



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



Georgia Agricultural Education

From the Desk of John (Chip) Bridges – Program Manager

The Georgia Agricultural Education Act Defining the Program and Expanding to Elementary Schools

Governor Nathan Deal recently signed the very popular “Georgia Agricultural Education Act” which will have a profound impact on agricultural education programs across the state. This legislation originated as a proposed idea from two northwest Georgia students and FFA members at Gordon Lee High School. Dalton Green and Emily Potter crafted the original wording for the bill and it was later modified and championed by Senator John K. Wilkinson from Toccoa, Georgia. During the 2018 session of the Georgia General Assembly, Senate Bill 330 unanimously passed both the house and the senate. In a special appearance at the 90th Georgia FFA Convention in Macon on April 27th, Governor Nathan Deal signed Senate Bill 330 on stage in front of more than 5,000 students and teachers. This has major implications for the delivery of agricultural education programs in Georgia. A copy of Senate Bill 330 can be found on the Georgia General Assembly website: <http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/Display/20172018/SB/330>

The Georgia Agricultural Education Act has two primary focus points for local school systems regarding the delivery of an agricultural education program. Primarily, beginning the 2018-2019 school year, any school that offers one of the State Board of Education approved courses for agricultural education, must also offer opportunities for supervised agriculture experiences (SAE) and student participation in FFA (section 2, line 27 & 28). The agricultural education staff at the Georgia Department of Education will work with all local middle & high schools that offer the state approved courses in agricultural education to insure they are given an official FFA charter number. This will help meet the new legislation defined in Senate Bill 330. Secondly, a very exciting part of this legislation provides for expansion into elementary grades beginning in 2019 with pilot programs located throughout the state (section 2, lines 36 – 63). This will require a great deal of work, collaboration, and development in the coming year. Here is a timeline that will be used to establish the elementary school pilot programs in agricultural education for the 2019-2020 school year.

May 1 – May 31, 2018	Georgia DOE will create the application and establish criteria.
June 1 – June 30, 2018	LEA submission of application for Elementary AgEd Pilot Program.
July 1 – July 31, 2018	Committee selection of Elementary AgEd Pilot Program sites.
August 1, 2018	Official announcement from DOE regarding AgEd Pilot Program Schools.
August – December 2018	Development of K-5 curriculum for Agricultural Education
January – March 2019	Public Review and State Board of Education approval of new curriculum.
April – June 2019	Professional Development for Elementary AgEd Program instructors.
2019 – 2020 school year	Implementation of first year Elementary AgEd Programs.



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The agricultural education staff at the Georgia Department of Education will be sending out more information regarding the criteria and application process in a few weeks. Local School Systems that are interested in implementing one of the pilot programs for elementary school agricultural education is encouraged to contact one of the state staff members listed below. The applications will be made available prior to June 1st with an expected deadline for LEA completion by June 30th, 2018. Any questions can be directed to the following:

<p>John (Chip) Bridges, AgEd Program Manager Email: jbridges@doe.k12.ga.us Office Phone: (404) 656-8311 Cell Phone: (706) 410-4605</p>	<p>Ira Tucker, South Region AgEd Director Email: itucker@doe.k12.ga.us Office Phone: (229) 386-3428 Cell Phone: (229) 425-7619</p>
<p>Chris Corzine, Central Region AgEd Director Email: ccorzine@doe.k12.ga.us Office Phone: (478) 822-7385 Cell Phone: (864) 844-4412</p>	<p>Stan Mitchell, North Region AgEd Director Email: smitchell@doe.k12.ga.us Office Phone: (706) 552-4468 Cell Phone: (706) 338-7230</p>

This is an exciting time for agricultural education in Georgia. We are thankful to all local school systems that recognize the important contribution agricultural education programs can have on the lives of students. Our team stands ready to support you in providing these opportunities.



During the 90th Georgia FFA Convention, Governor Nathan Deal signs the Georgia Agricultural Education Act in front of more than 5,000 in attendance. April 27, 2018