


“TransACT® provides us with professional, legally-reviewed documents that we can trust. Everything about them reflects the message that we want to send.”

- Carol Johnson
Program Specialist for Title III & ESOL
Georgia Department of Education

Georgia Department of Education

Leading the Nation: Improving student achievement through parent involvement

State Profile



Georgia is located in the Southeastern region of the United States. The Georgia Department of Education serves a population of 8,186,453, enrolls about 1,598,461 students and employs 108,535 teachers and 110,430 staff in over 2,489 schools in 180 districts. 4.8% of Georgia families speak a language other than English at home.*

The Challenge

Provide the tools and training to increase parent involvement and student achievement in over 200 districts across the entire state of Georgia.

The Solution

Georgia relies on TransACT to not only provide the legally-reviewed parent notifications in multiple languages that foster parent involvement, but also to provide the training and education to put the collection to good use.

*based on 2006-2007 budget year

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) not only leads the charge in providing its districts with access to high quality, multi-lingual parental notices necessary for legal compliance, but also demonstrates how such an extensive resource can be disseminated effectively across the state.

Federal laws mandate that school and districts communicate specific elements of NCLB, IDEA 2004 and OCR with parents in a language they can understand. Creating content and providing professional translations is a great challenge and financial strain for individual districts. To ease the burden on local resources, the Georgia Department of Education partnered with TransACT. GaDOE provides every administrator, teacher and staff member with access to an online TransACT subscription. While this powerful tool supplies the parental notifications that enable districts to meet federal parental communication requirements, it also allows each school to communicate with more parents in their native language. This leads to greater parent involvement and enhanced student achievement.

The vision of the Georgia Department of Education is to lead the entire nation in student improvement and to ensure no child is left behind. A primary goal in this vision is increased parental involvement. The GaDOE strategized to create a structure for improved, sustained communication with parents in order to increase their capacity to positively impact their child's academic achievement. The GaDOE turned to TransACT to supply the needed documents.

“Before we had TransACT, instructional periods were often interrupted and bilingual teachers were called out of the classroom to communicate with parents on an impromptu basis. Another option was the use of a bilingual paraprofessional. The most dangerous option was to consider using a student or a parent,” said Chris Scott, GaDOE Program Manager for Title III. “TransACT decreases the reliance on those types of resources. That’s where the value of TransACT is really evident to administrators.”

GaDOE's decision was to provide a TransACT subscription at the state level. State administrators wanted to ensure the availability of good translations as well as continuity of accurate communication throughout

the state. Additionally, the documents in the TransACT library met legal requirements.

"We chose to offer TransACT throughout the state to ensure everyone has the same information and is able to access high quality school documents in the languages our students need to meet requirements under Title I & III," said Carol Johnson, GaDOE Specialist for Title III & ESOL.

Training and Implementation:

A tool is useless if no one knows how to use it. The GaDOE took steps from the very beginning to ensure the successful implementation of the TransACT collections throughout the state. TransACT President/CEO Rick Passovoy traveled to Georgia to host the first round of training sessions to groups of ESOL coordinators and district personnel. The demonstrations were hands-on and face-to-face, providing clear detail and support specifically oriented for the users' needs.

"TransACT worked corroboratively with the GaDOE to ensure access wasn't limited. They continue to provide great customer service and support," said Scott.

After initial trainings, the GaDOE encouraged districts to use TransACT collections.

"As we go around the state, we are always reminding our LEAs that TransACT is available to them 24 hours a day," said Scott. "We show them how it can be beneficial to them. While monitoring, I sit down with school administrators and one of the first questions I ask is 'Are you using TransACT?' I take the time to explain, even go online and help them register then and there to ensure that it is something they won't forget and will start using."

Administrators are pleased to discover how simple TransACT is to use and how it supports their mission.

"Administrators have indicated that they like the one-stop shopping aspect in getting the forms and the information that they need in order to work with their parents and community. They find what they need at a moment's notice and are not bothered with trying to locate someone within the school system or in the community who has the language skills they need at a particular time," said Johnson. "TransACT has been very beneficial for administrators."

The Result:

Georgia relies on TransACT to provide legally-reviewed parental notifications in multiple languages. This fosters parental involvement and leads to improved student achievement.

"TransACT is the best way to go. We know of no other resource out there that can offer comparable services to our districts. I am very pleased with TransACT. I could probably go on about the benefits to school districts, administrators and staff personnel," said Scott. "Our districts and schools are using TransACT as part of the required communication with parents in their native languages. It has helped in making sure we get parental involvement in the schools."

Get the word out!

The Georgia Department of Education's tips for getting the most benefit from your TransACT subscription:

"Initially, build in as many training sessions as you can for school personnel throughout the state to increase awareness of TransACT. As a principal, or even as a teacher, you only have so many hours in a day. You really don't have time to sit down and learn a new program. The ease and simplicity needs to be laid out. Build in training time and exposure to TransACT for your school personnel. Make sure they're aware of the TransACT subscription. Don't rely on just one person for access. Involve the individual teacher to ensure that everyone knows about it."

-Chris Scott, Georgia DOE

Products

The GaDOE subscribes to:

- TransACT® NCLB Parent Notifications
- TransACT® NCLB RoadMaps
- TransACT® GenEd Parent Notifications
- TransACT® EduPortal® eLibrary

Contacts



TransACT Communications, Inc.

Rick Passovoy
President/CEO
425.977.2101
rick@transact.com

Monica Munar
Executive Director,
Customer Operations
425.977.2103
monica@transact.com

Georgia Department of Education

Ms. Cori Alston
Title III/ESOL Program Manager
calston@doe.k12.ga.us
404-656-2067

Amy Lacher
Program Specialist,
Title III & ESOL
404.463.1074
alacher@doe.k12.ga.us

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