

# Governor Perdue Announces Two New Certified Work Ready Communities — Creating Skilled Workforce, Improving Public High School Graduation Rates



**ATLANTA** – Governor Sonny Perdue today announced two new Certified Work Ready Communities, a designation showing the county has the skilled workforce that business demands and the educational infrastructure to drive economic growth and prosperity.

“These communities are empowering their citizens to improve their skills and set off on a path of life-long learning,” said Governor Perdue. “By building a strong, well-trained workforce our communities are taking charge of their futures and equipping themselves for success.”

The two new Certified Work Ready Communities are Franklin and Upson Counties. These counties represent the fourth group to complete their Work Ready Certificate goals and have both successfully met at least the required minimum increase in their county’s public high school graduation rate.

The new Certified Work Ready Communities achieved the following:

Franklin County: 333 Work Ready Certificates earned (56 percent above goal); increased public high school graduation rate from 60.3 percent to 68.3 percent

Upson County: 420 Work Ready Certificates earned (34 percent above goal); increased public high school graduation rate from 65 percent to 73.2 percent.

To earn the Certified Work Ready Community designation, counties must demonstrate a commitment to improving public high school graduation rates through a measurable increase, and show a specified percentage of the available and current workforce have obtained Work Ready Certificates.

Each community created a team of economic development, government and education partners to meet the certification criteria. Counties are given three years to reach the goals necessary to earn the designation.

Once counties attain their Certified Work Ready Community goals, they are able to maintain their status by ensuring a small percent of their available workforce continue to earn Work Ready Certificates, engage local businesses to recognize and use Work Ready, and continue to increase their public high school graduation rate until they reach a threshold of 75 percent.

To continue their work, each county will receive a \$10,000 grant. Their Work Ready Community teams will also receive a two-year membership to their local chamber of commerce and a budget for additional Work Ready outreach materials. Counties that are fully certified receive road signs and a seal denoting the year they achieved certification.

Georgia’s Work Ready initiative is based on a skills assessment and certification for job seekers and a job profiling system for businesses. By identifying both the needs of business and the available skills of Georgia’s workforce, the state can more effectively generate the right talent for the right jobs. The Certified Work Ready Community initiative builds on the assessments and job profiling system to create opportunities for greater economic development. For more information on the Work Ready initiative please visit the Web site at [www.gaworkready.org](http://www.gaworkready.org)