



# LEAH ALDRIDGE

STATE SENATE

Improving Education

I have personally visited homes from Williams Park to Forest Hills in Cobb to Tuxedo Park to Brookhaven and Sandy Springs in Fulton, and I heard that improving your schools is one of your top priorities. I share that passion and support a **ROBUST and THRIVING** public school system.

## MY SOLUTION:

**More Teachers + Less Bureaucracy + Smaller Class Sizes  
= Bigger Results**

Here are some of my priorities:

**K-12 PRIORITY:** I am proud that Governor Deal and the Republican team at the state Capitol invested \$167 million to fully fund our public schools. As we move forward, increased funding to reduce overall class sizes will be my priority. In addition, we must empower our K-12 schools with a flexible, student-based funding formula. It's time to revamp the outdated QBE formula.

**EARLY EDUCATION PRIORITY:** We must increase reading readiness. The research is clear: children who can't read proficiently by the end of third grade are more likely to experience poor health, have discipline problems, become teen parents, and drop out of high school. As adults, they're more likely to spend time in prison, struggle with unemployment, and face shorter life expectancies.

Our students **MUST** come to kindergarten at Green Acres or High Point or Jackson Elementary Schools ready to learn to read. Right now, many do not. They do not have sufficient words by age three for brain development to begin to learn to read in kindergarten. Like First Lady Sandra Deal and former First Lady Barbara Bush, I support programs that address this deficiency in early education like Talk With Me Baby and Get Georgia Reading.

**POST SECONDARY PRIORITY:** I support expanding our dual enrollment program. Our high school students need choices – dual enrollment allows our college bound students to take college classes early, thereby saving money, and it allows other students to get job training to ensure employability after high school. I fully support protecting the Hope and Zell Miller Scholarships and expanding the Hope Career Grant.

It must be acknowledged, however, that public schools do not meet every child's needs. For example, we have children with special needs and some children in military families who have to move frequently. I believe that school choice initiatives, including charter schools, home schools and our Georgia Virtual School, are important components of a diversified Georgia education plan that offers each child the best opportunity for success.