

# Educator and Leader Development

## BACKGROUND

Teacher and leader quality has an enormous impact on student achievement. The Educator and Leader Development working group will examine ways to strengthen the teaching profession and empower and support school leaders. Members will discuss teacher preparation, recruitment, retention, and development and personalized professional learning, and will help define supports on the teaching continuum from first-year teacher to teacher leader. This committee will identify broad strategies to address equity gaps and will address professional qualifications and educator effectiveness to ensure all students have equitable access to effective teachers and leaders.

## WHAT WAS THE MAKE-UP OF THIS WORKGROUP?

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) has been committed to a plan development process that is truly stakeholder driven. Each of Georgia's ESSA workgroups were made up of a cross-section of twenty individuals with five members representing different areas of GaDOE and fifteen members representing stakeholders. Each workgroup was chaired by a GaDOE leader and key stakeholder.

- *Chairs:* Associate Superintendent of Teacher and Leader Support and Development, Georgia Department of Education; 2016 Georgia Teacher of the Year
- *Representatives* for former Georgia Teachers of the Year, National Board Certified Teacher, teacher and leader preparation programs, curriculum and instruction, professional learning, and special education. *Organizations represented:* Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC), Regional Education Service Agencies (RESAs), and the University System of Georgia (USG)

GaDOE will keep these workgroups intact in order to provide on-going feedback on the implementation of Georgia's Plan.

## HOW WAS FEEDBACK FROM GEORGIANS GATHERED?

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) held eight feedback sessions across the state. These were opportunities for parents, students, educators, business and industry, and community members to share their thoughts and concerns. Feedback was compiled, analyzed, and summarized by a third party so participants could engage in candid conversations.

## WHAT IS ESSA?

The *Every Student Succeeds Act*, commonly referred to as ESSA, earned bipartisan approval in 2015.

States were freed from their *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) waiver agreements and given the responsibility to develop state plans to support education.

ESSA significantly scaled back the authority of the Secretary of Education and U.S. Department of Education. Though ESSA gave states additional authority and flexibility over their education system, wholesale flexibility was not granted and statutory requirements vary in specificity from issue-to-issue.

Georgia has sought out maximum flexibility while creating a cohesive and aligned plan that is responsive to stakeholder feedback and supports our vision of *offering a holistic education to each and every child in the state*.

To learn more about Georgia's plan development process visit:

[GaDOE.org/ESSA](http://GaDOE.org/ESSA)



## HOW WAS FEEDBACK FROM GEORGIANS GATHERED? (CONT.)

Feedback sessions were also held with each of the State School Superintendent's advisory councils, representing middle and high school students, parents, teachers, and district superintendents. Business and industry, as well as civil rights organizations, were also engaged.

GaDOE utilized social media, a dedicated ESSA email address for comments, as well as public surveys to gather feedback.

## WHAT DID GEORGIANS SAY?

Common themes that emerged around the work of Educator and Leader Development were:

1. Ensure student access to highly effective and qualified teachers and leaders.
2. Offer teachers and leaders more significant professional learning to address effectiveness with an emphasis on collaboration.
3. Ensure teachers and leaders have content knowledge and the opportunity to co-teach, receive mentoring, and have access to leadership training.
4. Promote more positive school cultures to attract and retain effective teachers.
5. Offer resources, incentives, and salary to attract educators to areas where they are most needed.
6. Ensure educators have many of the intangible qualities necessary to nurture students.

The full feedback summary report can be found at: [GaDOE.org/ESSAFeedback](https://GaDOE.org/ESSAFeedback). This report was compiled through a third party evaluator.

Feedback themes, along with the response to each of those themes, are embedded within Georgia's State ESSA Plan.

## AREAS OF FOCUS

- Effective Leadership
- Mentoring and induction
- Deepening collaboration between higher education and districts/schools
- Personalized Professional Learning
- Supporting the efforts of other state agencies & organizations
- Strengthening the teaching profession
- Coaching and ongoing support
- Multiple paths to teaching and leadership positions

## OUR PROGRESS

- **Focusing on leadership** by building capacity and expanding definition and support of leadership (teacher, parent, student, community)
- **Focusing on Effective Leadership and Professional Capacity** in the shared improvement framework
- **Personalized and meaningful professional learning**
- **Delivering support in different ways:** online communities, face-to-face, self-paced, blended, etc.
- **Not just measuring effectiveness,** but providing opportunities for development throughout their careers
- **Leveraging P-20 Collaboratives** that bring RESAs, school leaders, and higher education together to discuss staffing and professional development needs
- **Defining professional qualifications** and highly qualified
- **Ensuring student access** to effective and supported teachers and school leaders
- **Providing opportunities for teachers and school leaders to collaborate** and share best practices

