

Relationship Building: Engaging Families & Communicating During COVID-19

SPDG Director's Meeting

July 21, 2020

Georgia's Focus: Before COVID-19

2020 Vision

Provide infrastructure and supports for leaders, teachers, and families to meet the whole child needs of each student and improve student outcomes and school climate resulting in increased quality of life and a workforce ready future



Georgia's Focus: During COVID-19

- Ensure communication is always **welcoming** and **authentic**. It should be **kind**, **honest**, and **sincere** with a **hospitable focus**.
- Prioritize communication with families/districts/schools and limit communications to content related virtual/distance learning, reopening, and/or public health guidance.
- **Listen** to and **learn** how districts/schools can be most **supportive** and **form collaborative partnerships** with parents or guardians.
- Assist in developing an **inclusive and culturally responsive plan** of support that **fits the needs** of the **student** population.

Georgia's Focus: During COVID-19

Gather Input

- Understand parents/guardians are the experts on what their children may need right now. While families have many needs, they also have valuable input to share about how to support their children academically, socially, and emotionally.
- Consider the communication methods available to ask families what the best way is to collect and share information with them. There is no single communication method that will be effective for ALL families.
- Ensure there is a system in place to document feedback and updates to share with school and district teams to help determine best practices and next steps.

What are families saying?

Technology

Workload

Balance

Regression

Georgia's Focus: During COVID-19

DON'T ASSUME

Some families may not be responsive and that is okay. Just like you, families are doing the best they can to navigate their dual roles as parents and teachers, among juggling other life challenges. Be mindful that everything will not be perfect.

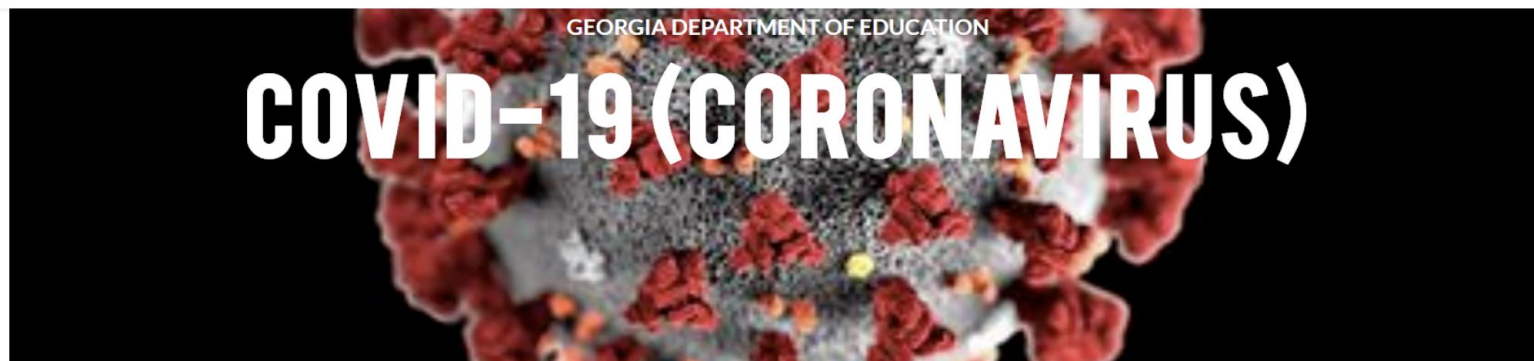
Communication Methods

Use more than one method of communication to display resources and share information. Be mindful of your audience and ensure the content is accessible in multiple languages & 508 compliant.

Sample list to include, but not limited to the use of:

- **Research-based and culturally responsive curriculum materials**
- Parent Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Home Visits
- District and/or school point of contact
- Local resources (i.e., faith-based organization bulletin, school marquee, community center)
- Websites
- Social Media/Apps
- Flyers
- Media – television and newspaper announcements
- Email and/or phone call blasts
- Newsletters (electronic and/or mailed)
- Family engagement staff and/or parent leaders (i.e., parent mentors, PTA/PTO, stakeholder teams)
- Word of mouth (empower and encourage students to communicate their needs to parents)

Information is Easily Accessible



Last Updated May 1, 2020

Superintendent Woods: "[School buildings are closed, but the hearts of educators remain open](#)" and "[we must choose compassion over compliance](#)"

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and Schools

[Home](#) > COVID-19 K-12 Resources Homepage



The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) is working closely with the Office of the Governor, the Georgia Department of Public Health (GaDPH), and other agencies to ensure local school districts, parents, and students have the

most accurate and up-to-date information regarding COVID-19 (commonly called coronavirus). State School Superintendent Richard Woods is a member of Governor Brian Kemp's Coronavirus Task Force, and GaDOE's Office of School



[Georgia Department of Community \(DPH\) Health's Daily COVID-19 Status Report](#)

Quick Links

<https://www.georgiainsights.com/coronavirus.html>

Georgia's Focus: During COVID-19

ESTABLISH FEEDBACK LOOPS

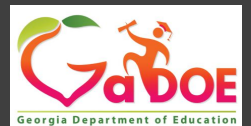
Close the feedback loop with families. When families offer feedback or suggestions, let them know how the district or school plans to incorporate the information or change in practices as a result of their participation.



Why Inclusive Leadership Matters?



Georgia Department of Education

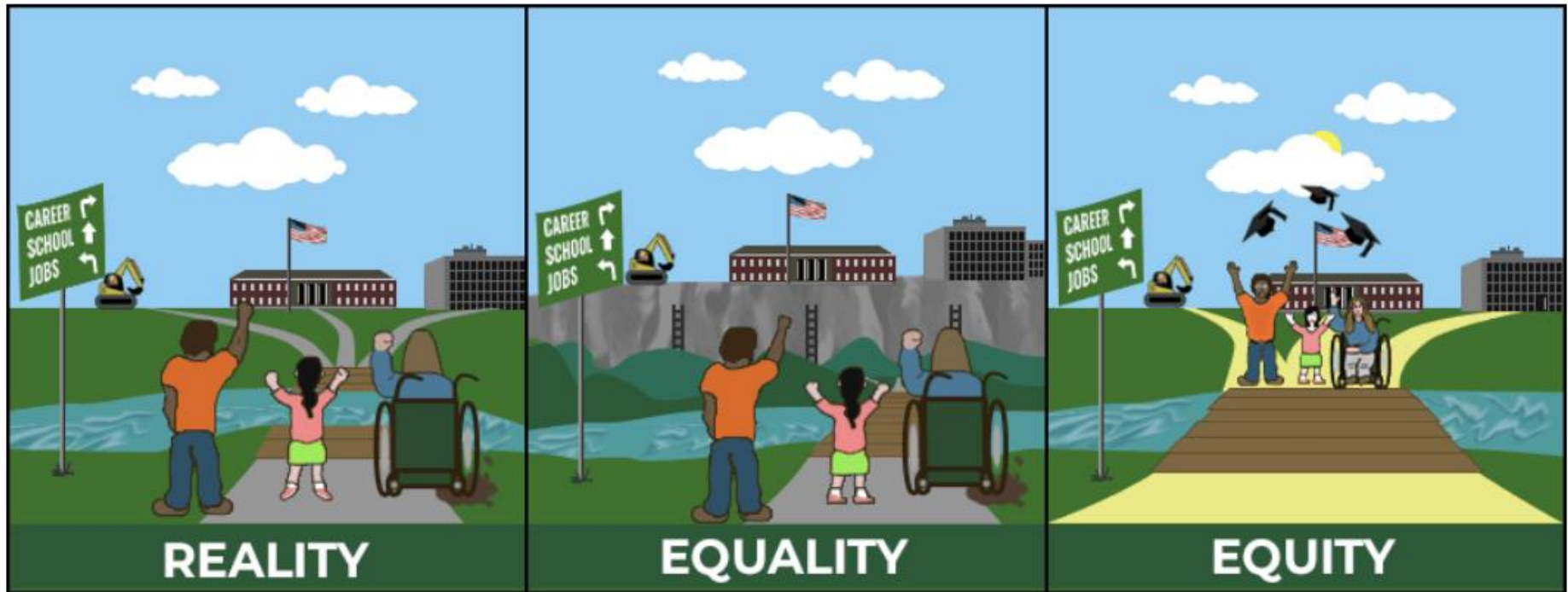


Define Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive Leadership Matters:

- *Inclusive leaders create strong school cultures and distribute leadership across staff to serve all learners and ensure all students feel safe, supported, and valued in school.*
- *Inclusive leaders, "In promoting equity for "all," must respond effectively to the potential and needs of **each** student.*
- *Inclusive leaders ensure high expectations and appropriate supports so that each student - across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, and / or family income - can excel in school.*

(Adopted from Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) definition)



Communicating Inclusive Leadership

Why Inclusive Leadership Matters?



- **Communication Plan**

- Leverage what has been done previously
- Define Inclusive Leadership
- Pinpoint target audience
- Create graphic and other visuals to support all learners
- Use appropriate language in existing newsletters and other communications and/or materials
- Create videos for messaging inclusive leadership
- Use conferences and school/district meetings and visits to spread the message
- Create a webpage for Inclusive Leadership and ask partners to share

- **Toolkit/Resources**

- Self- Assessment Rubric
- Roadmap of process
- Link with resources to the components of Georgia's System of Continuous Improvement Process




Simplifying the Message

Georgia Department of Education

Why Inclusive Leadership Matters?


Equity is imperative to keeping Georgia's students first! Inclusive principals create strong school cultures and distribute leadership across staff to serve all learners well and ensure all students feel safe, supported, and valued in school.

In promoting equity for "all," inclusive principals must respond effectively to the potential and needs of **each** student. Inclusive principals ensure high expectations and appropriate supports so that each student—across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, and/or family income—can excel in school.



REALITYEQUALITYEQUITY

What is Inclusive Leadership?

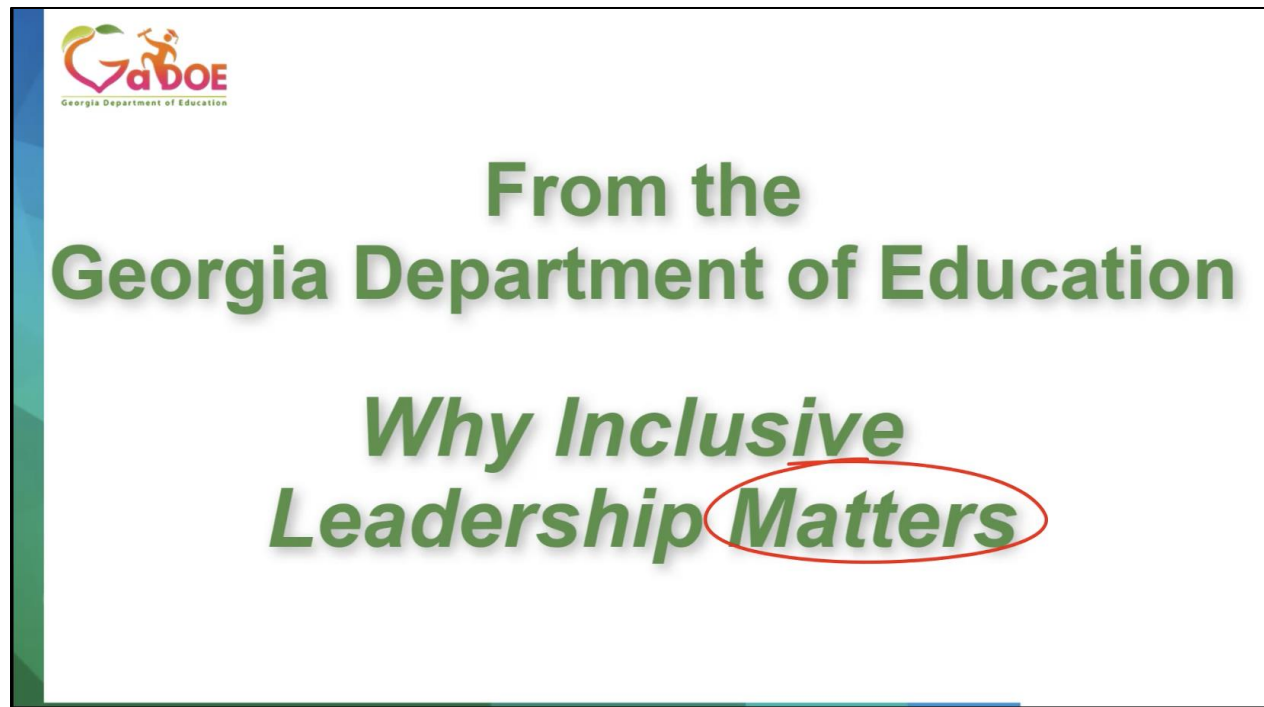


Inclusive education is a schoolwide culture and practice of valuing **each** student as a learner across general education classrooms, rather than a particular program or place. Inclusion provides students with disabilities equitable access and opportunity in the general education curriculum and ensures that each student receives the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education. In inclusive schools, educators' roles are restructured for shared accountability and responsibility. Learners who need differentiated support and additional intervention receive it. School leaders use schedules, teacher teams, and data to ensure the academic progress and success of each student.

<https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Documents/Sp%20Ed%20homepg/InclusiveLeadershipFactSheet.pdf>

Why Inclusive Leadership Matters?

Video Series



[Link to Inclusive Leadership video](#)

Shifting Language

- ✓ **Kind**
- ✓ **Honest**
- ✓ **Sincere**
- ✓ **Hospitable**
- ✓ **Supportive**
- ✓ **Inclusive & Culturally Responsive**

Welcome to Teacher Tools:

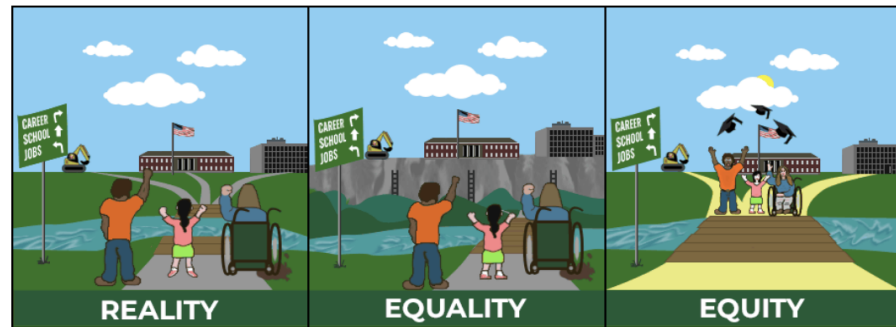
The newsletter designed specifically for teachers of students with disabilities



Keeping Students and Teachers First!

Georgia Department of Education

We realize many readers of this newsletter are adapting to distance learning during the COVID-19 school closures, and we know this transition comes with challenges. The tools below are intended to support you as you navigate this time with your students and with your own family. Please let us know if there are other supports you need.



Why Inclusive Leadership Matters?

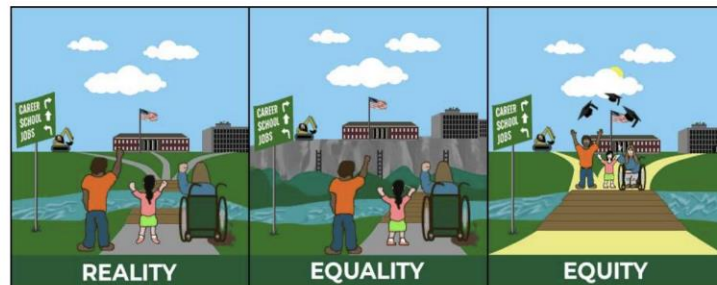
Purpose of Communications Plan

Step by Step Planning

- ✓ **Key Messages**
- ✓ **Mission**
- ✓ **Goals**
- ✓ **Strategies**
- ✓ **Target Audience**
- ✓ **Tactics (internal and external)**
- ✓ **Action Planning (timelines, to-do list, budget)**

Why Inclusive Leadership Matters?

Communications Plan 2020



<https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Documents/Sp%20Ed%20homepg/InclusiveLeadershipFactSheet.pdf>

Need More Information?

Georgia's Tiered System of Supports for Students

www.gadoe.org/MTSS

Inclusive Leadership

<https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/InclusiveLeadership.aspx>

Resources Available

The following list are links to resources and professional development for educators.

- [American Institutes of Research](#)
- [Assistive Technology - 508 Compliance and Accessibility](#)
- [Georgia Department of Education Digital Learning](#)
- [Georgia Virtual Learning](#)
- [Georgia Home Classroom](#)
- [Parent Mentor Partnership](#)
- [Parent Teacher Association](#)
- [The Office of Special Education Programs \(OSEP\) Federal Resources for Stakeholders: Continuity of Learning During COVID-19](#)
- [Why Inclusive Leadership Matters?](#)



Questions?

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**Offering a holistic education
to
each and every child
in our state.**

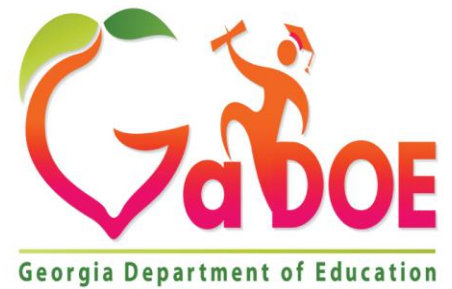
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Project Officer, Jennifer Coffey.**

