

Georgia College Targets Critical Teacher Shortage at Statewide Summit

Staff Report From Georgia CEO

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The Georgia Professional Standards Commission hosted the inaugural [Teacher Pipeline Summit](#) today at Georgia College & State University, in Milledgeville, with the goal of addressing the critical need for K-12 teachers throughout the state. Organized by Gov. Brian Kemp, the summit tasked education leaders to design a plan to elevate the profession and attract new teachers to the field by providing multiple career pathways, as well as boosting teacher retention.

"We cannot keep hoping the pipeline will fill itself because it won't," said Sen. Sonya Halpern of Atlanta, a member of the Senate Education and Youth Committee, who spoke at the event. "We need to be intentional about how we recruit, how we prepare, how we retain, and how we connect this work to Georgia's long-term goals for economic growth and community stability."

According to the job board [Indeed](#), there are currently over 2,000 active teacher openings throughout the state of Georgia. Those openings create an opportunity for those interested in pursuing or advancing a career in education, according to Dr. Joanne Previts, interim dean of the [John H. Lounsbury College of Education](#) at GCSU.

"Ensuring we have high-quality teachers is essential for quality K-12 education in Georgia and throughout the country," Previts said. "Teacher shortages have countless negative consequences, including limiting special education services, reducing school and extracurricular programs, requiring instructors to teach outside of their fields of specialization, creating and compounding learning gaps, and necessitating larger class sizes."

In the past five years, Georgia College has prepared 1,021 new teachers — specialized across elementary, middle, special and secondary education — including 194 new teachers in 2024. That level of impact is part of GCSU's mission, to university president Cathy Cox.

"The quality of a state's public education system is a critical barometer in determining a state's overall success — the success of its people and of its business community — which is why it is vitally important to attract new, high-performing and passionate teachers to the field," Cox said. "As a historical leader in talent development for Georgia schools, Georgia College & State University is proud to host this inaugural event, which should herald in a new and exciting era for educators, and students, throughout the state."

Several state legislators attended the summit, which also featured a series of strategic work sessions for education professionals throughout the state.

"If we want to address the educator shortage and prepare for the Georgia we are becoming, then we need a coordinated, fully resourced plan to recruit, prepare, support and retain a high-quality, high-capacity education workforce," Halpern added. "We need a statewide strategy that's as bold as the challenge itself, one that brings together our data, our expertise, our institutions, to ask and answer the hard questions."

The summit plans to reconvene annually at other Georgia institutions.

"Today is really about what can be done at the local level," explained Dr. Penney McRoy, director of educator preparation for the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. "All of these actions that are being developed in small groups today will inform ... a cohesive statewide plan for recruiting educators."

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission was created by the Georgia General Assembly in 1991 to assure the preparation, certification and professional conduct of certified personnel employed in Georgia's public schools. Its responsibilities include the support of recruiting functions throughout the [TeachGeorgia.org](#) website.