Annual AFY18/FY19 Budget Presentation

Joint Education Appropriation Committee

Dr. Cayanna Good, Executive Director
January 2018

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Agency Summary Information

As the state's P-20 education agency, the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) aims to increase student achievement, school completion, and life opportunities for all Georgia students.

To achieve our mission, GOSA conducts all business according to high standards of transparency, accessibility, objectivity, strategic collaboration, and innovation.

GOSA provides policy support to the Governor and ultimately to the citizens of Georgia through:

- Communicating meaningful education data to stakeholders;
- Providing research support and data analysis on various education programs in Georgia to inform the Governor's policy, budget, and legislative efforts;
- Auditing education programs to ensure fidelity at the district and school-level to performance and accountability requirements; and
- Identifying, supporting, and sustaining educational innovations that align with the Governor's education priorities.

GOSA supports the Governor's recommendations for AFY18 and FY19.

Agency Budget Overview

- Annual operating budget in FY18 was $21,930,685.
- The Governor's recommended annual operating budgets for AFY18 and FY19 do not change other than any state-required additions for merit system assessment adjustments, merit-based pay, retirement systems, and agency assessment adjustments.
- GOSA's FY18 staff numbers: 52 employees, including 22 regional field staffers serving as Reading Mentors, professional learning specialists, or grant implementation support specialists, and 1 full-time intern.
- GOSA employed approximately 100 summer instructors and resident advisors for 4 weeks to work with the Governor's Honors Program (GHP) in June-July 2017.

The following sections provide an overview of GOSA's recent accomplishments and upcoming work in four main areas:

- Research, Evaluation, Auditing, and Data,
- Governor's Honors Program,
- Grant Programs, and
- Special Projects.

Research, Evaluation, Auditing, and Data

Academic Auditing

Georgia Milestones Assessment Audits

GOSA conducts academic audits and investigations to maximize the integrity of student achievement data and to ensure that local education agencies (LEAs) implement Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) assessment policies and procedures with fidelity, so that achievement data can be utilized in making critical decisions and reporting student outcomes.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

- Contracted with the state testing vendor, Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), to conduct answer change analyses of all Georgia Milestones End of Grade (EOG) and End of Course (EOC) test administrations during FY17
- Contracted with the state testing vendor, DRC, to conduct a new unusual response pattern analysis for all EOG math and science test administrations
- Transitioned the Erasure Analysis Inquiry process into a secure online format for sharing and receiving information with LEAs in a more efficient and secure manner
- Audited 100% of paper and pencil Georgia Milestones EOG and EOC tests administered during the spring 2016 test administration and provided a report to the State Board of Education (SBOE) in February 2017 with GOSA's findings and recommendations
- Reviewed 2016 district inquiry form responses (112 schools) in spring 2017 and provided feedback to local systems to improve test administration
- Coordinated and trained state monitors who observed spring 2017 test administrations in identified schools
- Monitored 47 schools during the spring 2017 test administration, some of which had been identified for further inquiry and others at random

Upcoming Work

- Review DRC Georgia Milestones analyses (answer change for EOG paper/pencil and online administrations, unusual response, and test score gains/test duration for EOG online administration).
- Make recommendations to SBOE in January 2018 for next steps with schools identified for further inquiry (inquiry forms, investigations, and monitoring).
- Review 2017 district-led investigation inquiries and provide feedback (once submitted in early spring 2018).
- Implement first-ever significant test score gains and time duration analysis to identify schools with classrooms that had significant test score gains coupled with abnormal classroom test durations (e.g. a significant number of students in the class drastically improving their test scores while also completing the test significantly faster or slower than the state average for test completion).

Data Accuracy Audits

GOSA conducts data audits and investigations to ensure that: (a) school reporting data and other school records reported to GaDOE through Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) and Student Record (SR) collections are accurate, (b) Georgia LEAs and schools receive state funding in line with their actual enrollments, and (c) withdrawal data for Georgia LEAs and schools are as accurate as possible.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

- Conducted, in collaboration with GaDOE Data Collections, an enrollment verification audit to verify enrollment data that districts report to GaDOE for usage in the Quality Basic Education (QBE) funding formula
    - In fall 2017, 17 schools were required to submit an inquiry form to explain data discrepancies.
    - After analyzing the forms, GOSA made the following determinations:
        - All 17 schools provided sufficient responses such that no further action is currently needed. However, GOSA recommended that SBOE pursue a mechanism to recoup the funding provided to the LEAs for students who were incorrectly categorized as receiving services. In addition, the schools will be monitored for errors next year to ensure the protocol put in place has been effective. Future errors may warrant additional investigation, which may include an onsite audit. SBOE and GaDOE are exploring mechanisms for recouping funds in spring 2018.
- Conducted, in collaboration with GaDOE Data Collections, a withdrawal code verification audit to verify the accuracy of withdrawal data – used to determine graduation rates – that districts report to GaDOE
    - In fall 2017, 30 schools were required to submit withdrawal documentation and a cover sheet to explain data discrepancies.
    - After analyzing the submissions, GOSA made the following determinations:
        - Twenty schools provided all required documentation and required no further inquiry.
        - Eight schools provided documentation for all students that aligned with the withdrawal code reported. However, documentation for some student withdrawals did not meet the requirements set forth in SBOE rule 160-5-1-.28. Proper guidance was given, and no schools required further inquiry at this time.
        - One school did not provide all documentation for student withdrawals but has provided sufficient explanation or action to satisfy the State's concern at this time. GOSA will monitor the school's withdrawals for 2017-2018 school year, and the school may be subject to further inquiry or on-site audit next year.

Upcoming Work

- Review and revise current data audits to strengthen data audit processes.
- Conduct enrollment verification and withdrawal code audits of 2017-2018 school year data.
- Continue collaboration with GaDOE to identify and conduct data audits in additional areas deemed critical for school accountability or funding.

Click here to access all Academic Auditing resources, procedures, and final reports.

Research and Evaluation

GOSA's Research and Evaluation Program conducts research, analysis, and program evaluation on Georgia's education programs by prioritizing accountability for schools and school systems, encouraging collaboration and exchange of ideas around research and evaluation of education programs, and producing rigorous, actionable research and evaluation of education programs.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

- Contracted with the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) to publish, in early January 2017, the Georgia Higher Learning and Earnings (GHLE) dashboard and report and updated the dashboard in October 2017 (more details on page 14)
- GOSA updated the Georgia School Grades Reports in January 2017 and November 2017. In January 2018, it will update and publish the page again when all data become available (more details on page 6).
- GOSA calculated and announced the Single Statewide Accountability System (SSAS) school awards for Greatest Gains and Highest Achieving Schools in November 2017. The awarded schools will receive banners, certificates, and letters (more details on page 9).
- In response to district feedback, GOSA and GaDOE amended the calculation for the Financial Efficiency Star Ratings (FESR) and calculated the 2017 district and school FESR, which GaDOE is scheduled to publish in January 2018.
- Published 2016-2017 end-of-year evaluation reports for the Reading Mentors Program and the RESA Growing Readers Program
- Provided program evaluation support for the Innovation Fund
- Reviewed Strategic Waiver School System (SWSS) amendments for approval by the State Board of Education (SBOE) and conducted the Year 1 Evaluation, to be presented to SBOE in January 2018
- Published six education updates on various education topics, such as the FESR, trends in Advanced Placement (AP) performance, and Georgia's Early Education Empowerment Zones
- Published the fourth annual report on the performance of state charter schools in the 2015-2016 school year
  - Contracted with Dr. Tim Sass, Georgia State University
  - The evaluation examined multiple measures including:
    - Student performance on state assessments;
    - A "value-added" model (VAM) that includes statistical controls for observable student characteristics and prior academic performance; and
    - The student growth model utilized in the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI).
- Sent 12 monthly updates to provide stakeholders meaningful, accessible information on innovative educational programs or new education data
- Calculated and published the 2016 Beating the Odds analysis for GaDOE
- Calculated and published the 2017 list of Turnaround Eligible Schools for the Chief Turnaround Officer
- Published an evaluation of the Technical College Readiness Pilot (July 2017)
- GOSA published research reports on various policy-relevant education topics. The report titles and a hyperlink to each report are included on the following page.

2017 Georgia K-12 Teacher and Leader Workforce Report (January 2018)	Click here.
How Do Students' 3rd Grade Reading Levels Relate to their ACT/SAT Performance and Chance of Graduating from High School? (March 2017)	Click here.
A Summary of Leadership Experience, Age, and Retirement Status of Principals and Assistant Principals (October 2017)	Click here.
Georgia Dual Enrollment and Postsecondary Outcomes (November 2017)	Click here.

Upcoming Work

- Continue to collaborate with the GOSA Innovative Programs team to evaluate and continuously improve these programs.
- Present the Year 1 Evaluation of SWSS contracts to SBOE in January 2018 and create a data dashboard for straightforward presentation of evaluation results.
- Continue to publish research reports and monthly updates on policy-relevant education topics.
- Publish fifth annual value-added evaluation report on state charter schools (Spring 2018).
- Publish an update to the report on the state's public school teacher workforce (January 2018).
- Calculate the 2017 Beating the Odds analysis for GaDOE (December 2017).

Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge

GOSA's Research and Evaluation team serves as an external evaluator for two projects within Georgia's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (ELC) grant: Quality Rated Validation and the Early Education Empowerment Zones (E3Zs).

Recent Work/Accomplishments

Quality Rated
Quality Rated is Georgia's tiered quality rating and improvement system that rates child care centers on a three-star scale. It is optional for child care centers, but the Department of Early Care and Learning's (DECAL) goal is to have 100% participation by 2017. GOSA's validation work of Quality Rated examines whether the star ratings are truly differentiating quality in child care centers. GOSA has provided on-going data analysis to strengthen implementation.

E3Zs
Four areas of the state have been selected to receive an infusion of support, resources, and incentives to increase the quantity and quality of high-quality childcare. GOSA is evaluating implementation of the four E3Z's to identify best practices that can be scaled elsewhere in the state. GOSA published the most recent biannual report on implementation in September 2017 and published a small study of the Great Start Georgia Home Visitation model in August 2017.

Upcoming Work

- Continue validation work for Quality Rated.
- Continue to publish biannual evaluation reports of the E3Zs.
- Publish a summative report on the E3Zs.

School Grades Reports (SchoolGrades.Georgia.Gov)

In 2015, Governor Deal requested that GOSA develop parent-friendly, concise reports of school performance for parents and other stakeholders. GOSA built the Georgia School Reports site and released it in spring 2016 when GaDOE released the 2014-2015 College and Career Ready Index (CCRPI). GOSA added new features in 2017 and updated the site with new data in November 2017.

The additional features added in January 2017 include district-level reports, school climate star ratings, and financial efficiency star ratings (FESR). The site also includes a link to a companion tool, the [Schools Like Mine Dashboard](#), that enables the public to compare selected schools to other schools with similar characteristics (e.g., demographics, enrollment, etc.). In addition, the 2017 reports now include school-level mobility rates, and school-level FESRs will be added in mid-January 2018.

In October 2017, GOSA began working with a vendor to conduct usability testing of the site with parents, school and district administrators, and state policy makers.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

- Published parent-friendly school reports that provide meaningful information on local schools for parents, educators, and community members
- For each school and district, the reports include school contact information, demographics, outcomes (CCRPI and Georgia Milestones) and other key indicators.
- The reports are mobile-friendly and allow users to generate PDFs for easy printing.
- Contracted with a vendor for site improvements

Upcoming Work

- Maintain the site with up-to-date data.
- Consider enhancements to the site based on user feedback.

School page screenshots are included on the following pages.
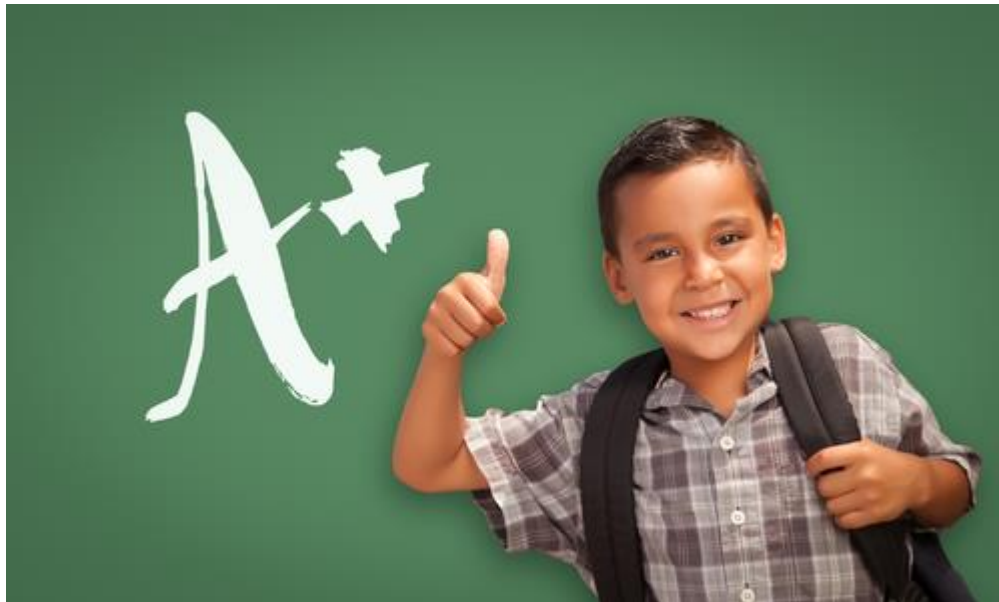
Top of Sample High School Page

Top of Sample Elementary School Page

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Georgia School Grades Reports

Search

Schools   Districts   Datasets   About   GOSA   FAQ   Reference   Contact Us   English ▼

🏠 / Home / McAllister Elementary School

McAllister Elementary School

📍 224 Veterans Memorial Parkway, Richmond Hill, GA 31324

🌐 District Website

📞 (912)851-4000

▦ Grades: K-5

👥 Enrollment: 927 students

Performance Snapshot

- McAllister Elementary School's overall performance **is higher than 81% of schools in the state** and is higher than its district.
- Its students' academic growth **is higher than 74% of schools in the state** and lower than its district.
- **70.6% of its 3rd grade students are** reading at or above the grade level target.
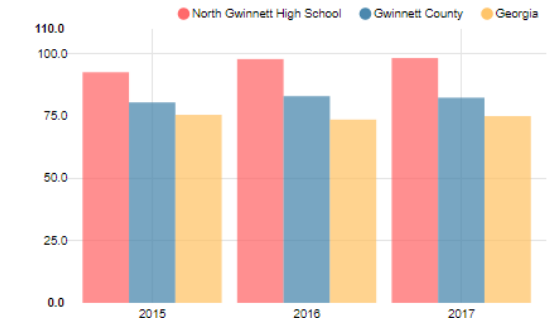
School Wide

Year	McAllister Elementary School
2017	B
2016	B

Grade conversion	
A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89.9
C	70 - 79.9
D	60 - 69.9
F	0 - 59.9

B
85.9

CCRPI Single Score ❓

● McAllister Elementary School ● Bryan County ● Georgia
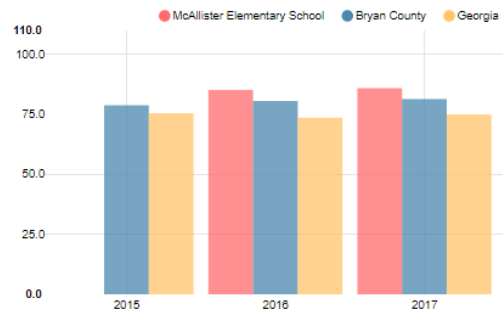
Single Statewide Accountability System (SSAS) Awards

The school awards, developed by GOSA and approved by the State Board of Education (SBOE), are part of Georgia's Single Statewide Accountability System (SSAS). Greatest Gains schools must earn a three-year average College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) Progress Score that ranks in at least the 93rd percentile. Highest Performing schools must earn a three-year average CCRPI Achievement Score that ranks in at least the 93rd percentile. Each award category has four tiers: Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze. For more details on how awards are calculated, click here.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

- Published the 2016 SSAS awards (Released in January 2017)
- Published the 2017 SSAS awards (Released in November 2017)
- 226 Georgia public schools in 54 districts received the 2017 Highest Performing or the Greatest Gains awards in 2016.
- Winning schools received a letter of congratulations, a certificate, and a banner to hang in their schools.

Upcoming Work

- Announce 2018 SSAS award winners and send letters, certificates, and banners to the winning schools after the 2018 CCRPI is released in fall 2018.

Click here for a list of 2017 award winners.

GA•AWARDS Longitudinal Data System

GA•AWARDS is the state's Pre-K through workforce (P20W) longitudinal data system. It is comprised of student- and teacher-level records from 2007-2017 from participating state agencies, including the following:

- Department of Early Care and Learning (Pre-K),
- Georgia Department of Education (K-12),
- State Charter School Commission (K-12),
- Georgia Student Finance Commission (Georgia's financial aid programs),
- University System of Georgia (postsecondary),
- Technical College System of Georgia (postsecondary),
- Georgia Independent College Association (postsecondary),
- Professional Standards Commission (teacher certification),
- Georgia Department of Labor (wage and standard industry codes),
- Governor's Office of Student Achievement (purchased data such as Advanced Placement (AP), SAT and ACT scores and National Student Clearinghouse out-of-state postsecondary data), and
- Georgia Military College.

GA•AWARDS provides consistent data matching using defined business rules and trust values. The system immediately removes personally identifiable information after the person matching and applies a unique identifier. It can then return de-identified student level data to designated researchers from each of the participating organizations for research. This service allows researchers access to cross-agency data in support of broader research focus areas.

Participating agencies use GA•AWARDS data to answer research questions related to educational and program evaluation purposes only. GA•AWARDS does not collect any new data. Rather, it matches preexisting data to facilitate stronger research and reporting in state education agencies.

The data system allows participating agencies to perform critical research that improves practice. It also serves as the foundation for GOSA's data dashboards and the annual education Report Card that fulfills state and federal reporting requirements.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

- In March 2017, GOSA launched the Schools Like Mine Dashboard that allows parents, educators, and community members to find schools with similar student populations to their school. It also lists the school's letter grade and College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) to allow for comparison of performance between the "like" schools.
- Incorporated Georgia Military College's 2009-2010 through 2016-2017 school year postsecondary data into GA•AWARDS
- Improved the quality of K-12 discipline data by incorporating new data elements including: data type, incident severity, discipline process, incident number, and number of days of suspension into GA•AWARDS
- Created a dashboard of the Strategic Waiver School System performance outcomes for the State Board of Education (SBOE) that will present outcomes in a concise, understandable format (public release in January 2018)
- GOSA released the 2016-2017 school year Report Card with all data except the National Assessments (AP, SAT and ACT) and K-12 Personnel and Fiscal data. These data will be

released in early 2018, pending receipt from Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and processing into GA•AWARDS. The Report Card now contains a seven-year historical view (2010-2011 through 2016-2017) of data.

- Updated the Higher Learning and Earnings Dashboard and Report with an additional year of data
- Created downloadable data files for all dashboards and added a report description table with corresponding links for more user-friendly navigation
- Added Lexile data to show student reading levels to the downloadable data files
- GOSA provided matching for the Department of Early Care and Learning's (DECAL) Cross Agency Child Data System, a birth-to-five dataset to support research and reporting. The use of the GA•AWARDS' unique identifier allows state agencies serving children with high needs in this age range to answer critical research questions regarding trends in birth through Pre-K and into K-12 – enabling them to improve services.

Upcoming Work

- Update the High School Graduate Outcomes Report with 2016-2017 data in January 2018
- Publish a new public-facing interactive dashboard that includes summary school-level discipline. data for all Georgia public schools (in collaboration with GaDOE Charter Schools Division).
- Continue to research data elements that would enhance researchers' abilities to evaluate programs and provide meaningful information to decision makers.
- Incorporate new data elements (e.g., foster child indicator, homeless student indicator, and children in military families indicator) needed for the Report Card to comply with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) as well as additional data elements requested by participating agencies (e.g., General Equivalency Diploma (GED) achievement and career pathway completion).
- Maintain current dashboards and update data as necessary.
- Incorporate Georgia Military Prep Academy data into GA•AWARDS.

Examples of GA•AWARDS Use to Support State Agency Work

- GaDOE's High School Feedback Report serves as a feedback mechanism to school administrators on high school graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution and whether or not those students required remediation.
- DECAL is comparing third grade reading scores between students who attended Georgia Pre-K and those who did not.
- The State Charter School Commission's (SCSC) value-added analysis of state charter schools, conducted in partnership with GOSA and researchers at Georgia State University, provides performance information used in its annual accountability report.
- In 2017, SCSC partnered with Georgia State University researchers to conduct a study on Georgia's virtual charter school performance and impact compared to the national performance of virtual charter schools.
- The Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) is conducting research on attributes of high school students, including dual enrollment course-taking patterns, that predict post-secondary success. In addition, GSFC uses GA•AWARDS to improve longitudinal tracking of HOPE Scholarship and Grant recipients.
- The Technical College System of Georgia is analyzing Georgia high school students' transition into postsecondary and the labor workforce.

- The University System of Georgia (USG) is looking for statewide patterns of postsecondary success and the impact of dual enrollment on that success. In addition, USG researchers are examining labor market participation and outcomes based on postsecondary choices.
- The Professional Standards Commission is using longitudinal data to examine whether tests used for teacher preparation program admissions and educator licensure measure performance consistently across race/ethnicity.
- The Georgia Independent College Association has created dashboards for its institutions that include graduation rates by subgroups. By using GA•AWARDS data, for the first time, private colleges can see where in-state transfer students move, which has improved graduation rates for federal reporting.

More detailed information on the K-12 and Postsecondary Report Cards and other data dashboards is outlined on the next few pages.

State Report Cards and Data Dashboards

GOSA uses GA•AWARDS to produce several reports and dashboards, including the Annual Report Card, the High School Graduate Outcomes Report, the Georgia Higher Learnings and Earnings Dashboard, and the Schools Like Mine Dashboard, all detailed below.

The Annual Report Card is a public-facing dashboard that displays state-, district-, and school-level performance on key indicators (e.g., demographics, assessments, graduation rate, etc.).

The High School Graduate Outcomes Report, released in January 2016, provides a dashboard to show the status of Georgia public high school graduates from each high school in postsecondary education or the labor market at one year intervals after graduation. This report gives information by graduating class and shows five year trends (e.g., for the class of 2007 from a certain high school, one can see how many students are in TCSG, USG, other colleges, the Georgia labor market, or unknown).
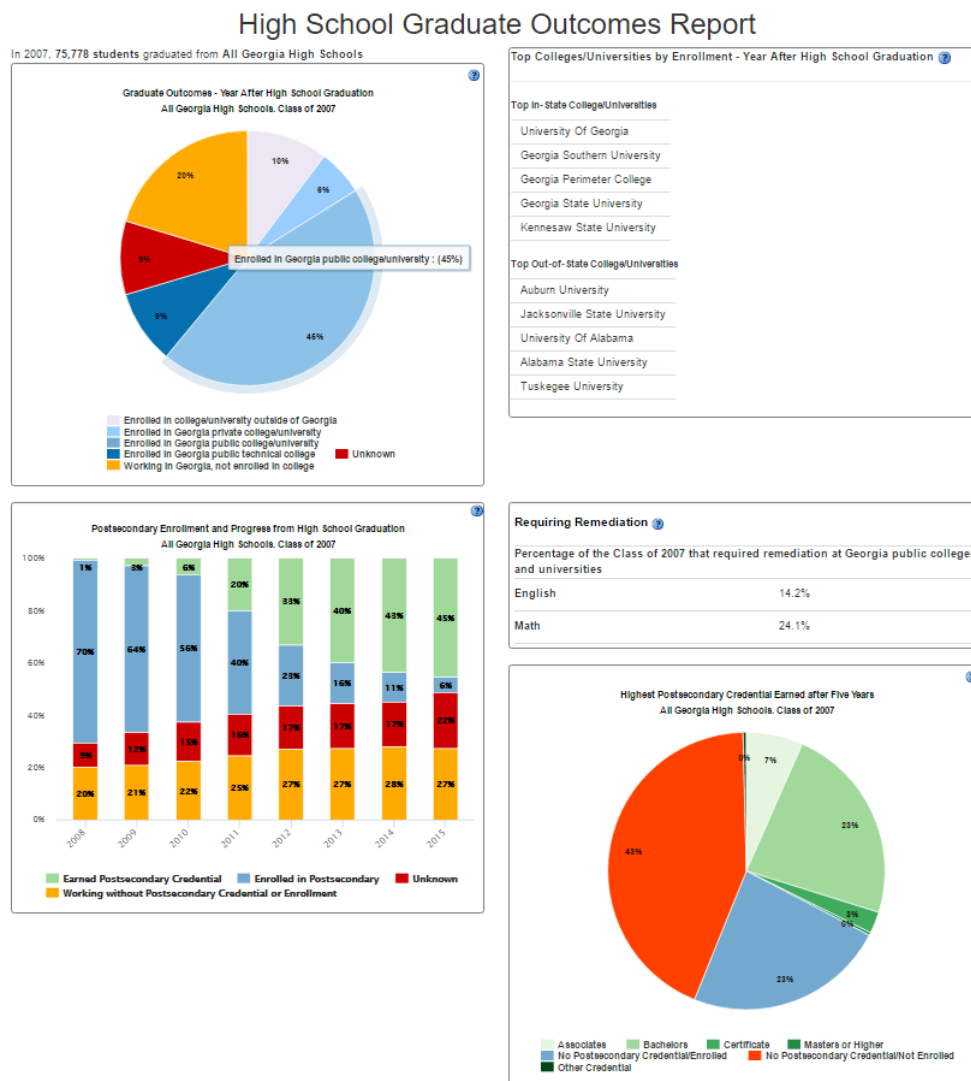
High School Graduate Outcomes Report

The Georgia Higher Learning and Earnings Dashboard, released in January 2017 and updated in October 2017, displays earnings information for Georgia technical college and college/university graduates who work in Georgia after earning their degrees. The interactive dashboard includes comparisons of first and fifth year wages by degree type, program of study (major), and college/university. The dashboard can be used to compare earnings for the same programs offered at different colleges/universities. A screenshot is below.

The dashboard includes a link to the Georgia Student Finance Commission's (GSFC's) GAFutures.

Welcome to the **Georgia Higher Learning and Earnings (GHLE)** dashboard. This dashboard provides earnings information for college graduates one year and five years after graduation. Earnings information can be viewed by degree type, major, college, or any combination of those choices.

* **Important Note:** In addition to degree type and earnings, it is important to note that many factors, such as student ability/motivation, college selectivity, and job market conditions, affect earnings. The information on this site should not be interpreted as a guarantee of employment or earnings. The results should be seen as one piece of information that students and parents can use when making major and degree choices.

* **Directions:** To begin, please select an option below using either the drop down menu or by typing in the information you are looking for. A degree type must be selected first to populate choices in the other fields (available choices are dependent on users previous choices e.g. choosing a Bachelor's degree will only allow you to choose programs and colleges that offer that degree and have data available for it.). You will notice that only one degree type may be chosen at a time. To repopulate the field, either reselect 'Choose a Degree Type' or click the 'Clear Selection' button near the bottom of the page.

Degree Type:	Program of Study:	College:
Bachelor's ▾	Mathematics & Statistics ▾	Statewide ▾

Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics & Statistics (Statewide)
Summary

* Median earnings are $29,901 one year after graduation and $43,459 five years after graduation.
* There is a $13,558 increase in median earnings from the first to fifth year.
* One year after graduation, earnings are $1,032 higher than the statewide median for Bachelor's degrees.
* Five years after graduation, earnings are $2,625 higher than the statewide median for Bachelor's degrees.

Earnings After One Year

	25th	50th Percentile	75th
	$16,725	$29,901	$41,929

Earnings After Five Years

	25th	50th Percentile	75th
	$28,598	$43,459	$58,499

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The Schools Like Mine Dashboard, released in March 2017, allows parents, educators, and community members to find schools with similar student populations to their school. It also lists the school's letter grade and College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) to allow for comparison of performance between the "like" schools. The site now contains 2017 CCRPI information. An example is displayed below:

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Georgia Schools Like Mine

Select a district, school, grades served, and two comparison criteria to find Georgia public schools that are similar to yours.

Select a District
Whitfield County

Select a School
New Hope Elementary School

Select Grades Served
Elementary

Select Comparison Criterion #1
Economically Disadvantaged

Select Comparison Criterion #2
Race/Ethnicity

Similar schools for **Whitfield County - New Hope Elementary School** based on **Economically Disadvantaged** and **Race/Ethnicity** .

District	School	Letter Grade/ CCRPI	Enrollment#	Economically Disadvantaged%	Students with Disabilities%	English Language Learners%	Asian%	Black%	Hispanic%	Other%	White%
Whitfield County	**New Hope Elementary School**	**B (84.6)**	**632**	**26**	**10**	**21**	**2**	**1**	**32**	**5**	**60**
Hall County	Sardis Elementary School	D (67.2)	601	29	14	16	1	4	29	1	65
Cherokee County	Oak Grove Elementary School	C (76.7)	584	28	11	26	1	10	35	6	48
Dalton City	Westwood Elementary School	C (75.4)	554	27	11	18	2	5	37	6	49

Governor's Honors Program (GHP)

The Georgia Governor's Honors Program (GHP) is a residential summer program for gifted and talented high school students who are rising juniors and seniors during the program. The program offers instruction that differs significantly from the typical high school classroom and provides students with the academic, cultural, and social enrichment necessary to become the next generation of global critical thinkers, innovators, and leaders.

GHP is held in mid-summer (mid-June to mid-July) as a residential educational experience on a college campus. In the mornings and afternoons, students attend classes in specific areas of study. In the evenings, students participate in a wide variety of social and instructional opportunities. The program covers the majority of expenses for students, including meals and rooms. The only required and expected costs to the students are travel expenses to and from the interviews, a few basic supplies for classes and dorm rooms, and spending money as desired during the program. A full-time GOSA program manager directs and leads the program and directly oversees the dean of residence life, the dean of instruction, and the dean of students.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

2017 Session
650 finalists from across Georgia attended the 2017 GHP session. The number of students from Metro Atlanta schools increased from 2016 to 2017.

	2015	**2016**	**2017**
Metro Atlanta students	58.5%	50.6%	57.4%
Students outside of Metro Atlanta	35.3%	39.0%	32.8%
Private school students	6.2%	10.4%	9.8%
Home school students*	0	0.6% (4 students)	0.2% (1 student)

*Home school students are also counted within the first two rows that indicate those students' geographic regions.

Partnership with Berry College
GOSA successfully transitioned GHP to Berry College (Berry) for both the February 2017 interviews/auditions and the summer session. Berry served as a strong program partner both before and during the program to ensure that GHP faculty and students had access to all program facilities and necessary equipment. During the summer, most field trips were held on campus, and the student body maximized the campus facilities. GHP students accessed facilities in science (including field studies), agricultural science, and theatre that have not been available in past years. Many subject areas also took advantage of team building activities through the Berry Outdoor Leadership Development (BOLD) program.

Nomination and Interview Process

In advance of the 2017 nomination process, GOSA provided two district GHP coordinator training sessions (North and South Georgia) for both new and experienced coordinators. Total participation increased over 20% from the previous year.

As of November 28, 2017, 3,174 students had been selected from districts and independent schools as state nominees. Approximately 1,700 of these students will be selected as semi-finalists. These semi-finalists will attend the state interview event, staffed with 300 volunteer teachers, in late February at Berry College. The program will select approximately 660 finalists.

Staffing

GOSA has worked with the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) to post position announcements and is continuing to interview for over 100 summer staff members. Currently, GOSA has selected approximately 76% of the instructional staff. All summer staff will be required to pass federal background checks again this year.

Upcoming Work

Berry will host the 2018 interviews/auditions and the summer program. GOSA and Berry will enhance all aspects of the program including, but not limited to: providing additional student service opportunities, increasing the availability of medical care for students, further developing relationships with Berry faculty and staff as guest instructors, maximizing facilities and equipment, and enhancing student recreational and seminar opportunities.

Grant Programs

Innovation Fund

The Innovation Fund invests in local education agencies (LEAs), traditional public schools, charter schools, and regional education service agencies (RESAs) that are planning, implementing, and scaling programs that reimagine education for Georgia's students.

The Innovation Fund began as a $19.4 million fund under Georgia's Race to the Top (RT3) plan. To continue the Innovation Fund beyond RT3, Governor Deal appropriated state funding in Fiscal Years (FY) 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. Since its inception, the Innovation Fund has invested over $35 million of state and federal funding through 164 grants. These grants have focused on developing innovative approaches to STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) applied learning, blended and personalized learning, birth to age eight language and literacy development, and teacher and leader development.

The Innovation Fund also operates the Innovation in Teaching Competition which promotes excellence in the classroom by recognizing and rewarding Georgia's most effective teachers and making their resources available to other educators. Each winning teacher receives a stipend and his/her school receives a grant to support innovative practices. Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) films each educator teaching his/her submitted unit plan to his/her students and makes these videos, along with unit plans and supplementary materials, available online for other educators. Since 2013, the Innovation in Teaching Competition has selected 36 winning educators and provided $258,500 directly to Georgia teachers and schools. These resources are now available on Georgia Public Broadcasting's website.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

FY18 Funding Cycle
The FY18 Funding Cycle launched in August 2017. To prepare applicants, the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) replaced the traditional in-person Technical Assistance Day with a Technical Assistance Webinar Series – providing applicants additional flexibility in meeting the technical assistance requirements. This three-part interactive webinar series covered the Innovation Fund priority areas and available grants, types and levels of innovation, and provided application tips and strategies for each type of grant.

For the FY18 Funding Cycle, GOSA sought to fund programs aligned with the following priority areas:

- Applied Learning with a Focus on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) education,
- Birth to Age Eight Language & Literacy Development,
- Blended and Personalized Learning, and
- Teacher & Leader Development for High-Need Schools.

Applicants could apply for the following grants:

- **Innovation Fund Accelerator ($10,000):** The Innovation Fund Accelerator is a six-month, GOSA-facilitated, planning process that supports schools and districts in developing radically innovative programs that target the root causes of challenging and complex education programs.

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Accelerator participants each receive a $10,000 grant to support activities directly related to the Accelerator, such as travel to and from workshops and site visits to other innovative schools. At the end of the Accelerator, each participating school or district can apply for up to $45,000 to pilot the program it developed.

- **Implementation Grants ($200,000 - $700,000)** provide funding to eligible organizations to pilot an innovative program aligned with one of the Innovation Fund priority areas.

- **Scaling Grants ($200,000 - $700,000)** provide funding to eligible organizations to expand or replicate an existing successful program aligned with one or more of the Innovation Fund priority areas.

In FY18, GOSA received a total of 54 applications (21 Accelerator applications, 26 implementation grant applications, and 7 scaling grant applications) for a total funding request of $21,265,498.94. On November 13, 2017, Governor Deal awarded six Accelerator grants totaling $60,000. On November 28, 2017 Governor Deal awarded two implementation grants and one scaling grant totaling $2,040,895.00. Click here for descriptions of the Accelerator grantees. Click here for descriptions of the implementation and scaling grantees.

Innovation Fund Accelerator Pilot
In FY17, GOSA piloted the Innovation Fund Accelerator with the goal of providing schools and districts additional support in developing purposeful innovations. The Accelerator pilot included the following schools and districts:
- Baldwin County School District,
- Clarke County School District,
- Elm Street Elementary School (Rome City Schools), and
- North Heights Elementary School (Rome City Schools).

From October 2016 to April 2017, these schools and districts attended GOSA-facilitated workshops, visited innovative schools, and collaborated with their teams between workshops and visits to grow their ideas. Throughout the process, they received hands-on, ongoing support and feedback from GOSA. At the end of the six months, participants applied for up to $45,000 to pilot the programs they developed over one year. All four schools and districts received funding and will pilot and evaluate their programs during the 2017-2018 school year.

Based on the Innovation Fund Accelerator Survey, administered in May 2017, the Innovation Fund Accelerator successfully supported districts in understanding innovation, developing purposeful innovations, and learning a strategic process to solve complex education challenges they may face in the future. Specifically:

- 88% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that their understanding of innovation changed over the course of the Accelerator;
- 100% of participants agreed that the program they designed during the Accelerator was stronger than their original idea for an innovative program; and
- 100% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they will use the process they went through during the Innovation Fund Accelerator to address challenging and complex problems in other areas of their work.

Due to this positive feedback, GOSA will continue the Accelerator during FY18 with a newly-selected cohort of six Georgia schools and districts. Descriptions of the FY18 Accelerator grantees are available here.

2017 Innovation Summit
On June 6 and 7, 2017, GOSA convened representatives from its innovative grant programs (Innovation Fund, Reading Mentors Program, Growing Readers, Project Lead the Way, and Professional Learning Grants) at the 2017 Innovation Summit in Athens, GA. During the Summit, participants attended general Launchpad Sessions where they heard from local and national experts and attended breakout sessions aligned with the following strands: innovation, STEAM Applied Learning, Birth to Age Eight Language and Literacy, Blended and Personalized Learning, and Teacher and Leader Development. Following the Summit, attendees could extend their learning by signing up for a post-Summit site visit to one of the schools or districts that presented at the Summit. To view the full Summit agenda, please click here.

Overall, attendees indicated that the Summit was a meaningful event that generated new ideas. Based on the Innovation Fund Summit survey, administered in June 2017:

- 90% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that they left the Summit feeling energized and excited to continue their work;
- 90% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that the Summit expanded their thinking about what is possible in education; and
- 95% of attendees agreed that the Innovation Summit was an effective use of their time.

Innovation Fund Tiny Grants
Innovation Fund Tiny Grants provide funding directly to teachers, schools, and school districts to pilot small-scale projects that directly engage students. In FY17, Tiny Grants ranged from $1,000 to $10,000. The Tiny Grant application is always open, and GOSA reviews applications three times per year (February, June and September). Over the past year, GOSA received 119 applications and awarded 66 grants – totaling $480,025.87 – to schools and districts representing 35 of Georgia's counties. Projects ranged in focus from creating school-based makerspaces, STEAM labs, and tiny houses to creating personalized learning environments and engaging community partners in building children's language and literacy skills.

To view a list and description of the winning Tiny Grants, please visit GOSA's website.

Innovation Fund Foundation
In late 2015, the Innovation Fund Foundation Inc., (IFF) a nonprofit organization established under §O.C.G.A 20-14.26.1, received tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), which allows the IFF to seek contributions from philanthropic organizations and businesses as a continuing source of start-up capital for promising innovations. Over the past year, the IFF Board has worked on developing and refining its vision, mission, and strategy for raising funds to support promising innovations.

Upcoming Work

- Monitor, support, and evaluate the current Innovation Fund grantees.
- Select the FY18 Innovation in Teaching Competition winners and work with GPB to film these teachers in action and make their videos and classroom resources available online.
- Facilitate the 2018 Innovation Fund Accelerator.
- Develop an Accelerator-type grant program to build the capacity of the bottom 5% of Georgia's schools.
- Host the 2018 Innovation Summit.
- Award additional Innovation Fund Tiny Grants.
- Finalize the IFF's strategy for raising funds to support promising innovations.

Reading Mentors Program

[The Reading Mentors Program: A Language and Literacy Partnership (RMP)](#) aims to improve the efficacy of K-3 teachers in literacy instruction through comprehensive coaching support for teachers and leaders at participating schools. Language and Literacy Specialists (LLSs) provide research-based professional learning, personalized one-on-one coaching, and support for data-driven instruction to teachers and administrators. RMP aims to build capacity and facilitate the change needed in each participating school to strengthen instructional practices and help more students read at grade level by the end of third grade. The program currently serves 58 elementary schools in 20 local education agencies (LEAs).

Recent Work/Accomplishments

In spring 2016, RMP extended the three-year grant opportunity to elementary schools that scored below 60 on the Georgia Department of Education's accountability measure, the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI), for three consecutive years. Nineteen schools applied, and RMP began serving these schools during the 2016-2017 school year.

RMP provides virtual and in-person coaching to teachers utilizing the Insight Advance™ online platform. During the 2017-2018 school year, each LLS will virtually coach a minimum of eighteen teachers across their caseloads in addition to in-person coaching. Teachers have responded positively and see the virtual coaching as a low-stakes, non-threatening way to receive constructive feedback and increase classroom effectiveness.

In December 2017, the Research and Evaluation team published the [2016-2017 Reading Mentors Program End-of-Year Evaluation Report.](#) The report assesses the program's performance using results from several evaluation measures, including District and School Satisfaction Surveys, School Literacy Needs Assessments, and DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). Some highlights include:

- 49% of schools saw growth in the percentage of students meeting DIBELS grade-level benchmarks;
- 89% of the LLS team (16 out of 18 LLSs) actively coached ten or more teachers in a virtual coaching platform during the 2016-2017 school year, which was below the program goal of 100%;
- LLSs actively coached an average of 14 teachers through virtual coaching;
- LLSs supported participants through collaborative meetings, classroom observations, modeling, virtual coaching, and email; and
- Teachers identified variation among the LLSs in how often they provided face-to-face support, which may be a result of RMP's differentiated coaching model or inconsistencies among LLSs.

Upcoming Work

- Ensure district staff are aware when RMP implementation expectations do not align with district initiatives, especially with regards to reading assessments, to address redundant or inconsistent messages to schools.

- Annually communicate clear and consistent program expectations to all participants, including teachers, coaches, administrators, and district staff, at the start of each school year.
- Encourage participants to utilize virtual coaching as an additional means to engage with LLSs.
- Monitor LLS feedback through virtual coaching to ensure it is equally as beneficial to teachers as on-site support.
- Build the capacity of schools' Literacy Leadership Teams to facilitate consistent literacy instruction across the curriculum.
- Support teachers in ensuring students are actively and meaningfully engaged in their own learning through student self-assessment and higher-order thinking.
- Conduct longitudinal analyses of RMP students at the school-, grade-, and teacher-level to identify potential areas of deficiency by school.
- Develop targeted professional learning content that addresses areas of deficiency identified through program data.
- Prioritize oral reading fluency as a major professional learning focus area for LLSs and participants.
- Help schools develop sustainability plans for achieving and maintaining improvements in reading performance.

[Click here for a current list of participating districts and schools.](#)

RESA Growing Readers Program

The Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA) Growing Readers Program (GRP) – a professional learning grant targeting K-3 literacy – provides consistent and high-quality professional learning to teachers on effective reading instruction. Through this professional learning, GRP aims to help more children read at grade level by the end of third grade. GRP is part of GOSA's goal to invest in universal RESA initiatives that ensure all regions in Georgia receive access to high-quality, replicable professional learning in reading instruction.

Each of Georgia's 16 RESAs identified one or more reading specialists to provide professional learning paired with ongoing, on-site coaching support for participating teachers. The statewide design team - consisting of literacy experts representing all regions of the state – provides each specialist ongoing training and support on consistent and effective implementation of all program components. In the first year of implementation (2015-2016 school year), GRP served 61 schools, approximately 230 teachers, and over 4,000 students across the state. In the second year of implementation (2016-2017 school year), the program served 67 schools, approximately 410 teachers, and more than 10,000 students.

During the 2017-2018 school year, GRP began using a revised two-year implementation model with a new cohort. Currently, GRP serves 384 teachers in 50 schools. This revised model allows GRP to serve two cohorts of teachers within each participating school to more pervasively impact culture and practice. For a list of current and previously participating schools, click here.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

In August 2017, GOSA's Research and Evaluation team published the 2016-2017 Growing Readers Program End-of-Year Evaluation Report, which included results from professional learning surveys, classroom observations, and classroom assessments.

Administrator Support and Sustainability Sessions
GRP added two program components for the 2017-2018 school year: Administrator Support Sessions and Sustainability Sessions. The first component supports administrators with two half-day sessions to familiarize them with GRP professional learning materials, implementation targets, and anticipated outcomes. These sessions also support successful integration of GRP with existing school initiatives and structures. The second component, Sustainability Sessions, support schools that participated in the first GRP cohort in continuing the practices established through the program. GRP offered a sustainability workshop to all 2016-2017 participants to establish a plan for continued implementation, monitoring, and training completion.

Specialist Training and Support
In August 2017, the design team facilitated a three-day intensive training session for all RESA specialists. During this annual session, specialists reviewed and evaluated data from the 2016-2017 school year and received updated information and materials for professional learning activities. Specialists received explicit training on professional learning expectations and content as well as program requirements and changes. Specialists receive ongoing support and training in whole-group, required sessions that are held at least every two months. In addition, specialists completed additional calibration exercises related to leveled assessments to ensure consistency. The program also developed new rubrics and support materials to maintain consistency in observations and reporting of assessment practices and data.

Professional Learning and On-Site Coaching
Specialists have provided the two-day Professional Learning Session One for all new cohort participants. GRP held administrator sessions for all new administrators and Sustainability Workshops for all cohort one participants. Schools that opted to complete remaining professional learning as part of their sustainability plan have completed those sessions. To date, specialists have completed baseline observations for all 2017-2018 participants, and almost 450 educators have participated in professional learning sessions.

Implementation Consistency
- As of May 2017, all RESAs implemented all GRP components, including the completion of three observations, submission of assessment data, and three professional learning sessions.
- 94% of year one participants and 92% of year two participants felt that the professional learning sessions were useful, engaging, and well-executed.
- Based on phone interviews and session feedback forms, most participants agreed that GRP is teaching them new classroom strategies to support struggling readers.

Teacher Practice
- GRP met its goal of at least 90% of year one teachers conferring effectively with students, assessing students formally and informally, and using assessment data to guide instruction. However, only 80% of year one teachers effectively implemented strategy groups to support students.
- Year two teachers increased their confidence in utilizing GRP strategies. They also implemented independent reading time and conferences with struggling readers more often in their second year.
- Over 90% of teachers, administrators, and coaches felt that GRP was valuable in improving literacy instruction and were likely to continue using GRP strategies in the future.
- By the end of the year, over 95% of teachers believed they were at least proficient in conferring with students and selecting targeted interventions, compared to less than 30% of teachers at the beginning of the year.
- On average, administrators and coaches observed a 70-percentage point increase in the percentage of teachers conferring with students, using assessment data to inform instruction, implementing targeted interventions, balancing instructional formats, and sharing strategies with other teachers.
- All participants recommended increasing the number of GRP participants to scale the program's impact schoolwide.

Student Outcomes
- The percentage of students meeting GRP benchmarks grew by 46 percentage points – from 11% at the beginning of the year to 57% at the end of the year.
- Kindergarten saw the most growth (60 percentage points) in the percentage of students meeting GRP benchmarks at the end of the year.
- 38% of target students, who were below grade level at the beginning of the year, met grade level benchmarks by the end of the year.

- Histograms displaying changes in reading levels throughout the year indicate that, although most target students were still below grade level at the end of the year, many target students advanced their reading level during 2016-2017 school year.

Upcoming Work

Using the results of the evaluation, the design team is focusing on three specific goals for 2017-2018:
- Restructuring the professional learning schedule to provide more incremental content to one cohort over two years;
- Designing and implementing additional tools for calibration activities with specialists to ensure the consistency of on-site implementation and observation; and
- Designing and implementing an administrator support component to help ensure that implementation is effective and schools sustain program practices beyond the cohort participation period.

In addition to these goals, ensuring statewide consistency of program implementation remains at the forefront of all grant activities, and the program continues to explore avenues for scalability.

South Georgia STEM Grant in Partnership with Project Lead The Way

The South Georgia STEM Grant is a partnership with Project Lead The Way (PLTW), a nonprofit organization that provides transformative learning experiences for K-12 students and teachers across the United States. Through this partnership, GOSA leverages private matching funds – allowing schools in South Georgia to implement PLTW's K-12 pathways in computer science, engineering, and biomedical science. Initially, this project served schools in Southwest Georgia. However, in 2018, the program expanded to serve schools in Southeast Georgia as well. In the first year of implementation, districts in the Chattahoochee-Flint, Coastal Plains, and Southwest Georgia RESAs were eligible for participation, and grantees started 61 programs in 59 schools representing 14 districts. During the first summer of training, 131 teachers successfully completed core training. In the second year of implementation, the first cohort of eligible districts added 19 additional programs.

For a list of currently participating schools, click here.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

- GOSA and PLTW held technical assistance sessions for each newly-eligible RESA.
- Participating districts attended regional summer trainings for the Launch (elementary) and Gateway (middle school) PLTW programs.
- In summer 2017, 63 teachers participated in core PLTW training.

Upcoming Work

- Award a new cycle of grants in Southeast Georgia to support seamless K-12 STEM pathways in computer science, biomedicine, or engineering.
- Continue to monitor the implementation of cohort one schools/districts.
- Support the planning and implementation of additional programs for schools and districts in their first and second years of implementation.
- Support program implementation for the newly-selected schools and districts.

Georgia Rural Advanced Placement (AP) STEM Initiative

In 2016, GOSA and the College Board partnered to establish the Georgia Rural AP STEM Initiative which aims to create a vertical pathway to student success in AP STEM courses in high-need, rural Georgia districts. Specifically, the initiative seeks to build enrollment and increase the number of students taking and earning qualifying scores on the AP exams in AP Computer Science A, AP Computer Science Principles, and AP Statistics.

In winter and spring 2017, GOSA awarded grants to seven school districts. Each grantee received up to $30,000 to create, strengthen, and implement rigorous middle and high school STEM courses in collaboration with College Board. As part of this initiative, College Board will also provide ongoing, personalized, professional learning for grant-funded teachers and administrators and facilitate a mentorship program between grant participants and Georgia AP teachers who have demonstrated successful teaching practices in the identified courses.

Awarded Districts and Focus Areas
- Appling County School District: Computer Science
- Baldwin County School District: Computer Science
- Coffee County School System: Computer Science
- Colquitt County Schools: Computer Science
- McDuffie County Schools: Statistics
- Peach County Schools: Statistics
- Thomas County Schools: Computer Science and Statistics

Recent Work/Accomplishments

- Each participating district received AP Summer Institute training for high school and middle school teachers.
- The program provided monthly on-site and virtual mentoring activities to each participating high school AP teacher.
- The program provided regional follow-up workshops for all participating districts to support grant implementation and goals.
- Each participating district identified and implemented a vertical alignment plan for the AP course targeted by its grant and taught that course during the 2017-2018 school year.

Upcoming Work

Over the next year, the partnership between GOSA and The College Board will:
- Provide regional workshops for currently participating districts through the end of the 2017-2018 school year;
- Continue to identify additional mentor teachers to target additional districts for participation in the second AP STEM Cohort; and
- Monitor and evaluate cohort one's implementation and progress.

Partnership with New Leaders

In 2017, GOSA partnered with New Leaders – a nonprofit organization dedicated to developing transformational school leaders – to elevate the quality of leadership throughout Georgia. Specifically, this partnership will provide Leading Instruction, an intensive professional development opportunity, to 70 teachers from the Richmond County and Dougherty County School Systems. Through Leading Instruction, these 70 teachers will receive targeted professional learning which emphasizes real-world, reflective practice combined with expert coaching and classroom-centered assignments. Ultimately, the program will equip these current and aspiring leaders with instructional expertise aligned to high standards and prepare them to elevate achievement in their classrooms and schools.

Recent Work/Accomplishments

- The program provided an intensive, on-site, three-day induction professional learning program to participating Dougherty and Richmond County School System teachers.
- All participating teachers have received monthly on-site and virtual coaching.
- New Leaders facilitators and coaches and district and school leadership teams have held on-site district planning, monitoring, and evaluation meetings to ensure successful progress and implementation.

Upcoming Work

Over the next year, the New Leaders partnership will:
- Continue to provide targeted professional learning opportunities and monthly coaching activities for participating teachers;
- Continue to monitor the impact of professional learning and coaching on students in participating teachers' classrooms; and
- Evaluate the success of cohort one to determine the partnership's next steps.

Connections for Classrooms Grant Program (CFC)

Connections for Classrooms is a competitive grant program joining multiple state agencies around the common goal of ensuring Georgia schools and classrooms have the high-speed broadband access required for digital and blended learning. The program has granted more than $88 million from the following two sources:

- Bond funds appropriated to the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE); and
- State general funds appropriated to the OneGeorgia Authority at the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) manages the funds.

The program is part of a broader statewide effort to expand classroom high-speed broadband access in response to Governor Deal's Digital Learning Task Force recommendations, as well as GaDOE's efforts to enable personalized learning for Georgia students. It complements the expansion of the University System of Georgia's (USG) PeachNet network to connect every Georgia local educational agency (LEA) to its high-speed network (LEAs are school districts, state charter schools, and state schools). The partnership between USG and GaDOE ensured that all district central offices have 100 megabits per second per school of bandwidth as of July 2015. CFC ensures that schools have sufficient network infrastructure to effectively utilize the increased bandwidth.

The CFC grant application and award criteria prioritized funding districts that will leverage the technology to implement digital learning, where students have "some element of control over the time, place, path, and/or pace" of learning.

Over the first three rounds, $77 million in state-funded grants to 159 LEAs has enabled them to receive $129 million in federal E-Rate funds for school network infrastructure – totaling a network infrastructure investment of $206 million. Rounds 4 and 5 increased the investment by providing additional grants for network infrastructure and digital devices for rural, high-need schools.

Round	Amount Awarded	Participating LEAs	Eligible Expenditures
1	$37 million	104	Network Infrastructure
2	$25.3 million	136	E-rate Category 2 (School-Level Infrastructure)
3	$15.1 million	62	E-rate Category 2 (School-Level Infrastructure)
4	$4.0 million	33	Digital Learning Devices
5	$7.2 million	60	E-Rate, Network, and Digital Learning Devices

Map of CFC Rounds 1-3 Network Infrastructure Grantees

Gray districts did not apply for or receive a CFC award.
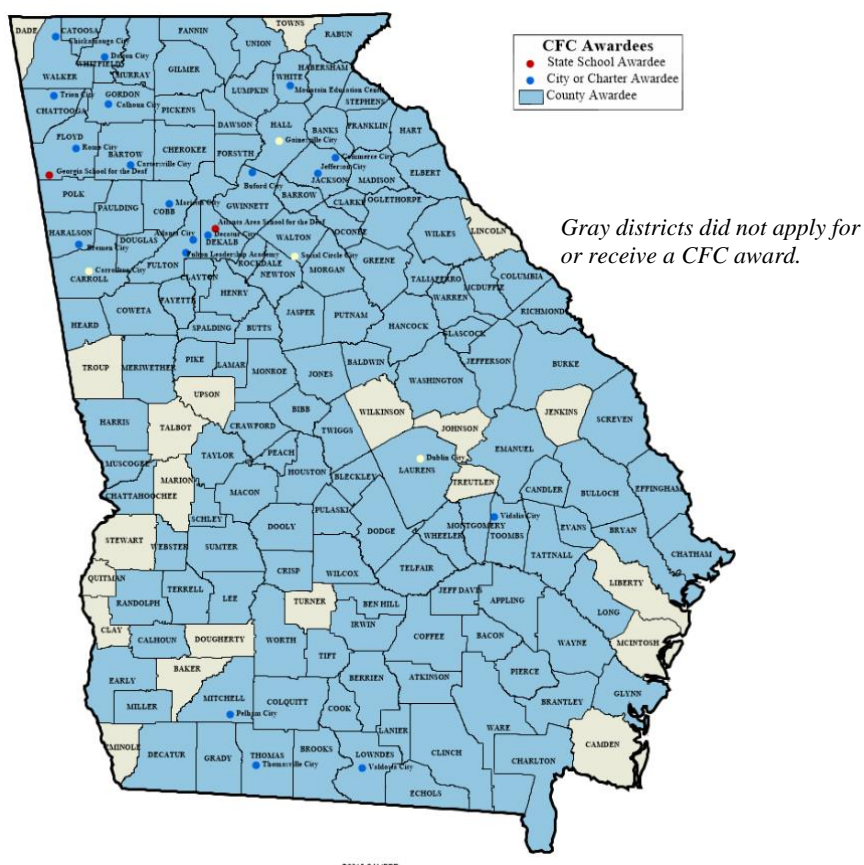
Overview of Grant Rounds

Overview of Rounds 1-3 (Network Infrastructure)

In 2014, CFC provided approximately $37 million in funds for LEAs to upgrade broadband infrastructure at the district, school, and classroom levels. Round 1 reimbursements were closed out on June 30, 2016.

In late 2014, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) infused $2 billion into Category 2 of the federal E-Rate program to focus on building out school- and classroom-level network infrastructure. With these changes, Georgia districts became eligible for as much as $188 million in Category 2 funds over the next five years.

Given this change, Rounds 2 and 3 shifted focus to exclusively provide funds for the LEAs' E-rate local match instead of directly funding infrastructure, allowing schools to leverage federal funds towards their infrastructure needs alongside their grant money. Round 2 fully funded the "local match" for all LEAs that applied for Round 1 grants but still had unfunded school-level infrastructure needs. Approximately $25.3 million was awarded to 136 LEAs, enabling LEAs to receive more than $90 million in E-rate funds.

Round 3 applications were open to all LEAs with remaining E-rate Category 2 eligibility in summer 2015. The Round 3 application closed in October 2015. Sixty-two LEAs applied. Governor Deal announced $15.1 million in Round 3 awards in 2016, which will enable districts to receive $36.8 million in E-rate funds.

As of December 1, 2017, 155 LEAs in Round 1, 2, or 3 had submitted documentation for reimbursement of E-rate FY15 or FY16 Category 2 expenses, and two have submitted documentation for reimbursement of E-rate FY17 Category 2 expenses. One-hundred and three (103) awardees from Round 1, 60 awardees from Round 2, and 11 awardees from Round 3 have closed out their grants. Awardees have under September 30, 2019 to request reimbursement.

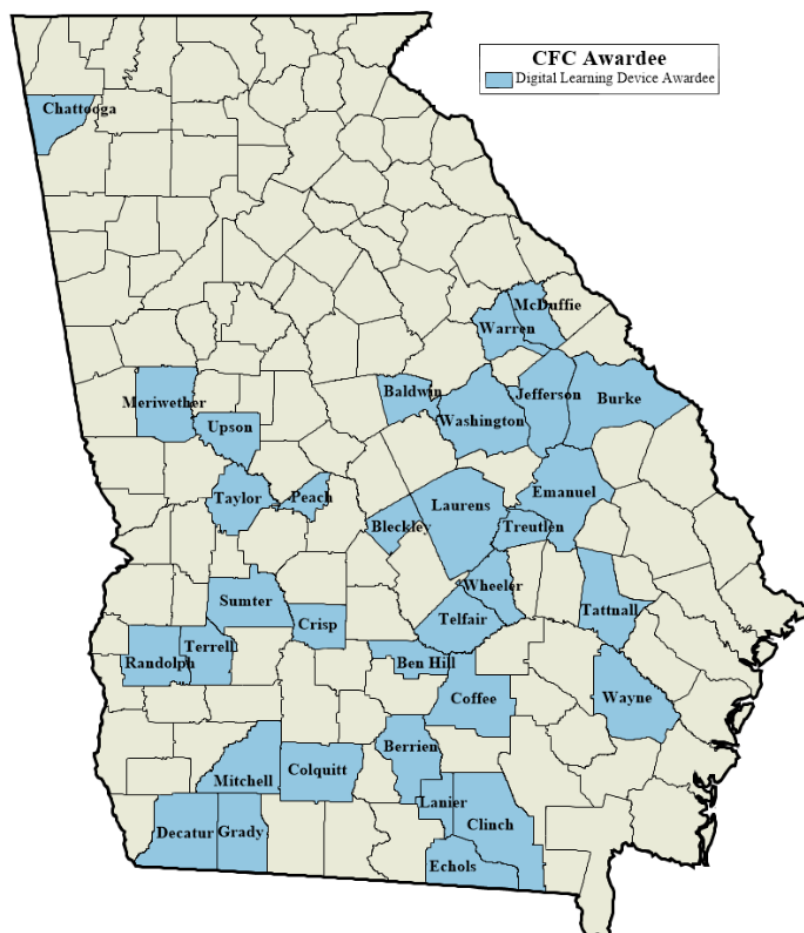Round 4: Digital Learning Device Rural Grant Program

In July 2016, GOSA announced a new round of competitive grant funding, the Digital Learning Device Rural Grant Program. This round enabled rural, high-need districts that are poised to implement digital learning to purchase laptops, tablets, or other mobile devices used for instruction. Approximately $4 million in grants was available in this round.

Eligibility was limited to 72 LEAs determined to be both rural and high-need. Click here for the eligibility criteria and a list of eligible LEAs. Eligible LEAs could apply for up to $75 per student. All devices had to comply with the minimum standards for online testing through the Georgia Milestones Assessment System.

GOSA received applications from 58 of the 72 eligible LEAs by the November 1, 2016 deadline, for a total funding request of $11.9 million. External reviewers scored the applications using a similar process as in prior grant rounds. On December 21, 2016, Governor Deal announced that 33 rural, high-need districts would receive nearly $4 million to purchase laptops and tablets. A map of these awardees is included to the right.

As of December 1, 2017, 23 of 33 awardees had submitted documentation for reimbursement for digital devices and closed out their grants. LEAs have until December 31, 2018 to request reimbursement.

The 2017 Annual Report provides additional information on recent accomplishments. Last year, GOSA also published case studies on five previous CFC grantees (Ben Hill County Schools, Fulton County Schools, Georgia School for the Deaf, Hall County Schools, and Thomas County Schools). Each case study tells a unique story about how increased bandwidth and wireless has impacted their schools. Click here to access the case studies.

Round 5: Addressing Remaining Network and Device Needs

Many previous CFC grantees did not spend all awarded funds. To address districts' remaining network and device needs, the program rescinded these funds for use in another grant round. In summer 2017, GOSA surveyed school district technology directors and charter school leaders to determine a strategic focus for the next round. The survey indicated varying needs across the state. Some districts needed additional network infrastructure, while others needed digital learning devices. In September 2017, GOSA launched Round 5 to support districts' network infrastructure or digital device needs. Rural, high-need districts, state schools, and charter schools were eligible to apply (more details on eligibility criteria are available on the CFC Round 5 website).

By the November 15, 2017 deadline, 61 districts. 8 local charter schools and 3 state charter schools applied for a total of $8.1 million in funding. Nearly 75% of the requests were for Priority 3—Digital Learning Devices. In January 2018, Governor Deal awarded $7.1 million to 60 applicants that scored 50 or higher on the rubric. Awardees include 51 districts, 2 state charter schools, and 7 local charter schools. Seventy-four percent (74%) of the grant funds supported digital devices, while the remaining 26% supported network infrastructure. A map of awardees is available below. Applicants that did not receive funding will have the opportunity to revise and resubmit their applications for rescoring in early 2018.
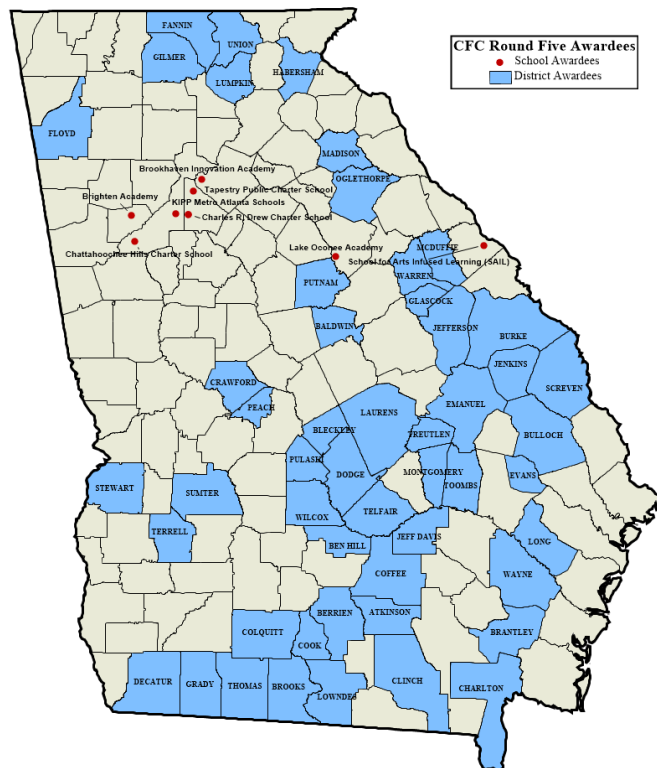
Upcoming Work

Over the next two years, grantees will continue to request reimbursements for approved expenditures as set out in the applicable guidelines for the round in which they received funds. In addition, GOSA will continue to conduct site visits to ensure that grantees are implementing their grant plans with fidelity.

Special Projects

Words2Reading

GOSA developed Words2Reading (words2reading.com), a birth-to-8 language and literacy resource, to increase awareness of the importance of early language and literacy development and to provide families, caregivers, and teachers quick access to easy-to-use resources. The website is a distribution tool for resources and strategies with embedded videos, all categorized by age group and type. Users who access the webpage are presented with four main areas of interest and resources.

- *Parents, Caregivers, and Teachers:* This choice takes users to their selected age group and allows them to filter for appropriate resources.
- *In the Spotlight:* This section regularly rotates featured videos. All spotlight videos are archived for viewing on the *In the Spotlight* landing page.
- *Ready4K GA* - Ready4K is an evidence-based text messaging program for parents of newborns, one, two, three, four, and five-year-olds provided at no cost. Each week, subscribers will receive fun facts and easy tips to boost early learning. Georgia has teamed with Ready4K to design texts around the DECAL GELDS standards. Parents can sign up on the *Ready4K GA* landing page. This feature is also housed on the main Words2Reading landing page. Since the launch of Words2Reading in July 2017, this feature has engaged almost 3,000 new subscribers.
- *Our Partners*: GOSA has partnered with Georgia-based organizations and other providers to bring families, caregivers, and teachers the best resources for developing early language skills and reading readiness. Easy-to-follow videos, web links, downloadable documents, e-books, and audio clips from these partners are available online. Each logo links to the main webpage for that partner.

Demographics ≠ Destiny

GOSA, in conjunction with Georgia Public Broadcasting, created a series of videos that provides actionable resources to assist educators, families, and communities in their school improvement efforts. The Demographics ≠ Destiny video series highlights consistently high-performing Georgia public schools that demonstrate excellent student outcomes, as determined by their College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) scores, despite challenging student demographics. The videos launched at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year and have been shared with districts, schools, and community groups across the state. Each video features schools across multiple geographic regions and grade levels (elementary school, middle school, and high school) and provides examples of specific strategies that have contributed to each school's academic outcomes. The videos, also available with Spanish subtitles, focus on the following topics:

- Overview,
- School Leadership,
- Teaching and Learning,
- Parental Engagement, and
- School Culture.

Real Teachers Real Voices

During summer 2016, Governor Deal convened a Teacher Advisory Committee to provide feedback on the Education Reform Commission's recommendations. Superintendents, RESA directors, legislators, and educational leaders recommended teachers for the Committee, and 90 teachers from across the state were selected to serve on the Advisory Committee. The teachers provided thoughtful insights and feedback in several areas, including teacher recruitment and retention.

During their discussions, the Committee remarked that Georgia teachers can serve as positive voices within their schools and school communities. Specifically, they can grow Georgia's next generation of teachers through an authentic, low-cost media campaign where real teachers speak in their own voices and provide glimpses into the real world of education. They wanted to share their stories about the great things happening in their schools – communicating to potential teachers that the intrinsic joy of working with students and seeing them succeed outweighs the challenges experienced along the way.

At the direction of Governor Deal, GOSA partnered with Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) to launch a series of high-quality public service announcements (PSAs) that showcase real teachers' experiences in the classroom. During the 2017 State of the State Address, Governor Deal shared the first PSA featuring Representative Amy Carter, the Chair of the Teacher Advisory Committee and the only full-time classroom teacher serving in the House of Representatives at that time. Her PSA, *Purpose*, is available on a YouTube channel dedicated to these PSAs, along with all subsequently-developed PSAs.

Each PSA features an outstanding Georgia teacher, most of them members of the Teacher Advisory Committee, and shares a positive message about how teaching holds opportunities to change students' lives.

Graduates Ready to Attain Success in Postsecondary (G.R.A.S.P.) Program Grants

The G.R.A.S.P. (Graduates Ready to Attain Success in Postsecondary) Program Grants support selected Georgia high schools as they work to increase student success in achieving high school graduation, completing postsecondary programs, and participating in the workforce. Specifically, G.R.A.S.P. grants provide selected high schools funding for one additional counselor to support a caseload of at-risk students in achieving academic, personal/social, and career success during the 2018-2019 school year. Allowable grant expenditures include items related to the additional counselor, such as salary, benefits, and travel expenses to required training. The GOSA G.R.A.S.P. program specialist will provide additional support to schools from January 2018 through the 2018-2019 school year. Depending on FY19 and FY20 state budget appropriations, schools may be able to renew their grants for two additional years.

In December 2017, GOSA awarded G.R.A.S.P. grants to nine schools. For a list of the G.R.A.S.P. grant awards click here.

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