

# GAfutures

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## Frequently Asked Questions

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### Student Users

05/2016

**GSFC** | Georgia Student  
Finance Commission

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **What is the name of the new website?**

**GAfutures.org** - The website should be referred to as GAfutures with the letters “G” and “A” pronounced as letters not as “Georgia”. GAfutures will replace GAcollge411.

### **When is GAfutures going to launch?**

GAfutures is currently scheduled to launch in **July 2016**.

### **What type of browser should be utilized in accessing the GAfutures.org website?**

Mainly your common browser options from Microsoft, Google, Firefox, and Apple are compatible. Attempting to access GAfutures through other browsers may cause compatibility issues.

### **Will student account information transfer to GAfutures?**

*Student profiles from GAcollge411 (active within the last two years) will automatically transfer to GAfutures. Most users will be able to sign in with their existing GAcollge411 account credentials. Some users however have a username that contains prohibited special characters and will have to modify their username before signing in the first time – No worries, a handy FAQ will be available to make this a snap. Please be advised that non-profile information will not transfer to the new site.*

### **If a student had multiple accounts will all their information migrate to GAfutures.org?**

Student profiles *will* migrate. If a student has multiple accounts, he/she needs to sign in with the account that contains their **most current information**. If they cannot remember their sign in information, the student can use the easy *Forget Username* and *Forgot Password* functionality on the site.

### **Will the services provided on GAfutures be free like on GAcollge411.org?**

Yes. GAfutures and all of the services it provides will be free. There will be tools for career exploration, planning and applying to college, and increased information on how to pay for college available to users.

# NEW FEATURES AND FUNCTIONS

## **What are some of the new features and functions available on GAfutures?**

- GAfutures has a fresh new look with a more engaging, user-friendly experience. GAfutures is well-organized and allows users to find relevant, up-to-date information quickly and easily.
- The Create an Account process has been streamlined with a more user-friendly design. The five screen process from GAcollge411 has been condensed to one screen and has less required information making account creation quicker, easier and faster.
- New single sign on capabilities allow authorized users to sign in to GAfutures only once and automatically have access to other systems including STARS and SURFER. No need for separate usernames and passwords.
- Usernames can be retrieved and passwords reset by the individual user in real time using the new *Forgot username?* and/or *Forgot your password?* functions.
- Users can now provide a secondary email address to retrieve their username and/or reset their password.
- Security questions are unique to different age groups to make them easier for users to remember.
- New account sharing function allows parents and legal guardians to view their student's account. It is easy and secure.
- GAfutures' search function is more advanced, easier to use and is powered by Google.
- In addition to the advanced search functions, an easy-to-use Site Map will be available. It will aid as another option to help users navigate the website and find specific information.
- GAfutures' content is professionally written for its respective audiences, search engine optimized and meets required state and national education standards.
- For students and other site users, "*My GAfutures*" is the centralized location for messages and managing their account profile. "*My Transcript*" allows high school students to request their transcripts be sent to designated postsecondary institutions.
- With the launch of GAfutures, GSFC has expanded the transcript calculation cycles for the HOPE GPA. There will now be two cycles per day instead of one.

## **Can two or more accounts share the same email address?**

Yes. The username must be unique, but the email address does not have to be unique. It is common for parents to use their own email address for their account as well as for the account of their younger children.

## **PASSWORDS, USERNAMES, AND DUPLICATE ACCOUNTS**

### **What if a student forgets their username and/or password?**

For convenience, GAfutures has a “*Forgot your username?*” and a “*Forgot your password?*” function on the sign in page.

Passwords can be reset by:

- Use Forgot password
- Email
- Answering previously chosen security questions
- Contacting designated staff (counselors and teachers) – an email with login assistance will be emailed to the email designated in student’s profile.
- Contacting GSFC

Usernames can be retrieved by:

- Use Forgot username
- Email
- Contact a designated staff member with an administrative account (counselors, teachers) – look-up student username
- Contacting GSFC

The *Forgot your username?* and *Forgot your password?* functions should significantly reduce the number of duplicate accounts created.

**Note: For security reasons, viewing, retrieving or printing existing passwords is prohibited.**

Special characters replacement algorithm for user names in imported accounts. Only the characters below will be replaced in the user names:

Special Character	Replacement	
'	1a	Single quote
;	2b	Semicolon
,	3c	Comma
&	4d	Ampersand
"	5e	Double quotes
'	6f	Apostrophe
-	7g	Dash
(space)	8h	
/	9i	Slash
\	0j	Back Slash

*\* Special characters replacement in user names may result in conflicts with other user names. The strategy to handle user name conflicts will be defined in the data testing cycle 2.*

### Resolving conflicts with existing user names after replacing special characters:

- After performing special characters replacing, if another user account already exists with same user name, the user name being updated/loaded will be changed to: **New User Name + “\_” (underline) + First Letter of User’s First Name in lowercase**. In very few cases, a “\_1” will be added to the new user name along with “\_” + first letter of first name. If this happens, it means the same account exists in all 3 account sources.
  - Example: John Doe has an account with the username gafutures. This username could be updated to gafutures\_j if a duplicate exists.

## **APPLICATIONS/TRANSCRIPTS AND TRAINING/PREPARATION**

### **Will I be able to apply to colleges through GAfutures?**

Yes. If a postsecondary institution currently has a link to their admissions application on GAcademy411.org, students will be able to access that college application through GAfutures.

### **Will I be able to send my transcripts in GAfutures?**

Yes, if your school allows students to request transcripts electronically, this process will not change.

### **What can I do to prepare for the transition from GAcademy411.org to GAfutures.org?**

Students can best prepare for the transition to GAfutures.org by updating profile information on GAcademy411.org prior to the migration of the data. The more information in the user profile prior to the transition, the easier it will be to retrieve and initiate user accounts on the new site.

### **Will there be training resources available for GAfutures?**

Resources will be available on GAfutures (within the Resources Tab) to aid users in different tasks on the new site. There is a *Help* feature throughout the site to assist users and questions can always be sent to [GAfutures@gsfc.org](mailto:GAfutures@gsfc.org).

### **How can customers receive more information or submit questions regarding GAfutures?**

Questions about the website and requests to be added to the GAfutures email list to receive updates about the new site can be submitted to [GAfutures@gsfc.org](mailto:GAfutures@gsfc.org).