Our end goal here at the Department of Education -- the mission that guides our work each day -- is to graduate students who are ready to learn, ready to live, and ready to lead.

Through the collaborative efforts of many partners, including the Get Georgia Reading campaign, we were able to give every kindergarten and pre-k student in Georgia a book of their very own. I hope this will play a part in encouraging a love of reading that will enable students to learn throughout their lives, even when their formal education is completed.

This year, we were also able to provide a pocket copy of the U.S. Constitution, and other founding documents, for every fourth grade student. Thanks to the support of generous donors, this was done at no expense to Georgia taxpayers. An increased understanding of the principles that guide our nation will, I hope, motivate our students to serve as leaders in their communities throughout their lives.

We've also posted three new computer science courses for public review and comment. In line with the Governor's computer programming initiative, students taking these courses would be eligible to receive a core math, science, or foreign language credit. It's our hope that this will provide further chances for our students to engage with computer science and STEM learning, opening up rich career opportunities for the future.

As always, I welcome your feedback about this work. If you have comments or questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at rwoods@doe.k12.ga.us.

Eight Georgia public schools have received National Blue Ribbon recognition. Congratulations to KIPP STRIVE Academy (Atlanta), Alexander II Math & Science Magnet (Bibb), Hoboken Elementary (Brantley), Clairemont Elementary (Decatur City), Johns Creek Elementary (Forsyth), Davidson Fine Arts (Richmond), Esther F. Garrison School of Visual & Performing Arts (Savannah-Chatham), and Rosemont Elementary (Troup)! Learn more at educatinggeorgiasfuture.org and click “Civic Awareness” on the right side of the page.
AROUND THE DEPARTMENT

New computer science courses proposed
The State Board of Education has posted standards for three new computer science courses for public review and comment. If approved, students in any of the proposed courses -- Embedded Computing, Web Development, and Game Design, Animation and Simulation -- would be eligible to receive a core math, science, or foreign language credit. To view the proposed course standards and provide feedback, visit bit.ly/gadoeCS.

New Student Advisory Council selected
Superintendent Woods has selected 110 Georgia students to serve on his 2015-16 Student Advisory Council. These middle and high school students were selected from a pool of 1,500 students who applied to serve on the council; they represent charter, virtual, and traditional public schools in every RESA district in Georgia. They will meet with Superintendent Woods to discuss the impact of state policies in the classroom.

GEORGIA'S FUTURE WORKFORCE

GaDOE’s Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) division is hosting Partners Educating Georgia’s Future Workforce meetings this fall, giving business and community partners a chance to learn more about CTAE in Georgia. View a schedule of remaining meetings below. For more information, visit georgiasfutureworkforce.org.

Oct. 13: Region 12, Beach High School, Savannah
Oct. 14: Region 9, Toombs Co. HS, Lyons
Nov. 2: Region 8, Pratt-Whitney Engine, Midland
Nov. 9: Region 6, Hutchings Complex, Macon
Nov. 16: Region 7, Grovetown HS, Grovetown
Nov. 18: Region 5, East Jackson HS, Commerce

Supporting Literacy

Pre-k, kindergarten students get books
At the beginning of the 2015-16 school year, every kindergarten and pre-k student in Georgia received a book to take home, an initiative organized by GaDOE and partners of the Get Georgia Reading campaign.

Each book comes with an activity for teachers to use before sending the books home, and resources for parents and families.

This project was funded through a portion of Georgia’s remaining Race to the Top funding and benefited from GaDOE’s partnerships with the Office of Governor Nathan Deal, the Office of First Lady Sandra Deal, the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement, the Department of Early Care and Learning, the Get Georgia Reading Campaign, and the Rollins Center for Language & Literacy at the Atlanta Speech School.

Prepare for school with GAREADY4K
Parents of four- and five-year-olds can now receive tips, facts, and resources for pre-k and kindergarten. To opt in, text GAREADY4K to 313131. This is a free program to help prepare four- and five-year-olds for kindergarten, thanks to a collaboration between the Georgia Department of Education and Stanford University.

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