

STOP

THE STATE TAKEOVER OF OUR LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS!

GEORGIA
GAE
ASSOCIATION
OF EDUCATORS®
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WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

TALKING POINTS

With this important vote coming up in November's election, we need your help to get the word out. Here are some actions you can take to help stop the takeover of our local schools:

- ▶ Talk to your friends, family members and neighbors about the importance of this vote and the threat to our schools. You can use our talking points [link] and top ten list to guide your discussion. These conversations are about educating people about the flaws in this takeover plan, not arguing politics. Share your personal experiences about what works in schools and what our schools need to succeed.
- ▶ Talk to your colleagues and fellow teachers about the importance of the vote and urge them to get involved. Teachers and school leaders know that our schools need resources and support to improve and succeed.
- ▶ Set up talks and presentations to community organizations, your church or other associations about the proposed amendment. Email us at getinvolved@gae.org to let us know if you have an event planned or need materials.
- ▶ Write a letter to the editor at your local paper about the takeover plan and how it is wrong for Georgia schools. You can find links to Georgia's newspapers at www.usnpl.com/ganews.php. Most papers have a word limit on letters to the editor, so be sure to keep your letter under 200 words. You can use our sample letter to the editor [link] as a starting point.
- ▶ Write a guest column or op/ed in your local newspaper. These pieces can be longer and more substantial than a letter to the editor. You should emphasize your experience and perspective as a teacher. You can use our sample op/ed [link] as a starting point.
- ▶ **VOTE! Make sure you vote in November and that you encourage others to vote as well.**

- ▶ The constitutional amendment on November's ballot would allow the state to take over local schools based almost entirely on standardized testing results – a risky and misguided approach to improving schools.
- ▶ As soon as 2017, struggling schools could be taken over by the state and remain under state control for up to 10 years.
- ▶ Parents, teachers and local residents will lose their voice in their local schools, which will be stuck in another layer of bureaucracy.
- ▶ While we should be focused on teaching students to think critically instead of teaching to tests, the takeover plan is based on the unreliable College and Career Readiness Performance Index (CCRPI score).
- ▶ There is no proof that this takeover plan will actually help schools. In fact, similar efforts have failed in other states, including Louisiana, Tennessee and Michigan.
- ▶ The state's takeover plan provides NO additional funding or resources for struggling schools.
- ▶ Our local teachers could be fired for no reason. The state has the power to close down any school, reorganize staff, fire and replace teachers and principals and convert any school to a charter school.
- ▶ Many of our schools do need help, but they deserve the kind of help that actually works. Our teachers need support. Our schools need resources. Our students deserve real solutions.
- ▶ The proven solution is investing in our local schools and the communities around them. All of us need to work together to help schools become anchors of the community by providing the resources students need including quality teachers, small class sizes, afterschool programs and health services.