

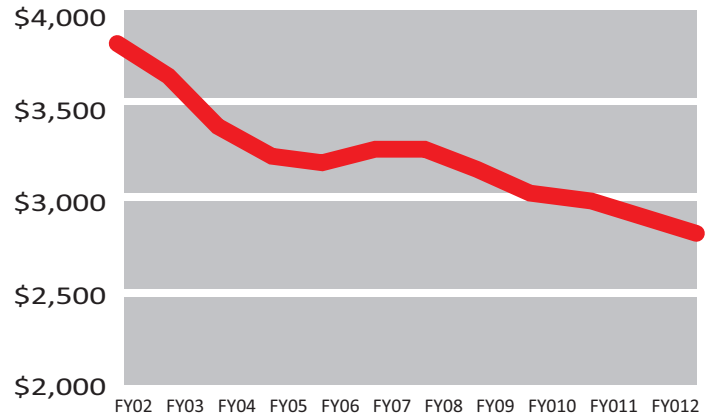
What is happening to Georgia's schools?

The opportunities for our children – and the prosperity of our state – are being severely undermined by the continuing erosion in state support to our schools. The extent of the cuts and the consequences for our students and our state are much more serious than generally recognized.



State Support to Local Schools¹

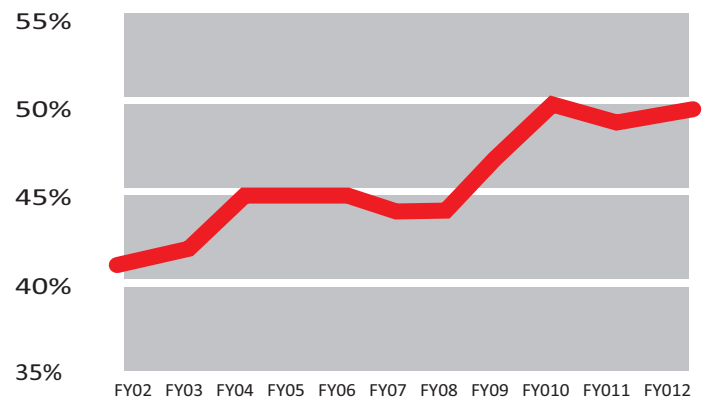
(on a per-student, inflation-adjusted basis)



Over the last decade, the total allotments of state funds to local school systems have fallen by over 25% on a per-student, inflation-adjusted basis.

Dependence on Local Funds²

(as a percent of total state and local revenues)



Local revenues have been used to offset the loss in state funding, but this source is being strained by the decline in property values.

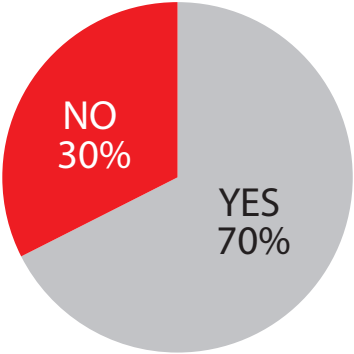
In those areas with a low tax base, the reduction in state support has been even more harmful to our schools than in the state as a whole.



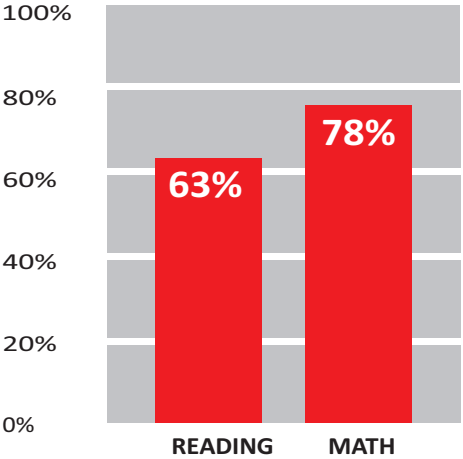
How well is Georgia doing in education?

A tragically large number of Georgia's students are not learning even the most basic skills or graduating from high school. This stark reality cannot be ignored.

Regular Diploma³



Basic Skills in Fourth Grade⁴



Will investing in our schools make a difference?

Yes, the needed improvements can be made by enabling our schools to offer a full Instructional program for every student. Capable teachers, active parents, and effective leaders are also essential. The austerity cuts must be ended, and the components of the funding formula should be set at a realistic level, based on the most cost-effective approaches.

Make Georgia strong by supporting our schools!

The best way to strengthen our economy and reduce crime is to develop the skills of our work force. Georgia cannot prosper unless we meet this challenge.

The State of Georgia has a constitutional and moral obligation to provide an adequate education for all of our students. This duty can be fulfilled without an increase in tax rates if existing taxes are collected and special exemptions are eliminated.

Georgia has stalled and will not move ahead unless we invest more in education and expect more from our schools. The future of our state hangs in the balance, and there is much we can do that is not being done.

Footnotes to tables

- ¹ Based on the statewide allotment sheets for school operations shown on the GDOE website, the price index for state and local governments calculated by the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the recommended state budget for FY 12.
- ² Based on the revenue reports shown on the GDOE website and projections for FY 11 and FY 12.
- ³ Represents the percentage of ninth graders who earn a regular diploma from high school four years earlier according to the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate, which is similar to the methodology that will be required by USDOE in FY 11. Based on graduation data for FY 10 from the 2009-2010 Report Card and enrollment data for FY 06, FY 08, and FY 09 from the GDOE website.
- ⁴ Based on reading and math scores at the Basic Level by fourth graders in Georgia in 2009 on the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The percentages for Proficient were 29% and 34%, respectively.