

## PRESS RELEASE

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The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) recently accepted the **Fannin County School System** into the 2021-2022 Economic Development Partnership (EDP) Designation program. The EDP is a district wide certification process that prepares school districts to adopt best practices and behaviors that support economic development, strengthen their programs, and align education with key regional industries. In terms of Economic Development, the EDP elevates the capability of school systems to fill their role in the community business recruitment and expansion efforts and as a catalyst for talent development in the community.

State CTAE Director Dr. Barbara Wall is excited about this year's EDP program. "The Economic Development Partnership (EDP) designation supports a school district's ability to contribute effectively to their local and regional workforce development efforts. The EDP enables school districts to align their CTAE programs with the needs of their local labor market. Fostering a strong relationship between education, business and industry, and economic development stakeholders ensures that we continue to offer high-quality industry relevant CTAE programs that are equitable for all students and are supportive of local talent pipeline development for both now and in the future. I am very proud of the districts that applied and have been accepted into the program for this year. Our team looks forward to working alongside the Fannin County School System on their journey to achieve the EDP."

Mr. Lucas Roof, the Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) Director for the Fannin County School System, will partner with local business and industry and economic development stakeholders to work towards achieving the EDP designation. To achieve the EDP designation, districts must meet required elements that include a focus on business and industry partnerships, strength of local CTAE program offerings, and the school district's economic development related activities.

Dr. Michael Gwatney, Superintendent of Fannin County Schools, is proud of the partnerships that have been formed with local stakeholders. According to Gwatney, "Our school system does not operate in isolation; we are an integral part of the community, and our work is an investment in its future. It is our responsibility as a school system to obtain and carefully analyze feedback from stakeholders to determine the most appropriate educational goals. With our latest educational initiatives, which were based on meaningful feedback from stakeholders, the Fannin County School System is certainly on the right path. Our commitment to achievement and our vision of a 100% graduation rate remain the same. I am proud of our schools and community, and I look forward to seeing this collaborative process move forward."

The Fannin County School System will work with representatives from the Georgia Department of Education throughout the next fiscal year on their journey to achieve the EDP. Districts who earn the EDP designation for 2021-2022 will be announced next Summer.

Richard Woods, *Georgia's School Superintendent*

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