

GaDOE Updates

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Spring 2017

FROM SUPERINTENDENT WOODS



Greetings,

The early months of the spring season bring many good things our way, but I especially enjoy the renewed focus on literacy and reading that comes each year.

Thursday, March 2 was Read Across America Day, and here in Georgia we will continue to celebrate Read Across Georgia Month. After that, we will move into the summer reading season. It is always inspiring to see partners from every corner of our communities come together to support summer literacy.

It has been a busy legislative season, and we will share updates from that front as news develops. For this month, though, I wanted to focus on something else: the joy of a book, and the difference that joy can make in the life of a child.

I hope you'll enjoy the story on the right side of this page about Dalayah Arana, a child who has fallen in love with reading and is dedicated to spreading the love of books to other children.

We asked Dalayah why she reads, and her answer was simple: Every book is a new adventure. For every child in Georgia, that's my wish: new adventures through the pages of a book. Happy spring, and happy reading!

Richard Woods

READING & LITERACY



Dalayah Arana loves books -- so much that she's read more than 2,000 of them. That would be an impressive accomplishment for anyone, but it's more exceptional given one fact: Dalayah just turned five years old. We caught up with Dalayah and her parents, Haleema and Miguel Arana, who shared their tips for building a family of readers.

1. Fill your home with books.

The Aranas made sure their children were constantly surrounded by things to read, checking out stacks of books at their local library every two weeks.

2. Let your kids read books that challenge them.

"We let them read books above their grade level, and found that quickly increased their vocabulary and helped them learn new words," Haleema said. "Additionally, we would purchase novels for \$1 during library sales."

3. Make it fun.

The Aranas recommend playing sight word games like word memory match, using educational apps on smartphones and tablets, and having your child read out loud to you to build their confidence.

4. Stick with it.

"The secret really lies in the consistency," Haleema said. "If you do it on a constant basis, all the time, they'll develop a habit."



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PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

A look at manufacturing careers for school counselors



School counselors from across the state gathered last month at Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia, a 650-acre Troup County facility that manufactures up to 360,000 Kia vehicles per year.

The 48 counselors came together with higher education and industry representatives for a Manufacturing Day hosted by the GaDOE. The idea was to address misconceptions about the manufacturing industry and equip counselors with information about opportunities in that sector.

In Georgia, 370,000 people are employed in manufacturing, at an average total compensation of \$67,365. But the industry is facing a skills gap that could leave two million jobs unfilled over the next decade.

“When people say manufacturing doesn’t exist anymore, or it’s dying or it’s going away, it’s simply not true,” said Brian Cooksey of Shaw Industries.

Torri Jackson, president of the Georgia School Counselor Association, said she’s excited about manufacturing opportunities for students.

“Our students are our best resource,” she said. “We will do whatever it takes to make sure they are successful.”

Read more at educatinggeorgiasfuture.org.

RESOURCES

Take a virtual field trip around GA. GPB Education has multiple virtual field trips aligned to the Georgia Standards of Excellence for Social Studies. Learn more at gpb.org/education/virtual-field-trip.

The Atlanta Science Festival is March 14 to 25. There are K-12 events, competitions, and resources available to engage students and teachers in celebrating local science and technology. Visit bit.ly/ATLSci.

FEMA is accepting applications for its Youth Preparedness Council.

Council members are selected based on their dedication to public service, their efforts in making a difference in their communities, and their potential to expand their impact as national advocates for youth preparedness. Visit bit.ly/FEMAYouth for more information.

GEORGIA SCHOOLS SUCCEEDING

State School Superintendent Richard Woods named 674 Advanced Placement (AP) Honor Schools on Feb. 27. The schools were named in six categories: Challenge, Access and Support, Merit, STEM, STEM Achievement, and Humanities.

Gwinnett County Public Schools was named an AP District of the Year, and was one of just three districts in the nation to receive that honor.

1,000+ Georgia schools beat the odds in 2016, performing better than statistically expected on the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI).

The GaDOE released its 2016-17 list of Title I Reward Districts and Schools. Schools were named in two categories: Highest Performing and High Progress.