide inventory showed:
 - 2.22-to-1 is the student per modern computer ratio
 - 31.5% of computers in schools are more than 5 years old
- The K-12 Education Finance Study Commission recommended that the state create a capital outlay program to help LEAs update infrastructure. Recommended grants are \$20 million over three years with local match.

Source: GaDOE 2011-12 Technology Inventory.

Discussion III: Infrastructure

Funding

- QBE formula generates \$42-45 million for textbooks (\$27 per FTE) each year (not including austerity cuts).
- From 2005-2011, LEAs spent on average \$114.7 million on textbooks and \$126.3 million for technology per year.
- QBE funds one instructional technology specialist per 1,110 FTEs
- GAVS receives about \$4.7 million each year from state budget.
- Federal Title II, Part D competitive grants provided funding to LEAs for technology improvement and integration into the classroom in FY 2010 and 2011.

Source: State Education Finance Study Commission, “Issue Paper: Textbooks and Classroom Technology,” 2011.

Discussion III: Infrastructure

Funding (continued)

The Education Finance Commission recommended that the state:

- Rename “Textbooks” category as “Instructional Materials.”
- Redirect Central Administration funds to Instructional Materials over 3 years, holding harmless the smallest 10% of LEAs (\$25 million/year).
- Add \$25 million to Instructional Materials by FY 2015.

The Commission also recommended that the Governor’s Office study the feasibility of transitioning from the current formula to student-based funding.

Source: State Education Finance Study Commission, “Issue Paper: Textbooks and Classroom Technology,” 2011.

Discussion III: Infrastructure

This category may include (not as exhaustive list):

- Internet Availability (in and out of school)
- Device Availability (in and out of school)
- Technology
- Funding Structure

Closing Information

- If you think of further guided questions, feel free to email them to me over the next week.
- Finalize the next meeting.
- Any last questions about the task force?

***Thank you for taking time to be
a part of this task force!***