

OUR MISSION

Georgia Independent School Association (GISA) is an association of private, independent, and parochial schools throughout the state. The mission of GISA is to advance excellence and collaboration among Georgia's independent schools by serving the professional growth, advocacy, and interscholastic needs of member schools.



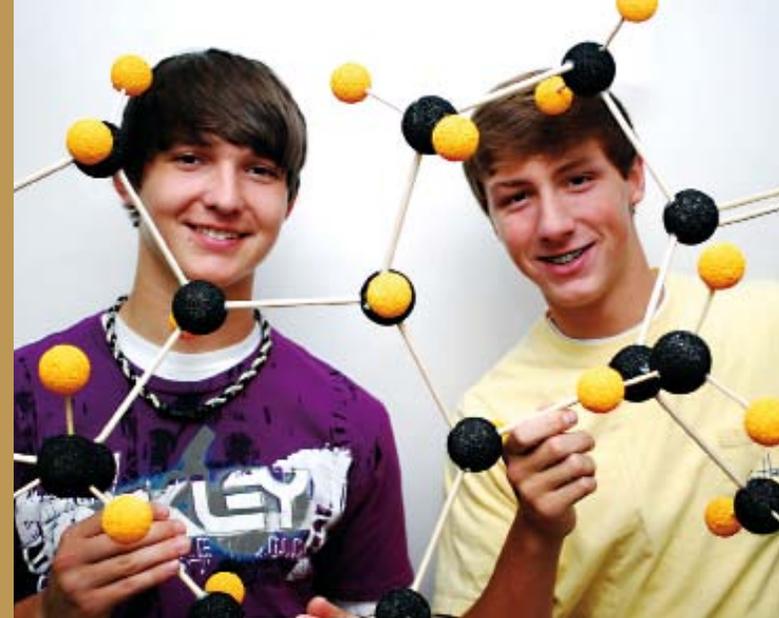
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THE PUBLIC BENEFITS OF GEORGIA'S INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS





Within the United States, there are 33,366 independent schools, serving over 5.5 million PK-12 students. Independent schools account for over 25 percent of our nation's schools, enrolling 10 percent of all students¹. Despite the number of schools offering independent PK-12 education and the number of students receiving such, the United States is one of the few industrialized nations that provide little or no support to independent schools.

Currently, the Georgia Independent School Association represents 72,480 students within 160 member schools. These are children who are educated in a GISA member school whose parents pay state and local taxes, yet who receive little to no educational services from their tax dollars.

Inclusive of federal, state, private, and local monies, the most recent data published by the National Center for Education Statistics at the U.S. Department of Education² illustrates that, within the state of Georgia, per-student

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expenditures for public school students were \$11,948, for the most recent year available. As federal and private revenues account for \$1,210 per student, the average state and local expenditures per student in public elementary and secondary education for Georgia equates to \$10,288³. Multiplying the \$10,288 per student rate by the number of students educated in GISA member schools demonstrates the extent to which GISA schools provide annual tax relief for Georgia taxpayers. Considering the current annual student cost and extrapolating from the published Digest

of Education Statistics, the state of GA and its taxpayers save over \$745 million by those students attending GISA member schools in one single year.

In addition, should the State of Georgia be charged with educating these 72,480 children enrolled in GISA member schools, the per-pupil expenditure would increase significantly due to unanticipated capital costs. Construction of new facilities would be essential and the cost of maintenance of these and current facilities would escalate considerably in order to manage the sizeable increase in student population.

Although the over \$745 million a year tax relief effected by GISA member schools is substantial, GISA schools and independent schools throughout the United States support their communities in various additional ways.

In an effort to prepare their students for a lifetime of responsible citizenship, independent schools encourage an unwavering commitment to community service opportunities in their policies and programs.

Independent schools, whether independent, parochial, or other denominational, serve as institutional role models for the values they seek to instill in their students.

Independent schools are geographically diverse; students do not have to live within a certain district in order to attend them, offering parents greater school choice. This, in turn, has historically increased property values within neighboring communities. GISA member schools promote enrollment from all segments of the community.

Independent schools frequently offer their auditoriums, gymnasiums, sports fields, and other facilities for use as needed to their community at large.



Independent schools are innovators in the field of education, setting high achievement standards and offering rigorous academic challenges. According to the College Board, students of independent schools consistently outperform public school students on the SAT and the NCES reports that a substantially higher percentage of independent school students apply to colleges.

Relieving our citizens of the burden of the per-student education cost, Georgia's independent schools' enrollment enables substantial tax savings to Georgia's taxpaying

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citizens. Furthermore, communities throughout the state gain tax revenue from all property owners, regardless of where a child is educated. The local tax base would undoubtedly have no option but to grow considerably should the state's current public schools have to absorb the student population enrolled in our independent schools. Independent schools meaningfully enrich communities throughout the nation, and the wealth of benefits that the Georgia Independent School Association's member schools provide to our state are transparent and unmistakable.

1 <http://www.capenet.org/facts.html>

2 2010 Digest of Education Statistics – Tables 181 & 191

3 <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d10/tables>