



# Muscogee County School District

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## For Immediate Release

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Date: March 3, 2010

## NEWS RELEASE

### HARDAWAY HIGH SCHOOL ONE OF 15 STATE SCHOOLS RECOGNIZED IN GEORGIA PARTNERSHIP STUDY

**(Columbus, GA)** – Hardaway High School is one of only 15 Georgia high schools to achieve at least an 85 percent graduation rate in 2008 after seeing an increase of at least 10 percentage points starting in the base year 2004. The schools also sustained that level through the 2009 graduation year. The results of a recent Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education study pinpoint the good work of the schools.

Dr. Steve Dolinger, president of the Georgia Partnership – a non-partisan, non-profit organization focused on improving student achievement – said his organization decided to take a close look at the state graduation rate that has shown a steady increase over the past few years. “When we started to look at the numbers, a group of schools stood out,” he said. “It was apparent they were following winning formulas.”

He added that various strategies were used by the “85/10” schools, but mutually dependent commonalities emerged. “It is these similar winning formulas we want to share across Georgia.” For example:

- Each school has a culture of high expectations for all and support for students who are struggling academically.
- The schools provide an integrated system of curriculum, assessment and instruction.
- Multiple safety nets of intervention are provided for students who need them.
- Administrators and teachers routinely collaborate to create innovative approaches to ensure challenging courses and effective practices.
- They use continuous improvement processes such as working in teams and using data to inform decisions.

Dr. Donna O’Neal, who conducted the study for the Georgia Partnership explained, “Education is a very complicated process, yet, these schools have an atmosphere of continually improving the factors that are necessary to improve graduation rates.

“They have very high expectations for students and faculty alike, and they provide additional instruction and supports to ensure all students graduate on time. We congratulate them all!”

- The schools joining Hardaway High School on the “85/10” list are:
- Buford High School (Buford – Buford City Schools)
- Gilmer High School (Ellijay – Gilmer County)
- Grady High School (Atlanta – Atlanta Public Schools)
- Greenbrier High School (Evans – Columbia County Schools)
- Houston County High School (Warner Robins, Houston County Schools)
- Loganville High School (Loganville, Walton County)
- Lumpkin County High School (Dahlonega - Lumpkin County Schools)
- Mays High School (Atlanta – Atlanta Public Schools)
- Perry High School (Perry – Houston County Schools)
- Redan High School (Stone Mountain - DeKalb County Schools)
- Riverwood International Charter High School (Atlanta/Sandy Springs – Fulton County Schools)
- Union County High School (Blairsville - Union County Schools)
- Washington-Wilkes Comprehensive High School (Washington – Wilkes County Schools)
- Westlake High School (Atlanta - Fulton County Schools)

Both a synopsis and the longer, detailed report are available on the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education web site at [www.gpee.org](http://www.gpee.org).

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