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So I asked the typical question about her oldest, "What will she study? Will she be a teacher like her mama?"    "I hope not," she said, then looked at me sheepishly. "I'm sorry. I know I shouldn't say that, but things have gotten crazy. I want her to be happy."    She went on to share a litany of things that represented a common theme we all hear a lot lately: Teaching is getting tougher. Parental support. Tests. Discipline. Salary. Support. Blaming and shaming.    I have to admit: the teacher's words hurt. Badly.    Why? Well, other than the fact that I know her protective maternal instincts were battling her true pride in being a teacher (she IS a good teacher!), it hurt because I knew she was not alone.    Many of us have heard the same thing for the last several years. Less teachers are encouraging their own family members to be teachers these days. And this is not good news for recruitment and retention of teachers. Whatever we do, we have to figure out a way to change this, and the problem is a daunting one (that shouldn't read, however, impossible one!).    Of course, this is not new news, and Georgia's teacher shortage...no, CRISIS...is something even our Governor is working to address. His listening tours, pay raises, and even his pats on the backs of educators on social media appear to be a sincere and much-appreciated leadership effort to stop the bleed of the last 15 years and then build toward the future. It helps.  Hopefully in this winter's General Assembly, we will see even more sharing of the narrative of how much Georgia public education is improving compared to the nation and even more government cheerleading and support of  our public school heroes.  **And now, let's pause...This article is not about the teacher shortage crisis**.    The teacher shortage is just the beginning of a domino effect because there may be another shortage on the way:  **A shortage of qualified assistant principals and principals.**  Think about it. About 5-10 years into many teachers' careers, a segment of them make the natural jump into the role of assistant principal or instructional coach and then into the role of school principal.    But if there is a gaping 10-year vacancy hole in the entire state's teaching profession, where will all the principals we will need in the next 10 years come from?    If this logic proves correct, we have to act now. Think of all the miracles we expect of you as leaders of schools in 2019. Now let's fast forward to 2029. Not only will the challenges of the day continue to grow, but we will need more of you! There will be more children to teach, more teachers to support (if we can find them), and more schools to lead!  If we are going to reap a crop of solid school assistant principals and principals and superintendents for an even tougher world in the future, we have to use every tool of policy and politics, every economic incentive, every marketing and recruitment technique, and every agency network we can muster to get top-notch teachers in the classroom right now.  It isn't just about the education system of Georgia; it's MUCH bigger than that. It's about the economic future of the state.    Turning this around may indeed be daunting, but it is not impossible. It starts with a vision:  **Georgia will be the #1 state in the nation to be an educator!**  **If you live in Georgia and are passionate about children, become a teacher!**  **If you are a teacher and don't live in Georgia...MOVE TO GOD'S COUNTRY! :)**  I believe the right policies and actions will follow (and so will a great legacy) if we shout and support this vision in every corner of Georgia.  Have a great week!  [@RobertCostley](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=0015ltOteeI454RVfQKnPfE3SQU_OwDm55OKmQ6lEmbuNJs0nGrcuwIfULnOdc595W1wXMJYC0Fst7gf2OZYx9u00Nkr3A-fBSbRfR8BCs6hLq6Kcrl26n9whrtlTSPsnTg4DEJLvipJsUPkasVWcrfQFsfRa2RUBKBT-RxOH2UwwZsOfb5i_0ixOX9laD220E4&c=mXWc1YhTHmTyCXlDYTpAP34ZkrretDLAYAZ5-5S56y8pP8V8iPkzPg==&ch=ZGPTdVlYAD4wcdKXHtH2MC2DgsXntd4O6NlmEjqibn4xQfOQQPRjjA==)  Executive Director | | | | | |