



*Governor Nathan Deal*  
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## Deal announces \$1 million grant, Complete College Georgia Initiative

Thursday, August 4, 2011

Gov. Nathan Deal today announced that Georgia is one of 10 states to be awarded \$1 million by Complete College America to fuel policy innovations and reforms aimed at significantly increasing college completion. In conjunction with this grant, Deal also introduced his Complete College Georgia Initiative.

"By 2018, more than 60 percent of job openings in Georgia will require some form of postsecondary education. To meet this demand, we must increase the number of students with access to higher education and ensure that these students graduate with postsecondary degrees in a timely manner," Deal said. "My Complete College Georgia Initiative provides concrete steps to address both access and completion. We know this problem is significant: Less than a quarter of full-time students at two-year colleges ever graduate and only 44 percent at four-year colleges get their degree within six years. We also know the problem is fixable."

The governor's plan prescribes the following strategies:

- Development of comprehensive system-wide and campus-level completion plans

- By Jan. 1, the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia must submit comprehensive system-wide completion plans to the governor.
- By July 1, each USG and TCSG institution must submit comprehensive campus-level completion plans to the governor.
- Restructuring of select TCSG programs
  - By fall 2012, at least five TCSG programs must be restructured to better support students who work while attending college.
- Seamless Education System
  - Work with Chancellor Hank Huckaby, Commissioner Ron Jackson, the Board of Regents and the board of the Technical College System of Georgia to ensure that the higher education system in Georgia is a seamless system that allows students to transfer with ease in order to complete their postsecondary educations
- Improvement in remediation as a part of the \$1 million Complete College America grant
  - Two USG institutions, College of Coastal Georgia and Georgia Gwinnett College, and two TCSG institutions, Athens Technical College and DeKalb Technical College, will pilot innovative remediation programs.
  - It will implement technology-based diagnostic assessments to determine level of remediation required for each student, modularize remediation coursework to allow students to work at an individualized pace, allow students to simultaneously enroll in college-level courses and diagnostic-based learning support, and increase opportunities for student success and skill supports.
  - Successful aspects of these pilot programs will then be scaled to USG and TCSG institutions across the state.
- Creation of a needs-based scholarship program
  - This program will identify low-income middle school students with college potential and provide them with support through high school. Students who complete the program will receive a tuition scholarship.
  - The governor's staff will look at successful programs, including Cartersville's GateKey Scholarship Program, as models for this needs-based scholarship.
  - Deal is aggressively pursuing private partners to assist with seed funding.
- Formation of the Higher Education Finance Commission
  - In the coming week, Deal will issue an executive order creating a commission that will focus on higher education funding, particularly examining ways to change the funding formula to incentivize completion.

Georgia is one of 10 states to win the \$1 million Completion Innovation Challenge grant. Thirty-three states applied for the 18-month implementation grants for innovative, high-impact college completion initiatives designed to enhance student success and close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations. Georgia's application focused on restructuring remediation programs. Complete College America received funding support for the grants from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

"Gov. Deal gets it: Doing more of the same will not boost student success or get Georgia the additional college graduates it must have to be competitive," said Complete College America President Stan Jones. "Georgia's innovative pilot program promises to significantly increase college completion, saving students precious time and money – and giving taxpayers more of what they expect from their hard-earned investments in higher education: college graduates," added Jones.

The Complete College Georgia Initiative is an important piece of Deal's broader Georgia Competitiveness Initiative.



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