



Richard Woods, Georgia's School Superintendent
"Educating Georgia's Future"

Op-Ed by Superintendent Woods: *VISION 2020*

[VISION 2020 document](#)

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Here's one thing I know for sure: no group, business, or organization can thrive without a clear vision and strategic plan to guide its work.

Success in our public schools is no different.

At the Georgia Department of Education, our primary purpose is providing high-quality service and support for schools and districts, so they're able to offer a holistic education to each and every child in our state. To get this done – to ensure that students are graduating ready to learn, ready to live, and ready to lead – we must cast an ambitious and attainable vision, paired with clear and measurable goals.

That's why I've created GaDOE's *VISION 2020*. This is not a new direction, but an expression of the GaDOE's strategic plan as we move forward in placing the child back into the center of Georgia's education system.

Our *VISION 2020* ensures that we remain fully focused on supporting the needs of our children.

By 2020...

- Every child will have access to **Georgia-owned and Georgia-grown standards**, and teachers will have access to high-quality instructional **resources and support**.
- Every child in Georgia will be on a **path to being proficient** in reading by third grade and being proficient in math by fifth grade.
- Georgia will **exceed the national average graduation rate**.
- Every child in Georgia will earn **college and/or career credit** before they graduate high school.
- The number of high-stakes tests will be **reduced to the federal minimum** while support for diagnostic tools in all core content areas will be provided.
- Every child in Georgia will have access to a **STEM or STEAM** certified school.
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- Every child in Georgia will have access to **computer science and fine arts learning opportunities**.
- Every teacher and leader in Georgia will have access to high-quality, relevant, **personalized professional learning**.
- State and federal processes, procedures, and policies will be streamlined and integrated in order to provide **maximum flexibility to districts** while ensuring transparency to taxpayers.
- We will increase the number of Georgia districts that **meet or exceed the goals of their performance contracts** through innovative practices, academic growth, and stakeholder engagement.
- Seventy percent of public schools will achieve a **4- or 5-star climate rating**.
- At least **20% of the meal requirements for the student lunch will be comprised of Georgia Grown products**.
- Every elementary and middle school student will have access to at least **30 minutes of physical activity per day**.
- We will ensure an **open and clear line of communication** to the Georgia Department of Education and continual opportunities to provide meaningful, ongoing feedback.

We face real challenges in education – but often, I think we overcomplicate the solutions. We chase fads and silver bullets as we seek to improve. The reality is, in order to truly improve education, we have to focus on the fundamentals – that’s what helped generations of public-school graduates lead the United States to become the greatest nation in the world.

To educate Georgia’s future – our children – we must have a forward-thinking vision. **VISION 2020** focuses on attainable goals that will benefit all students. When we meet the goals and vision set forth in this plan, I believe we’ll be well on our way to providing a world-class education for Georgia’s students.

Richard Woods, a 22-year public school educator and former small business owner, is Georgia’s School Superintendent.

Learn more: [VISION 2020 Document](#)