

POLICY. LEADERSHIP. NETWORKING.

 **GEPF III**
GEORGIA EDUCATION POLICY FELLOWSHIP

2026

APPLICATION FORM

2027



Georgia Partnership
FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

INFORMING LEADERS. IMPROVING EDUCATION.



**THE GEORGIA EDUCATION
POLICY FELLOWSHIP
IS AN INITIATIVE OF:**

Georgia Partnership for
Excellence in Education
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Atlanta, Georgia 30303
Telephone: 404.223.2280
www.gpee.org

In collaboration with:
The Institute for Educational Leadership
4301 Connecticut Avenue, NW
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For more information please contact:
Robert W. Gaines, II, Ph.D.
Email: fellows@gpee.org
Telephone: 678.476.4491

**ENROLLMENT IS LIMITED.
APPLY TODAY!**



Georgia Partnership
FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

The Georgia Education Policy Fellowship (GEPF) is a professional development program designed to equip emerging leaders across sectors with the knowledge, skills, and networks needed to advance key education policy priorities. Serving as a critical resource for individuals, organizations, and the state, GEPF deepens understanding of education policy while strengthening the connection between policy and practice. The fellowship's mission is to cultivate leaders in both public and private organizations who are prepared to shape and implement effective policies that improve outcomes for all Georgians.

Over the course of a ten-month program, Fellows engage in three core strands: public policy, leadership, and professional networking. Participants remain in their full-time roles, using their professional environments as a lens through which to explore and apply key leadership and policy concepts impacting education in Georgia.

GEPF is more than a traditional professional development program.

It brings Fellows and ideas together through a dynamic series of in-person learning experiences designed to serve as a "leadership laboratory"—a space to apply new insights, build practical skills, and engage deeply with complex policy issues. Participants learn directly from respected policymakers and thought leaders from across Georgia and the nation, gaining valuable perspective on the forces shaping education today. By the program's conclusion, Fellows emerge as more informed, confident, and effective advocates for sound public policy.

The program is anchored by several core components: (1) monthly colloquiums that offer a comprehensive, multi-dimensional learning experience; (2) a field experience in Washington, D.C., providing firsthand engagement with federal policy leaders; and (3) a strong and enduring network at both the state and national levels, with alumni spanning diverse sectors and sharing a demonstrated commitment to improving education policy—driving meaningful change in their communities and beyond.

THE GEORGIA EDUCATION POLICY FELLOWSHIP ADDRESSES A NEED IN OUR STATE

Across Georgia, professionals in a wide range of sectors play an increasingly important role in shaping public education. From the legislature to school boards and districts, businesses to social service agencies, foundations, and nonprofit organizations, these individuals have a unique opportunity to influence education policy at both the local and state levels.

To maximize that impact, they need a strong foundation of knowledge and training—grounded in both the issues facing education and the policies that shape them at the federal, state, and local levels.

Apply to become a Georgia Education Policy Fellow if you have:

- A passion for education policy and a desire to improve opportunities for all of Georgia's children
- A track record for making things happen both inside and across agencies/organizations
- A commitment to personal and professional development
- A full-time, professional position in Georgia with substantive work experience
- A bachelor's degree or its equivalent
- The endorsement and financial support of your employing organization

What is my commitment if I am accepted as a Georgia Education Policy Fellow?

- Participate in 10 gatherings over the ten-month period including a welcome reception, an overnight retreat, seven monthly colloquiums, D.C. Field Experience, and a graduation ceremony
- Attend D.C. Field Experience focusing on education policy
- Share your experience and knowledge with other Fellows through inquiry, discussions, and presentations
- Conduct independent study and research by reading materials in advance, preparing questions, and completing a self-designed project related to issues explored in the program

How will my organization benefit from my participation in GEPF?

- Access to a professional program with a proven track record
- Better informed, more skillful employees who understand policy making and the interconnections of education with other sectors
- Employees who are prepared to assume greater leadership responsibilities
- Employees equipped to make dynamic, research-based contributions to education policy and practice
- Expanded professional networks that enhance the organization's ability to access key leaders and decision makers who shape policy on behalf of children and youth

What is my employer's commitment in supporting my participation?

- To be sensitive to GEPF meetings and forum by allowing release time from work
- Pay tuition of \$3,800 plus all travel-related expenses for the D.C. Field Experience and monthly colloquiums

ADDED VALUE OF GEPF!

"The Georgia Partnership's Education Policy Fellowship Program (GEPF) is different than most leadership development programs because you are actually learning a great deal... every facet of education... it shows you the whole pipeline."

- Mike Carnathan, GEPF Class of 2016
Senior Principal Planner
Atlanta Regional Commission

"The Education Policy Fellowship Program (GEPF) gave me a deep and wide understanding of the education landscape in Georgia. Simultaneously, it gave me a network of peers who are passionate about education and come from various sectors, both from my class and in the alumni network. I'm grateful to the Georgia Partnership for this leadership experience and would highly recommend it to anyone looking to grow their education knowledge base and expand their network."

- Paige Pushkin, GEPF Class of 2017
Executive Director
Georgia Foundation for Public Education

"As an Education Policy Fellow in the inaugural Georgia class, I experienced professional development that crossed sectors, professions and geographic boundaries. Thanks to extensive reading and thoughtful presentations from education experts, I bonded with the Fellows at the monthly colloquiums and national seminars. I hope my colleagues in philanthropy will take advantage of this Education Policy Fellowship because it is more engaging and relevant than graduate school and Georgia needs more informed education advocates!"

- Atiba Mbiwan, GEPF Class of 2009
Executive Director
The Zeist Foundation

GEORGIA EDUCATION POLICY FELLOWSHIP CALENDAR

Colloquiums will be hosted on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. and will be held at the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education office.

Welcome Reception

Tuesday, August 11
5:30–7:00 p.m.

Opening Session/Overnight Retreat

Thursday – Friday, September 10-11

Colloquium #1

Wednesday, October 14

Colloquium #2

Wednesday, November 11

Colloquium #3

Wednesday, December 9
(2-hour virtual session)

Colloquium #4

Wednesday, January 13, 2026

Colloquium #5

Wednesday, February 10

D.C. Field Experience

March 2027
Washington, D.C.

Colloquium #6

Wednesday, April 14

Colloquium #7

Wednesday, May 12

Graduation Ceremony

Wednesday, May 19
5:30–7:00 p.m.

Topics May Include:

- Georgia Education Policy 101
- Leadership Lessons
- Political and Demographic Landscape of Georgia
- Critical Linkages to Education: Interconnectedness of Policy Sectors
- The Flattening World: Teaching and Learning in the U.S. and Across the World
- Following the Money: Funding Education in Georgia
- Public Policy Creation and Implementation in Georgia
- Forward Thinking: What Can We Do and How?

2026-2027 APPLICATION FORM

Name of Applicant _____

Professional Title _____

Division/Department _____

Organization/Institution _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Office Phone _____ Office Fax _____

Home Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Email _____

Cell Phone _____

EDUCATION (Please list most recent experience first)

University/College	Degree	Date
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

WORK EXPERIENCE (Please list current position and attach a résumé)

Title _____ Dates Employed _____

Employer's Name _____ Employer's Title _____

Employer's Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Employer's Phone _____ Employer's Email _____

Employer may be contacted.

2026-2027 APPLICATION FORM

GEPF OUTCOMES:

Please provide narrative responses (250 words maximum per response) to each of the following questions focused on the personal and professional outcomes of GEPF. .

1. What is your vision for education in Georgia, and how do you see yourself as a part of making that happen?
2. How will GEPF help you realize that vision?
3. As a fellow looking to enhance your capacity as a change-agent, what would your three learning priorities be and why?
4. How would your participation in GEPF enhance your organization's ability to engage in education advocacy?

OPTIONAL INFORMATION:

Race _____

Gender _____

How did you learn about GEPF?

COMMITMENT & ENDORSEMENT

The Georgia Education Policy Fellowship requires a significant commitment of time and energy. Participation involves an opening session/overnight retreat, seven colloquiums, the D.C. Field Experience, and the completion of a group project. The program tuition, plus travel costs for the D.C. Field Experience and colloquiums are paid by the Fellow's employer/sponsor.

We also offer the Dr. Stephen D. Dolinger Rising Leader Scholarship to cover the full tuition of one candidate who is currently serving as a public school educator in a K-12 system in Georgia and demonstrates high leadership potential.

Learn more and apply here: <http://bit.ly/SteveDolingerGEPFScholarship>

With the understanding that the maximum benefits are achieved through full participation by the Georgia Education Policy Fellow in all meetings and the D.C. Field Experience, the Fellow and the Fellow's sponsor hereby agree that the Fellow will participate fully in the program. Failure to attend mandatory sessions (Overnight Retreat and D.C. Field Experience) and/or more than two absences from other program activities may result in dismissal from the program.

IMPORTANT: Full Payment of \$3,800 is due by Friday, August 28, 2026

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT:

Your signature affirms:

- (1) You have reviewed the program calendar and arranged necessary leave with your employer;
- (2) If selected, you can and will commit to full participation in the GEPF experience.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY SUPERVISOR/SPONSOR:

Your signature affirms:

- (1) You will allow your employee release time for full participation in the GEPF experience;
- (2) Payment of program-related costs, including non-refundable program tuition of \$3,800 and travel expenses.

Supervisor's Name _____ Supervisor's Title _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Supervisor's Address _____

City _____ Zip Code _____

Office Phone _____ Office Fax _____

Email _____

PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION WITH RESUME & QUESTION RESPONSES ATTACHED BY EMAIL TO:

Robert W. Gaines, II (fellows@gpee.org)

This application can be signed in Adobe or signature pages may be scanned and attached.

Application deadline is **Friday, June 19, 2026**

Applicants will be notified of acceptance status no later than **Friday, July 10, 2026**

PROGRAM CALENDAR & ATTENDANCE POLICY

Welcome Reception

Tuesday, August 11

5:30– 7:00 p.m.

Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce

Opening Session/Overnight Retreat

Thursday – Friday, September 10-11

Callaway Resort & Gardens

D.C. Field Experience

March 2027

Washington, D.C.

Colloquiums

10:00 a.m – 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

Wednesday, November 11

Wednesday, December 9

Wednesday, January 13, 2027

Wednesday, February 10

Wednesday, April 14

Wednesday, May 12

Graduation Ceremony

Wednesday, May 19, 2027

Program Attendance Policy

With the understanding that the maximum benefits are achieved through full participation by the GEPF Fellow in all meetings and the national conference, complete participation in the program is expected of each Fellow.

Failure to attend mandatory sessions (Overnight Retreat and D.C. Field Experience) and/or more than two absences from other program activities may result in dismissal from the program.

Contact your GEPF Coordinator with questions

Robert Gaines ~ 678.476.4491 (Cell) ~ fellows@gpee.org



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