

## The Great Recession and School District Property Tax Revenues in Georgia

**NICHOLAS WARNER**

Center for State and Local Finance  
Georgia State University

### Introduction

The dramatic decline in home values during the Great Recession reduced available local revenues for most Georgia school districts. The budgetary strain caused by the housing decline differed greatly across districts and was primarily concentrated in the Atlanta metropolitan area school systems, which represent a large share of statewide taxable property and K-12 students. The lack of economic recovery has left most of Georgia's districts at or below pre-recession local revenue amounts.

The first section of this brief summarizes the statewide changes in per student net property tax digests through the recession. Section two describes the varying degrees of decline in the per student net property tax digests by urban classification and geographic location. Section three covers the extent to which districts' nominal per student net tax digest have recovered from their recession minimums by fiscal year 2014.

This report uses Property Tax Consolidation Sheet data obtained from the Georgia Department of Revenue for fiscal years 2008 through 2014.<sup>1</sup> Full-time equivalent (FTE) student counts, local revenues and total revenues were obtained from the Georgia Department of Education.<sup>2</sup> District urban classifications were obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics.<sup>3</sup>



**IN COLLABORATION WITH**



- <sup>1</sup> All local revenues represent fiscal years that end on June 30 of the indicated year. Property tax digest values also represent fiscal years but describe the taxable properties as of January 1 of the previous year; this is because the digest values in a tax year are the basis for the local revenues in the following fiscal year's budget.
- <sup>2</sup> "DE 46 Detailed Revenue and Expenditure Files and Fall Full Time Equivalent Data Files," Georgia Department of Education, accessed December 17, 2014, retrieved from [app3.doe.k12.ga.us/ows-bin/owa/fte\\_pack\\_enrollgrade.entry\\_form](http://app3.doe.k12.ga.us/ows-bin/owa/fte_pack_enrollgrade.entry_form).
- <sup>3</sup> "District Universe Files," The National Center for Education Statistics, accessed January 1, 2015, retrieved from [nces.ed.gov/ccd/](http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/).

# Section 1. Statewide Net Property Tax Digest during the Great Recession

A school district’s net maintenance and operating digest represents the value of all taxable property, net of exemptions, upon which a school district may collect ad valorem taxes and support operations. Changes in local property values translate into changes in available local revenue through variations in a district’s net digest. During the Great Recession, home values plummeted, and this devaluation drove down the amount of tax revenue that districts had to operate their schools.<sup>4</sup>

Georgia’s statewide per student net school digest (for brevity, this report will refer to per student net digest as PSD) declined by 17.51 percent in nominal dollars comparing fiscal years 2009 to 2014 (Table 1).<sup>5</sup> Districts

responded to the decline by raising rates to the degree that was feasible under the 20 mill cap, which is shown in the statewide 1.32 mill average maintenance and operations rate increase. Millage rate increases were not enough to offset the declining property values, and per student nominal local revenues declined by 9.15 percent during this period. This 9.15 percent decline in nominal local revenues represented \$351 per student statewide, approximately 4 percent of total per FTE revenues pre-recession. These statewide changes, however, mask the degree to which this decline in property values was concentrated in specific regions of the state.

**Table 1. Georgia School Property Tax Base Changes During the Great Recession**

	FY09-10	FY10-11	FY11-12	FY12-13	FY13-14	FY09-14
Statewide Net Digest <sup>(1)</sup>	-1.06%	-6.28%	-5.03%	-4.95%	-1.15%	-17.51%
Millage Rate <sup>(2)</sup>	0.17	0.33	0.29	0.27	0.26	1.32
Local Revenues	-1.99%	-3.42%	-3.27%	-2.39%	1.66%	-9.15%
Total Revenues	-0.33%	1.31%	-5.43%	-0.33%	1.26%	-3.63%

(1) Changes indicate nominal per FTE student dollars. (2) District average maintenance and operations millage rate over the 180 county and city school digests. Millage rates have not been adjusted to be consistent 40 percent assessment value equivalents in order to represent the actual millage rate changes only.

<sup>4</sup> For greater detail on school districts’ revenues and expenditures during the Great Recession, see “School District Education Expenditures in Response to the Great Recession” (2014) Fiscal Research Center at [cslf.gsu.edu/files/2014/06/school\\_district\\_education\\_expenditures\\_in\\_response\\_to\\_the\\_great\\_recession.pdf](http://cslf.gsu.edu/files/2014/06/school_district_education_expenditures_in_response_to_the_great_recession.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Total aggregate school digest amounts divided by total statewide fall full-time equivalent students. Dollar figures in the report have been left in nominal terms to better reflect actual changes to school districts’ available revenues during the Great Recession. If adjusted for inflation, these changes to local revenues and per student net tax digests would be greater in magnitude.

## Section 2. Geographic Differences

The collapse in housing values affected communities to varying degrees. Examining PSD recession changes for various urban classifications and geographic locations uncovers the kinds of districts that were the driving force for the statewide decline during the recession.<sup>6</sup> The degree of decline and the district's ability to raise revenue through millage rate increases were also critical to a district's ability to maintain local revenues through the recession. Changes to local revenues and average millage rates in different areas of the state also are explored to highlight types of districts that were better able to maintain revenues during a period of declining PSDs.

Georgia's only district classified as a large city district is Atlanta Public Schools, and its PSD in nominal dollars declined by 20.46 percent between fiscal years 2009 and 2014. This represented 9.44 percent of the statewide PSD decline during that period (Table 2). Mostly located in the Atlanta metropolitan area, the 14 suburban districts associated with a large city in Georgia represented 39.9 percent of Georgia's students, and these districts experienced the most dramatic decline in nominal PSD, 25.53 percent, of any urban classification type between fiscal years 2009 and 2014. Combined with the fact that they made up a disproportionate share of the statewide PSD, these districts accounted for 58.57 percent of the statewide nominal decline in PSD and 99.02 percent of the statewide change in nominal local revenue.<sup>7</sup> Together these school districts plus Atlanta's made up more than two-thirds of the statewide drop in the net tax digest. Rural fringe districts, which are defined as fewer than five miles from an urbanized area, had 26.5 percent of the state's students and accounted for 22.62 percent of the statewide net tax digest change in nominal dollars.

---

<sup>6</sup> For the definitions of the urban classifications, see Table A-1 in the appendix. Table A-2 provides each district's urban classification.

<sup>7</sup> Total nominal aggregate local revenues across the 14 suburb districts declined by \$402 million nominal dollars between fiscal years 2009 and 2014. Some non-suburb districts were able to maintain local revenues through millage rate increases, and some districts' property tax digests had started to increase as of fiscal year 2014. The aggregate change in local revenues across the 180 county and city districts between fiscal years 2009 and 2014 was a decline of \$406 million (nominal dollars).

In Georgia, the urban classification groups that experienced smaller percentage declines in their PSDs tended to have lower relative millage rates in fiscal year 2009 and were better able to increase their rate to maintain per student nominal local revenues during the recession (Table 2). The 40 rural distant districts' aggregate digests declined by 10.72 percent, but they raised their average millage rate by 1.47 mills, leaving their per student nominal local revenues relatively unaffected. With the exception of the large city, large suburb and rural fringe districts, nominal local revenues between fiscal years 2009 and 2014 declined by insignificant percentages or grew. The entire drop in statewide nominal local revenues came from the decline in the 75 districts where PSDs declined by double-digit percentages, particularly large city suburb districts.

In Figure 1, the recession minimum PSD is compared to the pre-recession peak value. Comparing the pre-recession peak of PSD to its recession minimum provides a more accurate picture of the peak to trough percentage decline for that district (Figure 1) than comparing two pre-selected years for comparison as shown in Table 2, as each district experienced its own timing of decline and recovery. Specifically, this is the highest value from fiscal years 2009, 2010 and 2011, compared to the lowest value from fiscal years 2012, 2013 and 2014.

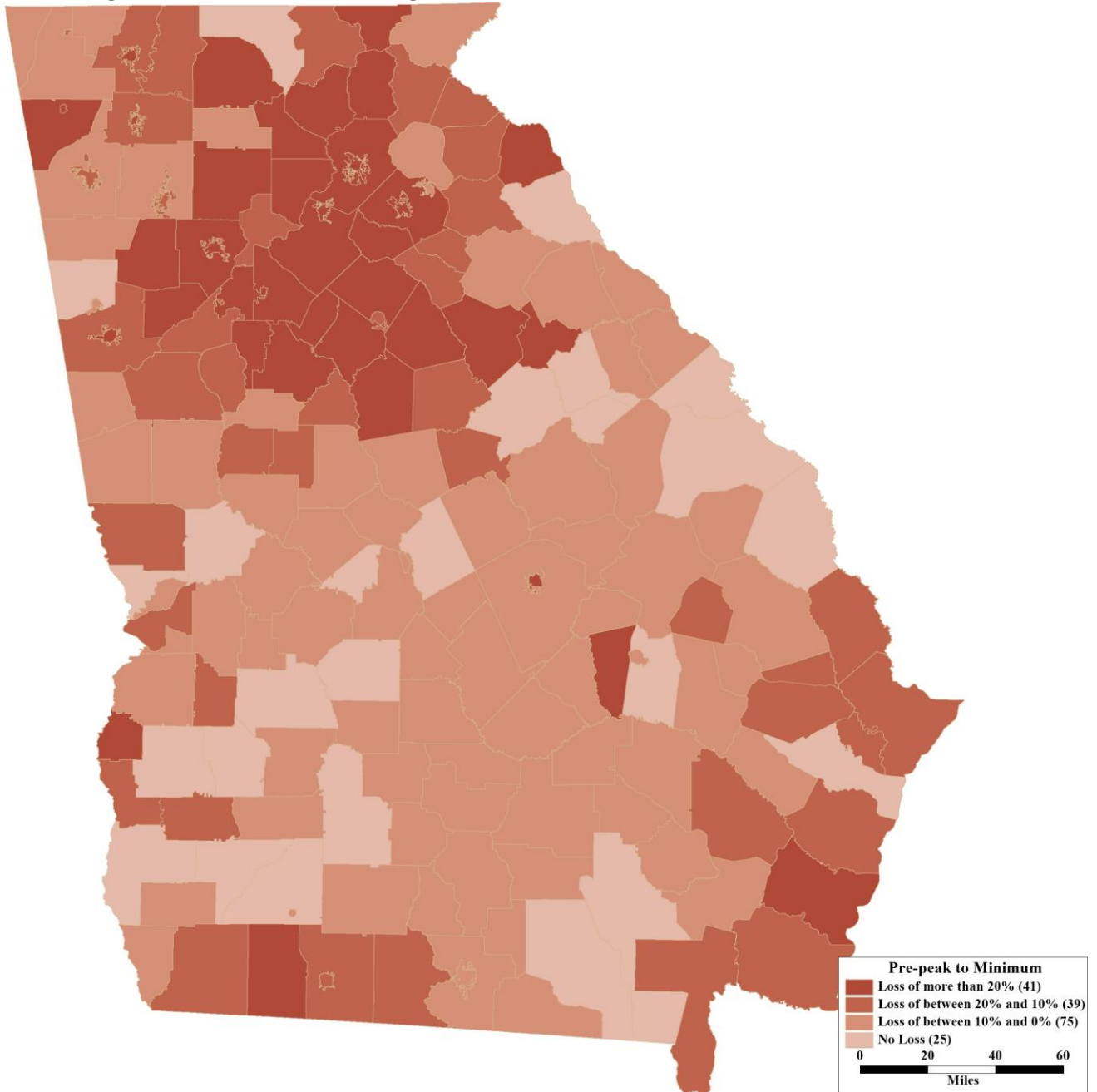
Forty-one districts experienced a nominal decline in PSD of 20 percent or more comparing their pre-peak amount to their recession minimum, and these districts were primarily located in the Atlanta metropolitan area (Figure 1). Of the districts in or close to urban clusters that did not have a decline of greater than 20 percent, most experienced a decline greater than 10 percent. Only 25 school districts experienced no nominal decline in the PSD during the recession, and these districts were, for the most part, not located in or near an urban cluster. The 17.51 percent statewide decline in nominal PSD (Table 1) was driven to a large degree by the dramatic declines the Atlanta metropolitan area and suburb districts, along with the corresponding decline in statewide nominal local revenues.

**Table 2. Georgia Districts' Change in Net School Tax Digest by Urban Classification FY 2009 and FY 2014**

	COUNT OF DISTRICTS	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS	FY09-14 CHANGE IN NOMINAL PER FTE NET DIGEST	SHARE OF STATEWIDE NET DIGEST CHANGE	FY09-14 MILLAGE RATE INCREASE <sup>(1)</sup>	FY09-14 CHANGE IN NOMINAL PER FTE LOC. REV.	SHARE OF STATEWIDE LOC. REV. CHANGE <sup>(2)</sup>
City: Large (Atlanta)	1	3.0%	-20.46%	9.44%	0.00 (21.64)	-16.99%	19.43%
City: Mid-size	4	6.7%	-3.23%	0.34%	0.78 (19.03)	7.54%	-10.67%
City: Small	9	6.8%	-6.87%	1.66%	0.30 (14.61)	-0.63%	-2.45%
Suburb: Large	14	39.9%	-25.53%	58.57%	1.32 (17.78)	-18.72%	99.02%
Town: Fringe	2	0.9%	-11.74%	0.24%	1.00 (14.52)	-0.74%	-0.47%
Town: Distant	24	5.3%	-7.49%	1.98%	1.26 (14.12)	7.16%	-4.13%
Town: Remote	11	2.6%	-3.07%	0.10%	0.74 (14.06)	7.70%	-2.56%
Rural: Fringe	60	26.5%	-15.08%	22.62%	1.30 (15.13)	-3.17%	9.52%
Rural: Distant	40	6.9%	-10.72%	4.21%	1.47 (14.84)	5.63%	-3.99%
Rural: Remote	15	1.4%	-4.35%	0.83%	2.46 (12.16)	23.09%	-3.71%

Urban Centric Codes are provided by The National Center for Education Statistics. (1) Change in the average maintenance and operations millage rates across the applicable districts. The number in parenthesis is the millage rate in FY 2009. (2) Share of statewide local revenue change is the aggregate local revenue change in the urban classification divided by the statewide aggregate local revenue change. This does not incorporate any decline in per FTE local revenue due to growth in FTEs, and this is why declining per FTE local revenues in the column to the left can actually be paired with a negative share in the statewide local revenue change.

**Figure 1. Change in Per FTE Net Tax Digest from Pre-Recession Peak to Recession Minimum**



For district data relating to this map, see column B in Table A-2 in the Appendix.

## Section 3. Delayed Recovery

The dramatic decline in Georgia's PSD was driven by the tax digest associated with the Atlanta metropolitan area. As of fiscal year 2014, the recovery in these net school digests had not yet occurred. This left available local revenues below pre-recession levels for the largest districts in Georgia. According to multiple sources, the housing market in Georgia hit bottom in fiscal years 2012 or 2013, depending on location, and it has since started to recover.<sup>8</sup> If the increasing estimates of home valuations are accurate, then some recovery in net school digests has occurred recently or is set to occur. The lag in the PSD's decline and recovery from the recession is a necessary result of the process. Changes in property values slowly affect the assessed property values, which then become the basis of the subsequent year's tax digests and district revenues; this lag was one or two years during the downturn.

Figure 2 shows whether a school district's PSD had increased or decreased from the 2009 PSD in nominal dollars by 2014. This form of recovery had not happened for the majority of districts in Georgia as of fiscal year 2014 (Figure 2). The PSDs that were above their fiscal year 2009 levels in fiscal year 2014 were, generally, the least affected rural and remote districts, which includes the systems

that experienced no recession decline. The suburban, fringe and city districts whose PSDs experienced dramatic pre-peak to recession minimum declines remained substantially below their fiscal year 2009 PSD levels in fiscal year 2014 (Figure 2).

Figure 3 shows whether, as of 2014, a school district has at least started to rebound from its lowest point during the recession. For 75 districts, fiscal year 2014 was actually their recession minimum PSD to date (Figure 3). In other words, their PSDs had not yet stopped declining as of fiscal year 2014. For the urban districts whose current PSD was above their recession minimum in fiscal year 2014, it was only by a small percentage and had not grown enough to surpass fiscal year 2009 PSD levels. The statewide PSD in nominal dollars continued to decline between fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and continued to be at its recession minimum, driven to a large extent by the continued decline within the largest districts. Unfortunately, for the districts whose digests were affected by the collapse in housing prices the most – large city, large city suburb and fringe districts – the decline in PSDs persisted as of fiscal year 2014. This effect of the Great Recession has continued five years after districts' total revenues began declining in fiscal year 2009.<sup>9</sup>

---

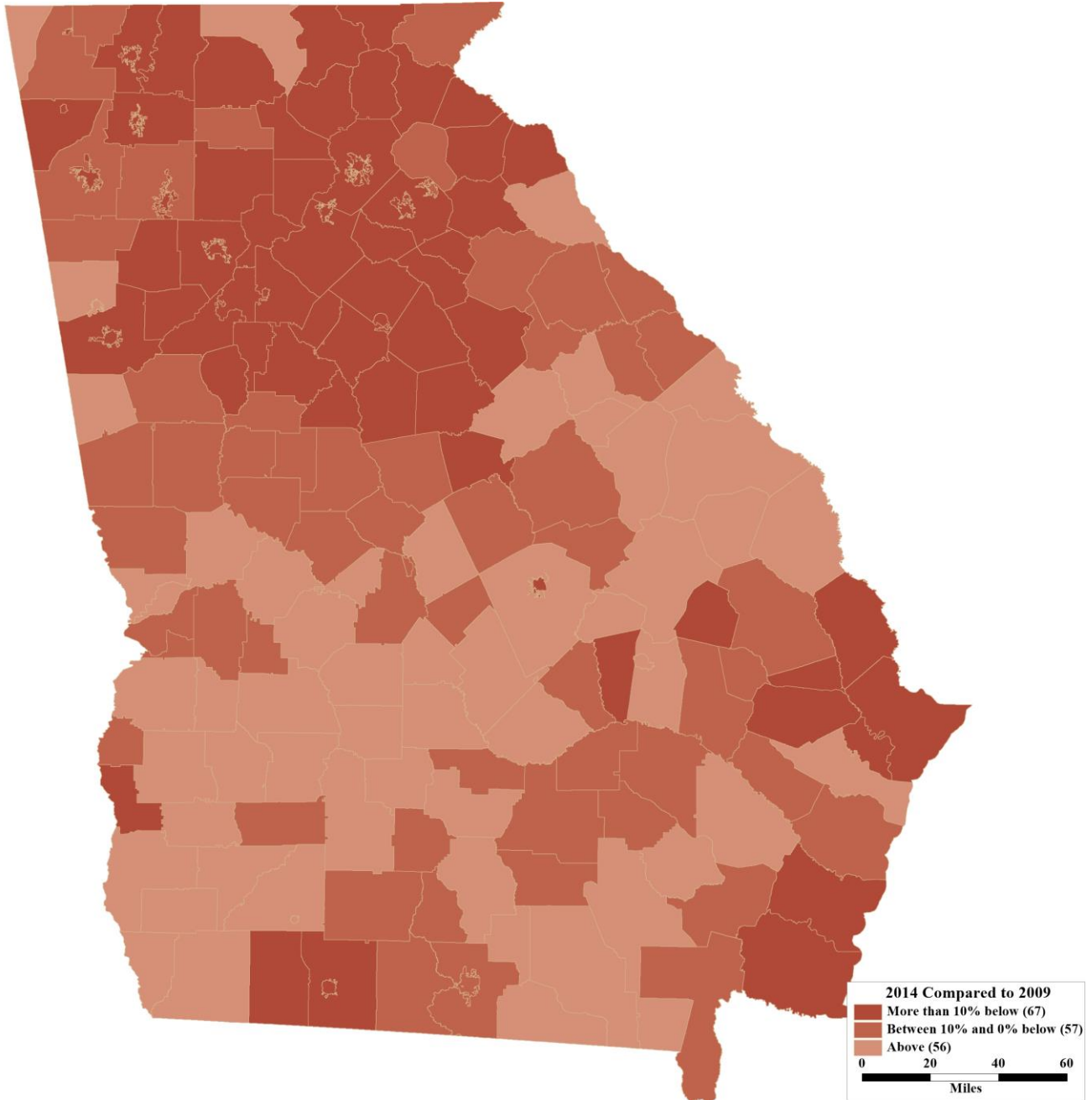
<sup>8</sup> Zillow Real Estate Research, retrieved from [www.zillow.com/research/](http://www.zillow.com/research/). The Zillow Home value Index for Georgia takes a minimum in March of 2012 and has steadily increased since. The Atlanta Region Case-Shiller Home Value Index started increasing in January 2013, which understates the statewide effect, retrieved from [us.spindices.com/indices/real-estate/sp-case-shiller-ga-atlanta-home-price-index](http://us.spindices.com/indices/real-estate/sp-case-shiller-ga-atlanta-home-price-index).

---

<sup>9</sup> Statewide total per FTE operating revenues first declined between fiscal years 2008 and 2009. The first year showing increase is between fiscal years 2013 and 2014.

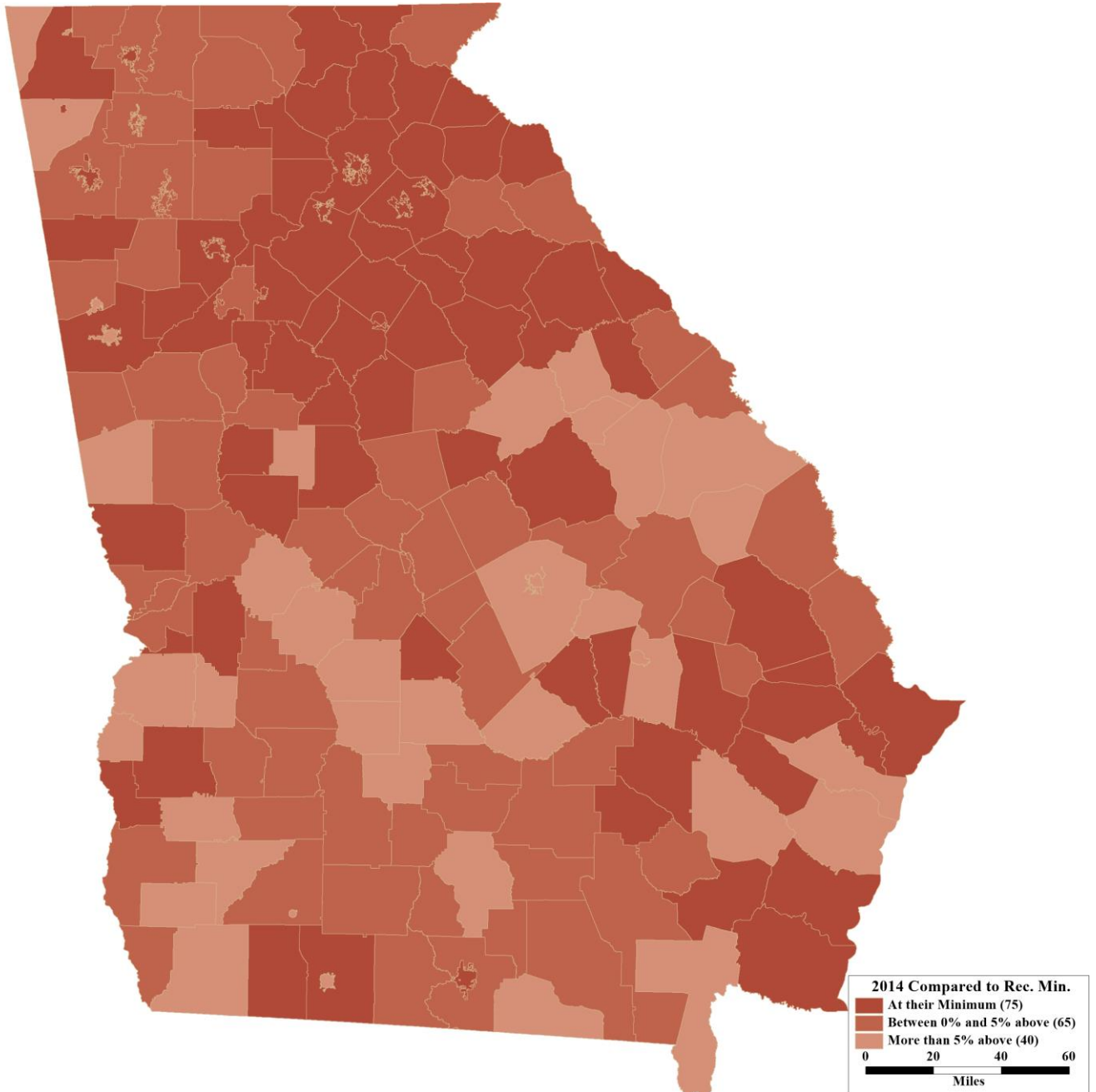


**Figure 2. Comparison of Per FTE Net Tax Digest, Fiscal Year 2009 to Fiscal Year 2014**



For district data relating to this map, see column A in Table A-2 in the Appendix.

**Figure 3. Comparison of Per Student Net Tax Digest Fiscal Year 2014 to the Recession Minimum**



For district data relating to this map, see column C in Table A-2 in the Appendix.

## Section 4. Conclusion

The vast majority of Georgia's K-12 students attend school districts that have seen their available local revenues decline by more than 10 percent due to the collapse in home values during the Great Recession. The effects were concentrated in the Atlanta metropolitan, suburb and fringe areas, but these are the largest districts in the state by aggregate property values and numbers of students. These select

districts made up virtually all of the decline in PSDs and all of the decline in statewide local revenues. To make matters worse, these same districts have shown only a trivial recovery in their digests as of fiscal year 2014, and some have continued to decline. Market signs point to recovering home values, but as of fiscal year 2014, the hardest hit districts had not seen this positively affect their budgets.



# Appendix

**Table A-1. Urban Classification Definitions**

CLASSIFICATION	DEFINITION
City: Large	Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population of 250,000 or more
City: Mid-size	Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000
City: Small	Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 100,000
Suburb: Large	Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population of 250,000 or more
Town: Fringe	Territory inside an urban cluster that is less than or equal to 10 miles from an urbanized area
Town: Distant	Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an urbanized area
Town: Remote	Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 35 miles from an urbanized area
Rural: Fringe	Census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster
Rural: Distant	Census-defined rural territory that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster
Rural: Remote	Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster

**Table A-2. Data Corresponding to Figures 1, 2 and 3**

DISTRICT	URBAN CLASSIFICATION	(A) 2014 COMPARED TO 2009	(B) PRE-PEAK COMPARED TO REC. MINIMUM	(C) 2014 COMPARED TO REC. MINIMUM
Appling County	Town: Remote	-0.77%	-0.77%	0.00%
Atkinson County	Rural: Remote	-3.26%	-5.83%	2.73%
Atlanta Public Schools	City: Large	-21.83%	-22.03%	0.25%
Bacon County	Rural: Fringe	-9.03%	-9.03%	0.00%
Baker County	Rural: Distant	16.73%	6.11%	6.58%
Baldwin County	Rural: Fringe	-13.98%	-13.98%	0.00%
Banks County	Rural: Distant	-5.58%	-5.82%	0.00%
Barrow County	Rural: Fringe	-29.08%	-33.75%	0.00%
Bartow County	Rural: Fringe	-6.74%	-7.59%	0.43%
Ben Hill County	Rural: Fringe	-0.27%	-3.70%	3.56%
Berrien County	Rural: Fringe	7.13%	-7.07%	12.81%
Bibb County	City: Small	-3.31%	-4.48%	1.23%
Bleckley County	Rural: Fringe	-7.53%	-9.67%	2.37%
Brantley County	Rural: Remote	-2.31%	-2.59%	0.00%
Bremen City	Rural: Fringe	1.81%	-8.46%	7.82%
Brooks County	Rural: Fringe	-4.08%	-13.62%	2.07%
Bryan County	Town: Fringe	-14.65%	-14.88%	0.00%
Buford City	Suburb: Large	-34.93%	-35.23%	0.00%
Bulloch County	Town: Remote	-9.95%	-9.95%	0.00%
Burke County	Rural: Fringe	55.57%	14.32%	32.88%

DISTRICT	URBAN CLASSIFICATION	(A) 2014 COMPARED TO 2009	(B) PRE-PEAK COMPARED TO REC. MINIMUM	(C) 2014 COMPARED TO REC. MINIMUM
Butts County	Rural: Fringe	-11.36%	-12.25%	0.00%
Calhoun City	Town: Distant	-19.43%	-22.35%	3.06%
Calhoun County	Rural: Remote	1.20%	-11.70%	5.27%
Camden County	Rural: Fringe	-19.89%	-19.89%	0.00%
Candler County	Rural: Fringe	-11.10%	-13.69%	3.00%
Carroll County	Rural: Fringe	-12.11%	-12.96%	0.00%
Carrollton City	Town: Distant	-17.60%	-26.27%	10.92%
Cartersville City	Town: Distant	-17.11%	-19.48%	0.50%
Catoosa County	Suburb: Large	-5.04%	-7.61%	2.26%
Charlton County	Rural: Fringe	-2.18%	-12.88%	6.04%
Chatham County	City: Mid-Size	-11.57%	-11.98%	0.00%
Chattahoochee County	Rural: Distant	-3.33%	-3.33%	0.00%
Chattooga County	Rural: Distant	-25.80%	-29.41%	5.12%
Cherokee County	Suburb: Large	-24.09%	-29.35%	0.63%
Chickamauga City	Suburb: Large	-10.48%	-15.25%	5.63%
Clarke County	City: Mid-Size	-10.57%	-10.57%	0.00%
Clay County	Rural: Remote	-15.75%	-17.67%	0.00%
Clayton County	Suburb: Large	-31.66%	-34.30%	0.00%
Clinch County	Rural: Fringe	6.37%	0.43%	2.16%
Cobb County	Suburb: Large	-19.73%	-21.23%	0.00%
Coffee County	Rural: Fringe	-3.19%	-5.40%	2.33%
Colquitt County	Town: Distant	-1.44%	-4.21%	2.21%
Columbia County	Rural: Fringe	-3.89%	-5.85%	0.06%
Commerce City	Town: Distant	-7.87%	-7.87%	0.00%
Cook County	Rural: Fringe	-1.75%	-9.40%	3.63%
Coweta County	Rural: Fringe	-8.13%	-11.85%	2.88%
Crawford County	Rural: Distant	-5.26%	-8.59%	3.64%
Crisp County	Rural: Fringe	5.28%	-2.95%	7.08%
Dade County	Town: Distant	4.37%	-4.91%	9.75%
Dalton City	City: Small	-19.44%	-22.12%	0.00%
Dawson County	Rural: Distant	-33.14%	-34.38%	0.00%
Decatur City	Suburb: Large	-34.65%	-34.65%	0.00%
Decatur County	Town: Distant	0.24%	-10.11%	5.27%
DeKalb County	Suburb: Large	-24.25%	-26.79%	0.00%
Dodge County	Rural: Fringe	0.02%	-1.45%	1.49%
Dooly County	Rural: Distant	7.81%	0.10%	7.70%
Dougherty County	City: Small	-5.39%	-8.02%	2.82%
Douglas County	Suburb: Large	-25.00%	-26.33%	0.00%
Dublin City	Town: Remote	-10.16%	-20.14%	12.50%
Early County	Town: Distant	5.54%	0.98%	2.50%
Echols County	Rural: Distant	4.46%	-7.98%	5.37%
Effingham County	Rural: Distant	-14.49%	-15.38%	1.05%
Elbert County	Town: Distant	3.85%	2.90%	0.92%
Emanuel County	Rural: Fringe	4.38%	-1.42%	2.76%

DISTRICT	URBAN CLASSIFICATION	(A) 2014 COMPARED TO 2009	(B) PRE-PEAK COMPARED TO REC. MINIMUM	(C) 2014 COMPARED TO REC. MINIMUM
Evans County	Rural: Fringe	-2.26%	-3.77%	1.57%
Fannin County	Rural: Remote	3.99%	0.47%	2.09%
Fayette County	Rural: Fringe	-16.22%	-16.59%	0.45%
Floyd County	Rural: Fringe	-4.13%	-5.34%	1.28%
Forsyth County	Suburb: Large	-27.25%	-31.44%	0.00%
Franklin County	Rural: Distant	-15.47%	-16.89%	0.00%
Fulton County	Suburb: Large	-15.69%	-17.87%	0.00%
Gainesville City	City: Small	-25.55%	-27.32%	0.00%
Gilmer County	Rural: Fringe	-38.13%	-43.09%	0.79%
Glascock County	Rural: Remote	12.49%	1.38%	6.40%
Glynn County	Rural: Fringe	-25.33%	-26.41%	0.00%
Gordon County	Rural: Distant	-18.89%	-19.36%	0.59%
Grady County	Town: Distant	-18.94%	-20.43%	0.00%
Greene County	Rural: Fringe	-29.90%	-32.84%	0.00%
Gwinnett County	Suburb: Large	-27.74%	-30.64%	0.00%
Habersham County	Rural: Fringe	-19.35%	-19.35%	0.00%
Hall County	Rural: Fringe	-23.31%	-23.31%	0.00%
Hancock County	Rural: Fringe	12.50%	2.95%	9.12%
Haralson County	Rural: Distant	1.36%	0.49%	0.31%
Harris County	Rural: Distant	-9.35%	-10.92%	0.00%
Hart County	Town: Distant	-21.80%	-21.80%	0.00%
Heard County	Rural: Distant	3.68%	-1.16%	4.89%
Henry County	Rural: Fringe	-29.26%	-32.34%	0.00%
Houston County	City: Small	-0.85%	-1.35%	0.51%
Irwin County	Rural: Fringe	0.13%	-0.83%	0.97%
Jackson County	Rural: Distant	-23.82%	-25.70%	0.00%
Jasper County	Rural: Distant	-32.36%	-34.47%	0.00%
Jeff Davis County	Town: Remote	-1.98%	-6.34%	3.65%
Jefferson City	Rural: Distant	-18.87%	-22.02%	0.00%
Jefferson County	Rural: Distant	15.25%	-0.15%	12.85%
Jenkins County	Rural: Fringe	16.54%	-6.35%	19.40%
Johnson County	Rural: Remote	-1.93%	-2.70%	0.79%
Jones County	Rural: Distant	-7.90%	-7.97%	0.08%
Lamar County	Town: Distant	-6.17%	-14.69%	9.64%
Lanier County	Rural: Distant	1.28%	-5.59%	3.66%
Laurens County	Rural: Distant	1.08%	-9.48%	7.43%
Lee County	Rural: Fringe	2.98%	-0.83%	3.84%
Liberty County	City: Small	6.92%	0.87%	6.00%
Lincoln County	Rural: Distant	-3.59%	-5.31%	0.00%
Long County	Rural: Distant	-2.47%	-5.12%	0.00%
Lowndes County	Rural: Fringe	-1.84%	-3.81%	2.05%
Lumpkin County	Town: Distant	-27.31%	-30.19%	0.00%
Macon County	Town: Distant	18.79%	-1.68%	20.82%
Madison County	Rural: Distant	-10.39%	-14.25%	2.65%

DISTRICT	URBAN CLASSIFICATION	(A) 2014 COMPARED TO 2009	(B) PRE-PEAK COMPARED TO REC. MINIMUM	(C) 2014 COMPARED TO REC. MINIMUM
Marietta City	City: Small	-24.65%	-25.15%	0.00%
Marion County	Rural: Distant	-6.06%	-6.06%	0.00%
McDuffie County	Rural: Fringe	-0.41%	-2.98%	0.00%
McIntosh County	Rural: Fringe	-0.84%	-12.29%	13.05%
Meriwether County	Rural: Distant	-4.35%	-5.98%	1.73%
Miller County	Rural: Remote	13.80%	-1.00%	14.95%
Mitchell County	Rural: Distant	6.47%	2.16%	4.22%
Monroe County	Rural: Fringe	-8.83%	-9.71%	0.00%
Montgomery County	Rural: Distant	-44.32%	-44.32%	0.00%
Morgan County	Rural: Fringe	-36.84%	-37.41%	0.00%
Murray County	Town: Fringe	-10.13%	-14.76%	4.69%
Muscogee County	City: Mid-Size	6.19%	1.46%	4.49%
Newton County	Suburb: Large	-34.84%	-38.29%	0.00%
Oconee County	Rural: Fringe	-16.89%	-19.05%	0.00%
Oglethorpe County	Rural: Distant	-5.45%	-5.45%	0.00%
Paulding County	Rural: Fringe	-30.95%	-37.38%	0.96%
Peach County	Rural: Fringe	4.93%	0.43%	4.48%
Pelham City	Town: Distant	7.09%	-2.92%	10.31%
Pickens County	Rural: Fringe	-4.06%	-4.06%	0.00%
Pierce County	Rural: Fringe	2.63%	-1.38%	2.98%
Pike County	Rural: Distant	-9.64%	-11.05%	0.00%
Polk County	Town: Distant	-5.15%	-7.73%	0.00%
Pulaski County	Town: Distant	6.77%	-1.22%	0.00%
Putnam County	Rural: Fringe	-10.95%	-12.44%	1.70%
Quitman County	Town: Remote	-1.47%	-43.44%	8.83%
Rabun County	Rural: Remote	-4.17%	-8.67%	1.94%
Randolph County	Town: Distant	18.51%	15.60%	0.00%
Richmond County	City: Mid-Size	5.48%	1.41%	2.91%
Rockdale County	Suburb: Large	-36.70%	-37.30%	0.00%
Rome City	City: Small	-12.17%	-12.17%	0.00%
Schley County	Rural: Remote	-6.98%	-7.89%	1.00%
Screven County	Rural: Fringe	9.30%	3.18%	4.44%
Seminole County	Rural: Fringe	0.27%	-4.58%	1.91%
Social Circle City	Rural: Distant	-11.27%	-15.42%	0.00%
Spalding County	Rural: Fringe	-5.09%	-6.11%	0.53%
Stephens County	Rural: Fringe	-10.64%	-10.64%	0.00%
Stewart County	Rural: Distant	3.03%	-8.52%	12.62%
Sumter County	Rural: Fringe	3.45%	1.59%	1.56%
Talbot County	Rural: Distant	9.37%	2.13%	0.72%
Taliaferro County	Rural: Remote	-2.88%	-20.01%	0.00%
Tattnell County	Rural: Distant	-3.43%	-5.53%	0.00%
Taylor County	Rural: Remote	0.68%	-5.70%	5.37%
Telfair County	Town: Remote	3.50%	-2.74%	5.20%
Terrell County	Town: Distant	4.85%	0.86%	3.96%

DISTRICT	URBAN CLASSIFICATION	(A) 2014 COMPARED TO 2009	(B) PRE-PEAK COMPARED TO REC. MINIMUM	(C) 2014 COMPARED TO REC. MINIMUM
Thomas County	Rural: Fringe	-15.17%	-17.22%	0.00%
Thomasville City	Rural: Fringe	-10.31%	-15.25%	5.83%
Tift County	Town: Distant	-2.84%	-5.50%	2.82%
Toombs County	Town: Remote	11.13%	1.21%	9.81%
Towns County	Town: Remote	-22.23%	-22.23%	0.00%
Treutlen County	Rural: Remote	1.75%	-4.44%	6.48%
Trion City	Rural: Fringe	-36.86%	-54.38%	0.00%
Troup County	Town: Distant	-2.64%	-7.68%	5.47%
Turner County	Town: Distant	6.79%	-3.46%	9.11%
Twiggs County	Town: Distant	4.86%	2.71%	2.10%
Union County	Rural: Distant	-13.07%	-13.85%	0.00%
Upson County	Rural: Remote	-0.73%	-0.73%	0.00%
Valdosta City	City: Small	-3.77%	-3.87%	0.00%
Vidalia City	Town: Remote	2.20%	-6.80%	9.66%
Walker County	Rural: Fringe	-5.20%	-5.20%	0.00%
Walton County	Rural: Fringe	-29.16%	-35.83%	0.00%
Ware County	Town: Remote	5.16%	0.43%	3.29%
Warren County	Rural: Distant	21.47%	1.70%	9.98%
Washington County	Town: Remote	-4.29%	-4.29%	0.00%
Wayne County	Rural: Fringe	0.16%	-12.12%	8.07%
Webster County	Rural: Distant	12.28%	-11.30%	14.22%
Wheeler County	Rural: Distant	-1.96%	-2.71%	0.00%
White County	Rural: Distant	-22.47%	-22.47%	0.00%
Whitfield County	Rural: Fringe	-15.90%	-17.65%	1.10%
Wilcox County	Rural: Remote	15.27%	-0.55%	10.92%
Wilkes County	Rural: Fringe	-7.54%	-7.54%	0.00%
Wilkinson County	Rural: Distant	-4.17%	-6.57%	2.57%
Worth County	Town: Distant	4.36%	1.37%	2.95%

## About the Author

---



Nicholas Warner is a research associate at the Center for State and Local Finance and the Fiscal Research Center. His recent research has focused on school district expenditure and revenue portfolio analysis, tax expenditure estimation, examination of Georgia’s special option sales tax for school facility funding, and school districts’ responses to the Great Recession.

---

## About the Fiscal Research Center

---

Established in 1995, the Fiscal Research Center (FRC) provides nonpartisan research, technical assistance and education in the evaluation and design of state tax and economic policy. FRC’s responsibilities include developing estimates for tax-related fiscal notes, writing the Georgia State Tax Expenditure Budget, supporting the state’s economist, and conducting policy and academic research on a variety of topics associated with state tax policy issues.

FRC Reports, Policy Briefs, and other publications maintain a position of neutrality on public policy issues in order to safeguard the academic freedom of the authors. Thus, interpretations or conclusions in FRC publications should be understood to be solely those of the author(s).

For more information on the Fiscal Research Center, visit our website at: [frc.gsu.edu](http://frc.gsu.edu).

## About the Center for State and Local Finance

---

The Center for State and Local Finance (CSLF) mission is to develop the people and technologies for next generation public finance. Key initiatives include: 1) Developing executive education programs in public finance to provide professional development for the next generation of practitioners in state and local finance; 2) Building technical assistance capacity in next generation technologies for the public sector that include the use of “big data” and improved analytics to better inform policy-makers and to better target solutions to public sector problems; 3) Supporting scholarship on critical challenges in state and local fiscal and economic policy; and 4) Building and strong capacity to translate and communicate academic research for the practitioner audience.

CSLF Reports, Policy Briefs, and other publications maintain a position of neutrality on public policy issues in order to safeguard the academic freedom of the authors. Thus, interpretations or conclusion in CSLF publications should be understood to be solely those of the author(s).

For more information on the Center for State and Local Finance, visit our website at: [cslf.gsu.edu](http://cslf.gsu.edu).