

education policy forums
media symposium
community engagement
education policy fellowship
program bus trip

2012 ANNUAL REPORT

IMPACT

economics of education
critical issues forums
REACHES education
policy forums
education policy
fellowship program



GEORGIA PARTNERSHIP
FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

1992 **20** 2012
YEARS

IMPACT!

How do you define an organization's impact?

There are many ways; metrics of course. Over the past year the Georgia Partnership has put up many impressive numbers. We presented three Critical Issues Forums to more than 400 people and we collaborated to present five Education Policy Forums across the state to 150-plus decision-makers. We graduated a class of 20 Education Policy Fellows and began another cohort of 21. We distributed 4,000 copies of our annual *Top Ten Issues to Watch* report and we delivered 30 Economics of Education briefings to more than 1,100 people. But what is the story behind the numbers?

Throughout this annual report – our 20th anniversary year – you will find personal statements from a wide range of education stakeholders. In their own words they paint the picture behind the numbers. Twenty years ago the Partnership founders envisioned an organization that would make an impact. We have worked hard to make them proud.

Letter from the Chair



*One of the best ways to judge an organization's effectiveness is by the results it achieves both short- and long-term. Over the past year I have been honored to serve as the chair of this organization, one that has built its sterling reputation on results. We have chosen an appropriate title for this year's annual report... **IMPACT!***

2012 was another very good year in a long line of good years. But 2012 was a year to celebrate. It was our 20th anniversary and we appropriately honored our heritage and many of the visionaries who both crafted and led the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education. This annual report is flavored with remembrances of our proud history.

Whether we are talking about the Top Ten Issues to Watch report, the Media Symposium, Critical Issues and Education Policy Forums, Bus Trip Across Georgia, the Education Policy Fellowship Program, or the Education Policy Toolbox, there are several things that ring true across the board: quality, focus, consistency and uniqueness. Combine the 2012 accomplishments with the 19 years before and we have... **IMPACT!**

When we talk topics such as quality of life, work-force development, and prosperity, it is the effectiveness of our education system that serves as the foundation for each. That is why this organization has maintained its relevance for these many years.

As I relinquish my chairmanship, I'm proud of what we have accomplished as a team and I have lofty expectations for even greater contributions to the public education landscape in Georgia. Together, we have made – and continue to make – an... **IMPACT!**

Paul Bowers
President and CEO, Georgia Power

“*The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education has an exceptional record of service to the educational institutions, students and families of Georgia. Education is a vital component to the overall success of every single person, and I applaud this organization's mission to impact education policies and practices for the improvement of student achievement.*”

– GOV. NATHAN DEAL, COMMENDATION HONORING THE PARTNERSHIP'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Welcome 2012!

The annual Media Symposium and subsequent release of the Top Ten Issues to Watch report in January always start the year off on the right foot!

Media Symposium

It is hard to believe that the Georgia Partnership observed the 6th annual Media Symposium at Georgia Public Broadcasting in January. Thanks to GPB for their continuing support! The event has grown in popularity as we continue to listen to what reporters want to cover and who they want to hear. The agenda always reflects as many of their requests as we can accommodate. The 2012 Media Symposium saw several "regulars" but also attracted several new reporters – 24 attendees in all.

The event has become a win-win production. Reporters win because they are able to hear from the experts on a wide range of subjects and they get to hear from policy makers and news makers who otherwise might not be as accessible as they would like. And the Partnership wins by opening doors to reporters and editors who may need a source or resource in the coming year. At least 10 stories were filed immediately following the event addressing subjects presented at the Symposium.

Agenda and Speakers

Top Ten Issues to Watch in 2012 – Dana Rickman, Georgia Partnership Policy and Research Director

Race to the Top in Georgia – A Status Report – Teresa McCartney, Implementation Director, Georgia's Race to the Top Plan, Georgia Department of Education

Education Policy – Governor Deal's Office – Erin Hames, Policy Director to Governor Deal and Kristin Bernhard, Governor Deal's Education Policy Advisor

Trends and Issues – Education Funding – Herb Garrett, Executive Director, Georgia School Superintendents Association
Georgia Department of Education Communications Office Update – Matt Cardoza

A Teacher's Perspective - Georgia's 2012 Teacher of the Year – Jadun McCarthy

Underscoring the Importance of Early Education – Commissioner Bobby Cagle, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

View from the Georgia Department of Education – State Superintendent of Schools Dr. John Barge

Under the Gold Dome – What's Ahead for Education in the 2012 Legislative Session – Representative Brooks Coleman (R), Chairman House Education Committee, and Representative Stacey Abrams (D), House Minority Leader

[Check out the video report](#)

In an evaluation completed by many of the reporters, 100 percent either rated the program "Excellent" or "Very Good" and all respondents agreed it was a "valuable use" of their time.

Comments – Will the information presented today be helpful in your work?

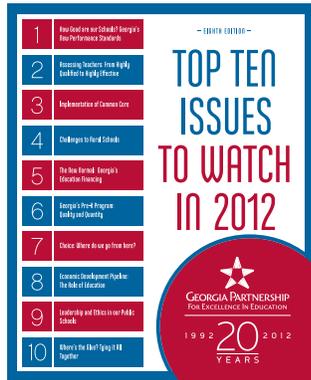
- > Yes! This provides helpful guidance to topics I'm planning to cover.
- > This has given me deeper reference materials and insights.
- > The Symposium has provided me with useful information and I can use some of the speakers in my TV show.
- > I can now plan ahead and be on top of issues at the state level that apply to my local area.
- > Being new to the beat, it provided an intense boot camp of all the huge issues coming down the pike I need to be aware of.



“ *Top Ten Issues to Watch, GPEE's annual publication, is just one example of the Partnership's many outstanding accomplishments. The Leadership Team in the Bagwell College of Education at Kennesaw State University looks forward to reviewing this document each year, utilizing it within our strategic planning process. Several professors incorporate Top Ten into their graduate course requirements, thereby introducing our students to current research, national trends, and state policy developments.* ”

– **ARLINDA J. EATON, PH.D. DEAN,**
BAGWELL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY

Top Ten Issues to Watch in 2012



When this report was born in 2005, the Partnership had no idea how popular it would become and what place it would eventually hold in the education landscape in Georgia. This latest edition just added to its popularity.

More than 4,000 hard copies were distributed throughout the state and beyond. Many more downloads were taken from the Partnership web site. A variety of

organizations requested a supply for their teams, conferences and events. It was the subject of several print and broadcast media reports, and House and Senate lawmakers often used it as a resource during the General Assembly.

Why has it become so popular? It's unique. There truly is no other publication like it in Georgia. Not only does it identify the key education policy issues but it analyzes them so readers clearly understand the significance to the state. But the book takes it a step further by suggesting the action steps Georgia needs to take to maximize our effectiveness and efficiency on the road to a world-class education system.

For the second year in a row the publication started with a framework for the report. Where does Georgia stack up nationally on a set of 10 key indicators? For example, in the category of children ages 3-5 enrolled in early education (2007-2009), we were far ahead of the national average but in 8th grade math performance, Georgia students are several points below their counterparts.

This is what the Top Ten report has become: A trusted, valued, thorough piece of work that appeals to a wide-ranging variety of stakeholders.

TOPICS:

1. How Are Our Schools? Georgia's New Performance Standards
2. Assessing Teachers: From Highly Qualified to Highly Effective
3. Implementation of Common Core
4. Challenges to Rural Schools
5. The New Normal: Georgia's Education Financing
6. Georgia's Pre-K Program: Quality and Quantity
7. Choice: Where Do We Go from Here?
8. Economic Development Pipeline: The Role of Education
9. Leadership and Ethics in Our Public Schools
10. Where's the Glue? Tying it All Together

Education Policy Fellowship Program – EPFP

2012 saw the graduation of the program's fourth cohort and the start of Class #5! The interest in this policy-focused initiative continues to grow.

Twenty members of Class #4 graduated in May after spending nine months getting into the nuts and bolts of education policy. Another 21 began their cohort the following September.

EPFP is made up of three program strands: public policy, leadership, and professional networking. Fellows remain in their full-time positions and use their work environment as the context for examining important leadership and policy issues in Georgia.

“ A strong education policy does not emerge without thoughtful engagement of the factors influencing that policy. Through EPFP I have listened, learned, and bantered about the issues that we in Georgia face from urban, suburban, and rural systems to immigration issues, and from virtual learning opportunities to property tax funding dilemmas. The experience I had with my fellow EPFP colleagues in examining the policy considerations was dynamic and very rewarding. I highly recommend EPFP to those who are interested in helping Georgia continue to develop strong education policies making the state very competitive. ”

– KAMI BENSON LUIGS,
EPFP CLASS 2012, PROGRAM MANAGER, GE

What's in it for the participants? The program provides Fellows with a unique personal development for applying new insights and for cultivating new skills. By the time the cohort concludes, participants have heard from a wealth of subject matter experts and have discussed education policy in depth. The 2012 Fellows left the program better informed, more skillful advocates for sound public policy.

What's in it for Georgia? New strategic leaders are being cultivated who have the capacity to advocate for and create policies to improve public education. Ultimately, EPFP seeks to improve the chances of children and youth to succeed.

The Georgia Partnership is proud to have the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University and the Office of the Vice President Public Service & Outreach at the University of Georgia as co-sponsors of the Education Policy Fellowship Program.

2012 Colloquium Topics

- > Critical Linkages to Education: The Connections and Intersections of Policy Sectors
- > Education in a Flattening World: International Comparisons of Teaching and Learning
- > High Performing and Effective Schools: What Do They Look Like? How Do We Create Them?
- > College Access and Completion: What is Georgia's Path Forward?
- > A Conversation With the Alliance of Education Agency Heads
- > The Demographic Landscape of Georgia
- > School Funding and Finance: Following the Money Stream and Toward a Better Understanding of Policymaking



Critical Issues Forums

Three times during the year the Georgia Partnership presents public programs that examine specific topics of interest. Subject matter experts are invited to take a hard look at issues. Panel discussions often follow that allow even closer inspection. Audience participation is a regular feature. These unique offerings draw large audiences from business, government, education and civic communities. The three events held in 2012 drew more than 400 participants and looked at student preparation, what's the future impact of technology on education, and how the education process works in fielding practices that impact student learning and achievement.

May – Preparing Today's Students for Tomorrow's Workforce

State School Superintendent **Dr. John Barge** briefed the audience on the new College and Career Ready Performance Index. He was followed by State Farm Mutual President and CEO **Ed Rust** who talked about how we must be preparing tomorrow's workforce by using the best tools and processes available. Mr. Rust also serves as the co-chair for the national Business Coalition for Student Achievement.

A panel discussion followed. Joining Mr. Rust were **Dr. Martha Reichrath**, deputy state school superintendent, **Mr. Paul Bowers**, president and CEO Georgia Power and the Georgia Partnership's Board Chair; and **Mr. Steve Smith**, associate superintendent, Atlanta Public Schools.

Check this Forum now

Mr. Art Hopkins, president and CEO of Macquarium Intelligent Communications, served as moderator.

August – The Future of Education: From Evolution to Revolution

Dr. Jason Huett, Associate Dean of Online Development, University of West Georgia, provided a provocative presentation designed to make the audience think about the changes that our education system must make in the future if we are to remain competitive and their roles in those changes. He challenged the audience with this key takeaway: "Change always takes longer than we think it should but then happens much faster than we thought it could... it is time to change. It is time for us to educate our students for their future and not our past."

Check this Forum now

Former Georgia Partnership Chair and current Board member, **Ann Cramer**, Director Americas, Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Affairs, IBM, reflected on the early days of the Georgia Partnership and related them to where we are today as we look ahead. The Partnership

only imagined then where we would be today. Ann urged the group to keep the early vision of the Georgia Partnership alive by co-laboring ("collaborate = co-labor") for change. "We must never give up for a minute but build the hope not only around the world but in our state for our children."

Here is the video from the Georgia Partnership's 20th Anniversary celebration that followed the Forum

Immediately following the Forum, a reception was held in honor of the Georgia Partnership's 20th anniversary.

November – From Policy to Plan to Practice: Building a Strong Education Pipeline

The featured speaker was **Kristin Bernhard**, Education Policy Advisor, Office of Governor Nathan Deal. She outlined the state's plan related to third grade reading, college completion, preparing effective teachers and school leaders, increasing STEM competencies, and providing public school options for increased flexibility to improve student achievement.

A panel discussion featuring a group of front-line practitioners from a variety of fields brought life to the five areas discussed by Ms. Bernhard. Participating on the panel were **Dr. Emily Lembeck**, Superintendent, Marietta City Schools; **Kami Luigs**, Program Manager, GE Foundation Education Grant, GE; **Mindy Palmer**, Reading Instruction Mentor, Governor's Office of Student Achievement; **Chandra Young**, Principal, Simonton Elementary School; and **Dan Smith**, Vice President for Instructional Effectiveness, Athens Technical College. An audience question and answer period concluded the Forum.

Check this Forum now

“ This is a phenomenal collaborative, I was invited by a friend and colleague. Thank you for the Partnership's dedication to education and the corresponding contribution to Georgia communities! ”



Partnership
forums

Economics of Education

What can you say new about a program that has been around since 2004 and continues to be as popular now as it was when it debuted? How about this, the message resonates. It is meaningful and impactful! This is exactly why it remains in demand and captures the attention of audiences from north, south, east and west Georgia.

Turn the title around... education is economics and that is why the calls keep coming for briefing after briefing. Our economy has been hit hard over the past several years and now more than ever, communities want to ensure they are doing everything they can to maximize their "situation." In almost every case, the quality of education is a bottom line if not the bottom line. Find prosperity and you will find a vibrant education system. Find struggles and you will usually find a need for improvement.

2012 was another exciting year for the program that began as a partnership with the Georgia Chamber of Commerce. Thirty briefings were presented. Audience participation was in excess of 1,100 people and the groups addressed covered a variety of business, education, government and civic groups.

Why does this program continue to live and even grow after more than eight years? Take a look at the topics presented in the third edition of The Economics of Education publication that is the cornerstone of the briefing. What do you find here in 2012? Relevance!

- > *Making the Connection: Why High School Graduation and Work Readiness Matter*
- > *Key Issue #1: Early Life Experiences*
- > *Key Issue #2: Academic Achievement in Every Grade*
- > *Key Issue #3: Transition to Work or Post-Secondary Education*
- > *Community Support for School Improvement*

A relating success story with the Economics of Education is the Georgia Partnership's Community Engagement program which also continues to have an impact in several Georgia communities. Learn more in that section of this report (page 7).



“ I'm proud of the joint efforts the Georgia Partnership and I made to move our education system forward on several fronts... We understood that if Georgia was to prosper we had to provide and make available a first-rate education system for every child and young person in this state. We accomplished a great deal. It wasn't easy but when something is worth fighting for, you fight and we did that. Together we made a difference. ”

– GOV. ZELL MILLER (1991-1998)

Community Engagement and Strategic Planning

This program first began in 2005 after education stakeholders in Elbert County asked the Georgia Partnership's expertise in helping them make improvements to their public education system. After hearing an Economics of Education briefing (see page 6), community leaders knew it was time to take action if they were to have and benefit from the best education system possible.

The success of that first effort resulted in several other calls for Partnership assistance. Since 2005, more than 15 Georgia communities have received that helping hand. 2012 saw the program continue with several ongoing efforts.

Marietta City Schools

The Partnership continued working with the district on the "Succeeding in Ninth Grade (SING)" project. An issue in most high schools, the inordinately large number of ninth grade student drop-outs occurs as many students who are promoted to the ninth grade have difficulty adjusting to the rigor and structure of high school or may not be academically prepared for ninth grade content. Thus, they do not earn the number of credits needed to move to the tenth grade. Marietta identified this as a barrier to increasing the graduation rate.

With the help of a Georgia Partnership facilitator, the project interviewed administrators and board members; held focus groups of students, parents and teachers; collected data; and formed four action teams –

- > Relevance and Careers
- > Advisement and Counseling
- > Programs and Interventions and
- > Parental Engagement.

These teams interviewed educators in Texarkana, Texas, and Copiague, New York, school districts that are demographically similar to Marietta and have increased their graduation rates. One other interview is set with educators in Linden, New Jersey. Once completed, the teams will make recommendations to the superintendent and board of education based on their findings.

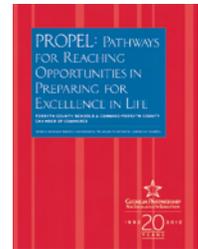


Paulding County Schools and Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement (GLISI)

The Partnership began a collaboration with the Paulding County School District and the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement in a Race-to-the-Top Innovation Grant focusing on a pipeline of effective secondary school leaders. The Partnership's role is to facilitate the community engagement component, forming an Advisory Committee, conducting an Education Summit, and designing a plan for community support and engagement for the Paulding County Schools. Work here will continue into 2013.

Forsyth County

With a grant from AT&T, the Partnership documented the two-year PROPEL (Pathways for Reaching Opportunities for Excellence in Life) project, partnering with Forsyth County Schools and the Cumming-Forsyth County Chamber of Commerce to significantly increase the school system's graduation rate, already well above the state average. The project included gathering a great deal of data, forming nine action teams to tackle various components of a plan to implement more than 80 recommendations to the superintendent and board of education.



The teams interviewed educators in Douglas County, Colorado; Plano, Texas; Loudoun, Virginia; and Howard County, Maryland – all districts that are demographically similar to Forsyth County, yet have graduation rates around 95 percent. The district is currently implementing the recommendations as it also prepares for the implementation of Georgia's new accountability system based on the College and Career Readiness Performance Index.

Research on Georgia's Successful Elementary Schools

This new project is an extension of the Georgia Partnership research on successful high schools conducted in 2010 and successful middle schools conducted in 2011. Twenty elementary and primary schools were identified that meet certain success factors. As 2012 came to a close, these schools were participating in a study to determine the strategies they have in common that have led to their success. The study will be completed in 2013.

REACHES

Research, Engagement and Communities for Hispanic/Latino Educated Students

The Partnership launched REACHES, a Goizueta Foundation funded initiative, in June 2011 and substantial progress was made in 2012. The goal of the program is to strengthen the education pipeline of Hispanic/Latino students in select school systems so students there will become college or career ready. REACHES is shaped through collaboration with the project's advisory board and key state leaders.

This year, Tattnall County and Calhoun City were chosen as REACHES communities based on 27 pieces of school enrollment, student achievement, and community data. Upon community selection, local advisory boards were assembled to drive program planning. For a deeper look at the birth-to-work pipeline, the Georgia Partnership worked with local contacts to conduct four perception surveys and 28 focus groups with community teachers, students and parents.

Results will be used to refine project plans made by community advisory boards. REACHES will continue into the new year, finalizing action plans and impact measures in each community.

College Access

This year, the Georgia Partnership continued as a member of the state College Access Challenge Grant (CACG) leadership team. Through the USDOE-funded multi-year grant, the Partnership joined the University System of Georgia, Georgia Department of Education, Technical College Systems of Georgia, Georgia Student Finance Commission, Communities in Schools of Georgia and numerous other agencies and organizations to recruit more high school graduates, especially low-income, to enroll in college and more adults to return.

The Partnership has reached community and business leaders with a strong "college education matters" message. From writing articles in business-oriented magazines and newsletters, to blogging for a Fortune 500 company about college access, to recruiting volunteers for the highly successful Georgia Apply to College efforts, the Partnership has touched community members across the state.

2012 marked the beginning of a mini-grant initiative to support local chambers of commerce in conveying key message points about the ROI for individuals and communities on building a college-going culture.

Education Policy Forums

Every election year since 2002, the Georgia Partnership has joined the Georgia School Boards Association to present a half-day non-partisan education primer for local school board and state legislative candidates. The Forums were also open to current office holders and others in the community who wanted to learn more about the inner workings of Georgia's education system and school board governance.

Would you recommend this program to other candidates or community leaders? YES!

There is research-based data behind the information presented... Extremely informative... Excellent, impartial, comprehensive information presented... Good start in understanding the state education system... Informative, well organized and overall excellent... I am now a better informed candidate!

The 2012 edition was presented at five locations to a combined audience of more than 150 people. The Georgia Partnership conducted the first part of the session that looked at such issues as the economics of education, charter schools, assessments, funding and teacher quality. School Board representatives then provided a close look at the roles and responsibilities that come with serving on local boards.

Briefing Sites
*Athens
Atlanta
Cartersville
Macon
Savannah*



REACHES
college access

Communications

Every member of the Georgia Partnership team is a “story teller” when it comes to our organization. There are so many good stories to tell, it makes sense that the messaging comes from everyone. This is a big reason the Partnership has enjoyed consistent success in its communications efforts.

2012 was another good year as a multi-approach to “getting the word out” enabled the organization to position itself as an excellent source/resource. Whether it is through media outreach, the web site, speaking opportunities, social media or other opportunities, we rarely say no.

Media Outreach – There is a separate entry in this report (see page 2) that identifies our media outreach flagship effort – the Media Symposium. This January effort consistently solidifies ongoing relationships and opens new doors that allow us to better communicate throughout the year. This effort lets reporters know they have a willing and reliable education source they can turn to for either attribution or background. As this Annual Report attests, the Georgia Partnership is active in so many areas, there are numerous media opportunities. We try not to miss a one.

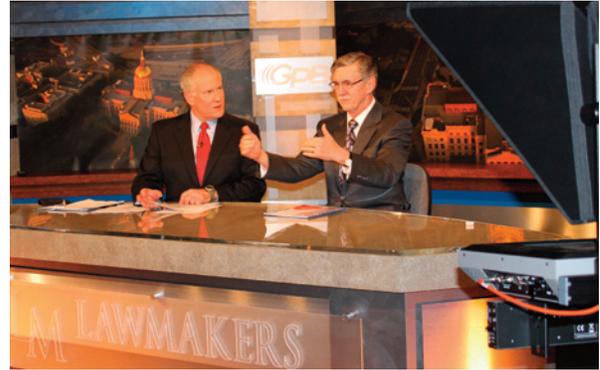
Web Site – The primary focus of the Partnership’s site is to tell its story – what contributions we are making, what programs we are presenting and participating in, and where we stand on the issues. The web site has also become an excellent education resource. Besides finding out who we are and what we are doing, visitors can get a daily dose of education news from across Georgia and the U.S. and they can access some of the most recent education research and reports. Few web sites provide such a wide range of information. Two special editions, the Toolbox and 20th Anniversary, were added in 2012.

The Education Policy Toolbox – A few years ago, the Partnership prepared and published an Education Policy Primer that was used in our Education Policy Forums (see page 8). We have moved to an electronic version of this earlier publication. This unique web site within the web site covers a wide range of education policy issues. Visitors will find an alphabetical listing of topics. Once on a specific page, the issue is dissected in a variety of ways: Quick Definition; Relevancy to Georgia; National Perspective; Research Tells Us; Latest News; and For More Information – Critical Links. Each page offers a “Printable Document” feature that allows the material to be printed for further use and study. This feature is growing and will be expanded in 2013.

Check it out!

Social Media – What’s the old saying... you’ve come a long way baby. This might be appropriate in discussing the Partnership’s progress here. It was only a couple years ago we were trying to figure out how this new communication tool applied to us. 2012 saw us leap forward, especially in Twitter. By the end of the year we had more than 950 followers, almost a 100 percent increase over 2011 numbers and we had issued 500 (meaningful!) Tweets, a 60 percent increase. Facebook is becoming more valuable to our messaging as we have increased our “likes” to over 300 and YouTube has helped us tell a variety of stories from the Bus Trip to our Critical Issues Forums.

Access them all here!



Other Communications Opportunities – The Georgia Partnership was often asked to be a part of a variety of media presentations. The organization was a regular contributor to James Magazine, providing several education stories. The Partnership’s president served as the moderator for Business to Business Magazine’s annual Education Town Hall Meeting and was interviewed on Georgia Public Broadcasting’s Lawmakers program that looked at the education issues facing the state.

Awards – It’s always good to receive kudos for our work along the way. The Georgia Partnership was fortunate to be recognized by the Georgia School Public Relations Association’s annual publications and electronic media competition. The team took one silver and four gold awards. Three of the gold awards were also judged to be “Best in Category.”

- Gold Awards**
 - > Annual Report (Best in Category)
 - > Web Site – Education Policy Toolbox (Best in Category)
 - > Special Purpose Publications
 - Top Ten Issues to Watch in 2012 (Best in Category)
 - Bus Trip 19
- Silver Award**
 - > Web site

The 20th Anniversary Web Site –

Twenty years of accomplishments is hard to capture but this site does a good job. Visitors here will get a virtual tour of where the Partnership has been from the first days in 1992 to where we have come in 2012. The site is separated into five key areas: people, accomplishments, recognizing excellence, Bus Trip across Georgia, and impact.

Check it out!

Using Technology, Creating Pathways for Student Success

One thing has remained constant throughout the Partnership's history: The Annual Bus Trip Across Georgia. The brainchild in 1993 of Partnership Board member and President and CEO of BellSouth Telecommunications Carl Swearingen, the event was born to serve as a fact-finding tour that would not only serve to inform leaders from various walks of life and celebrate achievement but also be an effective way to brand this new organization.

Slowly but surely, audiences across the state began to learn the name Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education and that its focus was making our education system better. Twenty years later the event continues to be highly anticipated, and the designation as a Georgia Partnership Bus Trip School is cherished because it signifies academic excellence.

Check out the short Bus Trip 20 promotional video

Although the annual road trip has seen a variety of configurations through the years, its dual purpose has remained constant: celebrate achievement and share best practices. It is hard to adequately describe the energy level when the buses arrive and riders make their way into the school of the moment. It is an "event" not only for the school but often for the entire community as local leaders and supporters come out to participate.

2012 saw a new configuration: two 2-day trips that visited eight K-12 schools and two technical colleges. Two tour buses filled with a variety of education, business, government and civic leaders experienced first-hand that Georgia public education is moving forward.

2012 Bus Trip 20 – 103 Riders

- > **FUTURE GEORGIA TEACHERS:** 32 students from 14 colleges and universities participated; a group of future teachers from South Georgia College under the guidance of Professor Kit Carson attended independently.
- > **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:** For the third year in a row, students from Lowndes High School's Future Teachers club under the guidance of teacher and State Representative Amy Carter participated.
- > **EVERY STOP:** Media coverage.
- > **EVERY STOP:** Local community support showing their pride.
- > **SPECIAL PARTNERS:** The Georgia Highway Patrol has ensured our safety throughout our 20 years by providing road escorts for our buses and participants.
- > **HISTORY:** In 20 years, more than 2,100 riders have participated, making more than 300 stops in more than 125 school systems and numerous communities, covering a total distance of more than 31,000 miles.
- > **SPECIAL THANKS:** Each trip enjoyed a special dinner presentation thanks to The Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach and the College of Education at the University of Georgia (Trip One) and AdvancedEd (Trip Two).

The bus trip has already begun to change the culture in my school. Teachers are letting go of their fears of technology and beginning to embrace it as tools to free students to process, and then produce incredibly sophisticated products and presentations...I wanted you to know the progress my school has made since the Bus Trip and how valuable this experience has been.

– DR. TRACY DOYLE, WILLIS ROAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



The Bus Stopped Here!

October 22-23*

**Chairperson – Mr. Chris Clark, President and CEO,
Georgia Chamber of Commerce**

World Language Academy, Hall County Schools (Flowery Branch) – Amazing! It was incredible how all of the students were so motivated to learn, but not only learn, encourage others to learn as well! As I was talking to a couple of students in Spanish, I was amazed when I found myself being taught Chinese from the same kids. Truly amazing and motivating!

Westside Middle School, Barrow County Schools (Winder) – I wish I could have taken the enthusiasm and engagement of the students and teachers at this school away in a bottle. Middle school is a notorious no man's land of schooling, but the opportunities for growth and exploration at WMS were amazing. From seeing the night sky on the other side of the world to having labs guided by Georgia Tech researchers, WMS captured the imagination.

Barrow Elementary School, Clarke County Schools (Athens) – I'm so impressed with the behavior of all the children from Pre-K to fifth grade. The school-wide behavior management program seems to be extremely effective. The amount of parent involvement and engagement also seemed to have tremendous impact on the classroom atmosphere.

Gwinnett Technical College, Technical College System of Georgia (Lawrenceville) – This is the model that all Technical Colleges should follow to ensure that we have the most qualified individuals on the jobs (high tech jobs). Awesome use of simulators in almost every field of training. What an awesome group of science labs (DNA, nuclear magnetic resonance, etc.).

Rockdale Magnet School for Science and Technology, Rockdale County School System (Conyers) – Amazing!!! These students are doing college-level work! What a neat thing, to have all students who are focused and motivated on academic excellence...and no behavior problems. Their environment was so conducive to higher-level exploration and learning.

October 29-30*

Chairperson – Commissioner Bobby Cagle, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Marietta Center for Advanced Academics, Marietta City Schools (Marietta) – This school was incredible! It was a true example of setting extremely high expectations, giving students valuable tools and experiences, and watching the children rise up to the occasion.

Loganville High School, Walton County, (Loganville) – This was a great high school environment, it was so encouraging to see a staff who wanted to see their students succeed within the classroom as well as in their extra-curricular activities. I was excited to see all of the options that Loganville High School offered.

Kelly Mill Elementary School, Forsyth County Schools (Cumming) – This was stunning. I could have spent all day in their second grade museum learning about Georgia from eager and knowledgeable students. I was dubious about BYOT (bring your own technology), but seeing this program's enabling of student research and learning while in class showed me the positive aspects of it. KME is truly equipping its students to be engaged and active learners.

South Forsyth High School, Forsyth County Schools (Cumming) – Truly one of the best high schools in America! Evidence of focused intentionality to connect students to their schools. Many students voiced their belief that their teachers and administrators care about them. High expectations abound! Rigor, relevance and relationships come together to create self-directed students in charge of their own learning.

Lanier Technical College, Technical College System of Georgia (Eastman) – Great technology that trains the students to be ready for the workforce. With this kind of post high school option, why are we still programming ourselves to expect college for everyone?

**Comments taken from trip evaluation sheets.*



The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education remains grateful to the special group of people who provides financial support. These funders represent corporations, foundations, Board members, educators, and others who realize the long-term potential of an investment in the Partnership.

Despite a challenging economy, 2012 was an outstanding year with many great successes for the Partnership. The accomplishments throughout the year demonstrate the breadth and depth of our mission. Moreover, these achievements underscore how so many can do so much by working in partnership. We are honored to recognize these friends:

\$100,000 and Greater

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“*The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education has been a true champion of public education over the last 20 years. For public education to be successful, we must have the support of the business and philanthropic communities. GPPE has done a tremendous job garnering the support of those communities and engaging them in the critical task of improving education in Georgia.*”

– DR. JOHN BARGE, STATE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

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2012 Audited Financials

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Year ended December 31, 2011

ASSETS	
CURRENT ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$4,254,104
Restricted cash	607,400
Unconditional promises to give, net	120,000
Other receivables	20,287
Prepaid expenses	17,161
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>5,018,952</u>
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, NET	<u>20,984</u>
OTHER ASSETS	
Unconditional promises to give, net of current portion	<u>10,000</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>\$5,049,936</u></u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable	\$ 49,032
Deferred revenue	337,500
Accrued expenses	3,000
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>389,532</u>
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted – undesignated	4,053,004
Temporarily restricted	607,400
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>4,660,404</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u><u>\$5,049,936</u></u>

STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

Year ended December 31, 2011

CHANGES IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	
SUPPORT, REVENUES AND RECLASSIFICATIONS	
Contributions	\$1,014,285
Meeting, registration, and consulting fees	885,256
Program sponsors and publications	655
Interest income	11,463
Other income	–
TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUES	1,911,659
Net assets released from restrictions	
Restrictions satisfied by payments	<u>897,000</u>
TOTAL SUPPORT, REVENUES AND RECLASSIFICATIONS	<u>2,808,659</u>
OPERATING EXPENSES	
Program services	
General program operations	940,690
Next Generation School Project	77,295
Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement	<u>1,807,824</u>
Total program services	<u>2,825,809</u>
Supporting services	
General and administrative	222,999
Fundraising	<u>103,992</u>
Total supporting services	<u>326,991</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>3,152,800</u>
CHANGE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u>(344,141)</u>
CHANGES IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS	
Contributions	1,393,400
Grants	11,000
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>(897,000)</u>
CHANGE IN TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS	<u>507,400</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	163,259
NET ASSETS, beginning	<u>4,497,145</u>
NET ASSETS, ending	<u><u>\$4,660,404</u></u>

“ It is hard to describe in words the great impact the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education has had in improving education in Georgia. While I was Governor, the Georgia Partnership was an integral part of our reform and improvement efforts in education. ”

– GOV. ROY BARNES, (1999-2003)

Our 20th anniversary year afforded an opportunity to celebrate the organization's roots and accomplishments. This organization would not have survived if it had not been for the dynamic leadership both at the Board and president (Art Dunning, Tom Upchurch, Steve Dolinger) levels. Where there is success you will find very good people. Such is the case with the Georgia Partnership.

A 20th anniversary web site was developed to honor our history. We encourage you to visit the site to learn more about our accomplishments, many of the people instrumental in those accomplishments, the education excellence we have observed along the way, our famous Bus Trip Across Georgia and our Impact as seen through the eyes of many people.

As we end this 2012 Annual Report, we would like to recognize our distinguished Board Chairs and let them offer a few words of their own about days gone by. To each we offer a hearty thank you! You helped bring us here and set the stage for the next 20 years! Their complete comments can be found on the "People" page of the anniversary site.

[Click
Link Here](#)

Bill Gaston, 1992-1993
Retired CEO, Gold Kist

Roy Richards, Jr., 1994-1996
CEO, Southwire Company

They were good and exciting days, and we really had the feeling that we were moving things forward. We published our Next Generation School report and successfully built quite a base of bipartisan (remember those days?) support around it. Most importantly, we were working at a time when there was broad and deep belief in vaulting Georgia schools into a future of better student outcomes.

Carl Swearingen, 1996-1997
President, BellSouth Telecommunications

During that time, the previous two chairs were very carefully studying the issues surrounding education. It might have been finance, it might have been the graduation rates, it might have been the various ways to teach in respective communities. So, when I became chair, we had a chance to look at a wide array of issues, then not only address them in our formal Board meetings and Partnership meetings but also ask specific questions when we were in the schools themselves. (Swearingen is credited with originating the Bus Trip Across Georgia.)

Ann Cramer, 1997-1999 and 2010-2011
Manager, IBM Corporate Community Relations – East Region and later Director Americas, IBM Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Affairs, IBM, Atlanta

As I look over the past 20 years, including the two time periods that I was chair, and the time in between, I'm struck by the thought that the more things change, the more they remain the same. I remember 20 years ago standing in the Capitol rotunda with key business, education and government leaders forming a coalition that viewed education as a critical component to the success of our state. We still have that coalition today with the same mission!

Gary Lee, 1999-2001
Retired Executive Director, UPS Foundation

These were busy times. Governor Roy Barnes was elected and soon after formed an Education Reform Study Commission that would help him develop his education agenda for the coming legislative session. The Georgia Partnership had a substantial role in the Commission with three of the four co-chairs and 22 of the 63 member positions. Those 22 came from the Partnership's Board which then was much larger than today's 30+ members. This showed us just how much faith the Governor had in us as an organization.

David Ratcliffe, 2001-2004
Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Southern Company

I don't think the issues have changed much over the years. The two or three things I remember were first of all hiring Dr. Steve Dolinger; what a great decision that was and remains. Then I would point to two other things: the work we did on superintendent and principal training and the effort to link economic development to better school performance in local communities across the state.

Phil Jacobs, 2004-2006
President, BellSouth Georgia

The Annual Bus Trip Across Georgia stands out as one of my great memories of GPPE. I chaired the trip twice. It was during these trips I really began to realize the value of the Partnership - bringing people together from different backgrounds and points of view, business people, educators, government and civic leaders for the overall good of public education.

Robert Brown, 2006-2010
President and CEO, R L Brown & Associates

Engaging stakeholders was a key during my chairmanship. We had great research and a wealth of data but we needed to make sure we were getting it in the right hands. We did that through such things as our Partnership Forums (now Critical Issues Forums) and Education Policy Forums and publications such as the Top Ten Issues to Watch. I'm very proud of the Top Ten because it started during my tenure and has now grown to be a signature effort for the organization.

Paul Bowers, 2012
President and CEO, Georgia Power

The Partnership today is strong and it continues to make a difference in the public education landscape of Georgia. Our table remains filled with voices from a variety of communities. Business leaders know they have an organization that is providing first rate research and policy analysis on which to make decisions. Educators know the expertise found at the Partnership is unmatched and available to them when confronting a variety of issues. Our government and civic leaders also know the Georgia Partnership's staunchly nonpartisan approach to every issue allows them to cut right to the facts.

What's Ahead?

Celebrating our 20th anniversary was exciting and provided an opportunity for the organization to revisit its roots and do some introspection. Have we remained true to the vision created in 1992 by a group of accomplished forward thinkers? Are they proud of their work and more importantly proud of the work the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education continues to do on their behalf as well as the people of this state? We believe this annual report provides support to our resounding "Yes!" answer.

But continuous improvement has been a watchword of this organization throughout its history. Being very good but striving to get even better is what leads us in our pursuit of educational excellence and the improvement of student achievement. So where does that lead us as we close our 2012 book and open another challenging edition?

These are both exciting and critical times. There is so much work ahead and we are positioned to make significant contributions in a variety of areas...improving the graduation rate, increasing post secondary attendance and success, improving teacher quality, strengthening the birth to work education pipeline, being a leading Common Core State Standards proponent, unveiling a new Economics of Education edition, and of course, once again celebrating achievement and sharing best practices via our Bus Trip Across Georgia.

As we have done since 1992, we accept the ever-evolving challenges. We welcome 2013 and will continue to be a strong advocate with high expectations for our students, our schools and our future.



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FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

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Y E A R S

270 Peachtree Street, Suite 2200
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