

GaDOE Updates

EducatingGeorgiasFuture.org

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FROM SUPERINTENDENT WOODS



Here in Georgia, 44 percent of newly hired teachers leave the profession within five years of entering it. To say that's a sobering statistic is understating the issue.

The teaching profession must be appealing to our best and brightest, because our students need excellent -- and experienced -- teachers. That can't happen when teachers are leaving at such a shocking rate.

We wanted to give teachers a voice in this, so we asked, through a survey, for their thoughts on the reasons teachers leave. We received more than 53,000 responses. To put that in perspective, there are just over 100,000 public school teachers in our state.

Those responses we received point to real, measurable steps we can take to keep excellent teachers in the classroom. Some of those changes can be made at the Department level. Some will require the collaboration of legislators and other stakeholders.

What I can promise is that I'm committed to doing everything I can to make sure every kid in Georgia can learn from great teachers.

SHARE YOUR PERSPECTIVE

*Share your thoughts on teacher turnover and retention in Georgia with us on social media. Use the hashtag **#gadoeretentionsurvey***

STATEWIDE NEWS

Teachers speak out on high turnover

Only 2.7 percent of current and former Georgia public school teachers would be "very likely" to recommend teaching as a profession to one of their students, according to a survey conducted by the Georgia Department of Education.

The survey, which was open to current and former teachers in Georgia's public schools, examined the reasons for our state's high rate of teacher turnover. Currently, nearly half -- 44 percent -- of Georgia teachers leave the profession within their first five years of employment.

The teachers surveyed said the main reason for low teacher retention was the number of, and emphasis on, mandated tests. That was closely followed by the current method of evaluating teachers, and the level of teacher participation permitted in decisions that affect the classroom.

The survey also gave teachers a chance to share, anecdotally, their thoughts on the reasons for heavy teacher attrition in Georgia.

"I love my time with my students, but I would never choose this path again."

--Elementary teacher who responded to GaDOE's survey

"I love my time with my students," said one elementary teacher with more than 25 years of experience. "But I would never choose this path again -- which makes me very sad."

Full survey results are now available at gadoe.org, and the GaDOE is communicating about the results with policymakers and other stakeholders.

Read an op-ed from Superintendent Richard Woods on the survey results at gadoe.org under "News & Announcements."



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STATEWIDE NEWS

New federal education law passes

On December 10, the Every Student Succeeds Act -- the reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the end of No Child Left Behind -- was signed into law.

The new law maintains many federal requirements, including the requirement to test students in grades three through eight and at least once in high school in ELA and math, and once each grade span (elementary, middle, high) in science. However, it offers states greater flexibility in teacher and school accountability.

“I am encouraged by this new legislation because, when I was at the school level, I experienced firsthand the impact of NCLB,” Superintendent Richard Woods said. “Though NCLB drew our attention to certain groups of students and introduced more accountability, unrealistic expectations and a one-size-fits-all approach to education ensured its failure.”

The process of developing a state plan based on the new law is currently underway.

FROM THE STATE SCHOOLS



GaDOE congratulates this year's Teacher of the Year for Georgia's State Schools, Sarah Sims.

Sarah is a fourth grade teacher at the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf.

GaDOE oversees three state schools: the Georgia Academy for the Blind, Georgia School for the Deaf and Atlanta Area School for the Deaf.

AROUND THE DISTRICTS

Reward Districts and Schools named

The Georgia Department of Education has announced its 2015-16 list of Title I Reward Districts and Schools, designations that reward the highest-performing Title I districts and schools, as well as the schools making the most progress. The 2015-16 Reward Districts are Forsyth County, Oconee County, Jefferson City, and Coweta Charter Academy. A list of the 2015-16 Reward Schools can be found at bit.ly/reward1516.

SOCIAL MEDIA VOICES



“Chalker Elementary students in Cobb County love to code daily during morning enrichment time!”
@ChinitaAllen on Twitter

Why GaDOE Updates?

This newsletter is intended primarily as a print communication for parents and other stakeholders who may not receive email, web, and social media updates from the Georgia Department of Education. However, the newsletter is available via email. Visit bit.ly/gadoenewsletter to sign up.