



A critical component of the mission of the Georgia Council of Teachers of Mathematics is to promote a high-quality mathematics education for all students that prepares them to compete in a global workplace. We believe that the current *Mathematics Georgia Standards of Excellence* provide the opportunity for students to learn grade-level appropriate content with the development of conceptual understanding and critical thinking skills that prepare them for higher mathematics content as they transition to college and career. It is critically important that any revisions to the standards not lower the expectations we place upon our students. To do so would weaken their education and place them at a competitive disadvantage. Absent the expertise of Georgia's own math educators reviewing standards revisions, there is a real danger that the final product may hurt Georgia's students!

What everyone needs to know about the current [Mathematics Georgia Standards of Excellence](#) (MGSE):

❖ **Georgia students are rising to the challenge of our standards and success is trending.**

- According to the Education Week's 2019 Quality Counts report released on September 4, 2019, Georgia ranks 13th in the nation for K -12 achievement. "Georgia's K – 12 Achievement score of 74.4 was also higher than the national average of 73." In the communication about the report from the Georgia Department of Education, Superintendent Woods commented, "Our work is certainly not finished, but we're moving in the right direction, and I continue to see indicators that this strategy is working."
- In 2018, GA high school students made a 14-point gain on the revised national Student Achievement Test (SAT). This gain is unprecedented in our state's history and was made with the largest number of students ever recorded taking the SAT in GA (66%). It is our belief that this gain is an indicator of a trend of steady improvement resulting from the better preparation of our GA students over the last 7 years with the implementation of both the CCGPS and the MGSE. This belief was publicly shared by our current state superintendent in this [All on Georgia](#) article and he credited the GSE as a reason for our student improvement.
- In 2018, 46% of Grade 3 students in GA scored at the Proficient or Distinguished levels in Mathematics on the GA Milestones. In 2019, 50% of students scored at the Proficient or Distinguished levels in Grade 4, a 4% gain in one year. This cohort of students has experienced the MGSE for the past 3 years and as previously noted with the SAT results, GCTM expects slow and steady growth over time for all students with the current MGSE.
- Since 2015, there has been a nearly 8 percentage point gain in students reaching proficiency in 3rd grade math – that means an estimated 10,800 more students are now proficient.

❖ **Georgia math teachers have been deeply involved – and are deeply invested – in our current standards.**

- In 2014-2015, teams of GA mathematics teachers worked to revise and refine the GA mathematics standards. This collaborative work resulted in the current MGSE and reflects the changes to the standards that GA mathematics teachers across the state wanted for our GA students to be successful in their future education and career choices.
- The MGSE are based on decades of validated research supporting a progression for learning mathematics content and instructional practices that best prepare each and every student for postsecondary education or a 21st century postsecondary career of their choice.
 - [How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience, and School](#)
 - [Adding it Up: Helping Children Learn Mathematics](#) (2 lead editors from GA universities)
 - [Foundations for Success: The Final Report of the National Mathematics Advisory Panel](#)



❖ **Staying the course is a fiscally smart decision both in the short and long-term.**

- GA school districts have invested a great amount of their own taxpayer monies in professional development. They've aligned curriculum to better equip teachers with continued content and pedagogical knowledge and skills to provide their students with meaningful learning experiences, while utilizing well-developed resources for the current standards. Changes to the standards will require districts to spend additional taxpayer monies to repeat this process yet again.
- Changes to the current MGSE standards will require revisions to the GA Milestones tests administered across the state and additional professional development for teachers – all of which costs time and money. The GA taxpayers will need to incur the financial burden of changes made to the Milestones tests to align items with any revised standards. New items will need time to be validated, further extending the time frame needed to know the impact of the revisions for our students. In addition, districts who have purchased or developed their own interim formative assessments aligned to the current standards, will have to spend their own monies to revise those district assessments to match any changes to the standards.
- Business leaders across Georgia and nationally have been clear on the skills they need and the MGSE deliver. The content and practice standards support the four 21st century skills most commonly requested by GA and national business leaders to prepare students for their current and future workforce. These are: 1) critical thinking; 2) creativity; 3) collaboration; and 4) communication and are described in detail in [Preparing 21st Century Students for a Global Society: An Educator's Guide to the "Four Cs"](#). A strong and competent workforce is essential for a strong economy, and these standards prepare students to meet the competitive demands of the workforce.

❖ **The MGSE are a set of goals for what students should know, understand, and be able to do in mathematics at the end of each grade from Kindergarten-Algebra 2. They are not a curriculum or a textbook for teachers, nor will revising them eliminate required testing.**

- The standards themselves are written in language intended for mathematics educators to understand what needs to be learned in each grade/course and the GaDOE mathematics team provides standards support for the public and teachers at GeorgiaStandards.org. In addition, RESA mathematics specialists throughout GA provide further support for the standards upon district request. Every district in GA has the freedom to choose: 1) how to implement the standards; 2) what mathematics professional development teachers receive; 3) the instructional strategies used to teach mathematics in their own district; and 4) what supports and resources to provide their district students and parents.
- If the MGSE are eliminated completely, our state will still be required to administer tests. GA is required to administer annual GA Milestones assessments, regardless of what standards we have in place. However, it is in the best interest of our students that the tests are based on the current mathematics standards in Grades 3-Algebra 2. If we change the standards without changing the test, student scores will fall and will not be an accurate reflection of what they have learned. Changing the tests could be a very costly endeavor. All other testing that students experience in each GA district is the choice of the district and classroom teacher. GA districts do not participate in any of the tests that were created as a result of any federal initiatives.