

Gwinnett County Board of Education

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES 2025

The Gwinnett County Board of Education annually adopts Legislative Priorities that support the vision, mission, and goals of Gwinnett County Public Schools as well as the district's strategic priorities of **Empathy, Equity, Effectiveness, and Excellence**.

1. School Safety & Security

GCPS is committed to a proactive, collaborative approach to provide safe and secure environments for our staff, students, and community members.

Priority: Provide investment in personnel/technologies that may be utilized to promote safe and secure school sites.

Priority: Provide measures to address factors that negatively impact safety at all district schools and facilities. Consideration should be given to...

- Introducing legislation that requires the safe storage of firearms and promotes gun safety training as protections against any child's unsupervised access to lethal weapons.
- Increasing penalties for making terroristic threats in our schools. Threats divert valuable time and resources from school resource officers and law enforcement agencies and create a climate of fear and anxiety within school communities.

2. Mental Health/Whole Child

GCPS is committed to providing the mental health services essential to promoting positive educational outcomes for all students.

Priority: Provide funding to expand student access to school counselors, social workers, and mental health services.

Priority: Promote effective inter-agency communications between school systems, behavioral health professionals, and law enforcement.

3. Multilingual Learners

GCPS is committed to creating an additional Quality Basic Education (QBE) weight that supports multilingual learners.

- Differentiated funding must be allocated based on students' level of language proficiency.
- Supports requested to promote and encourage higher levels of teachers with English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) certification.

The Board asks the Gwinnett County Legislative Delegation to support the following Legislative Priorities during the 2025 session of the Georgia General Assembly.



4. Providing a Quality Education for All Students

Pre-K: Increase state grant funds to offset substantial district costs associated with early learning/Pre-K programs.

Literacy: Increase state grant funds to offset substantial district costs associated with literacy instruction.

Special Education: Provide recruitment/retention incentives for psychologists, speech/language pathologists, and special education teachers. Support appropriate levels of special education professional development aligned to requirements of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

5. Funding of Public Education

GCPS is committed to providing a quality education for each and every student and responsible stewardship of public funds to support teaching and learning.

Priority: Create an additional weight that funds services to support **students living in poverty**.

Priority: Reduce the gap between state funding for **student transportation** and the actual costs for doing so. During FY25, student transportation will cost GCPS \$156,105,000 with the state covering \$41,001,883 or 26.27% of the cost.

Priority: Support districts in offsetting the increasing costs of the employer portion of **non-certified employee health insurance**.

Gwinnett County Board of Education

Steven Knudsen, *District II, 2024 Chair*

Karen Watkins, *District I, 2024 Vice Chair*

Dr. Mary Kay Murphy, *District III*

Dr. Adrienne Simmons, *District IV*

Dr. Tarece Johnson-Morgan, *District V*

Rachel Stone, *District I Board Member-Elect*

Steve Gasper, *District III Board Member-Elect*

Dr. Calvin J. Watts, *Superintendent*

GCPS By the Numbers

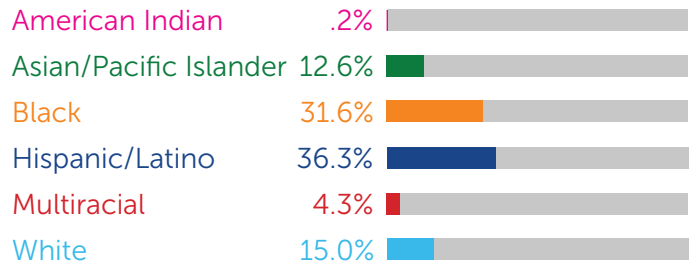
182,518 Students

Enrollment as of October 2024

Our students come from **181** countries and speak **108** different languages.

(May 2024)

Racial/Ethnic Distribution (October 2024)



12,982 graduates in the Class of 2024

- 76% had plans to continue their education
- Offered more than \$242 million in academic, athletic, and military scholarships

22 schools offer Dual Language Immersion.

19 nationally certified Career and Technical Education programs across career areas.

School Nutrition

30 million meals served in 2023-24

\$3.2

billion budget in FY2025

On average, the cost of educating one child in GCPS is \$13,825 per year. The direct costs of instruction account for 80.7% of that amount.

Our 142 Schools

81 Elementary Schools

29 Middle Schools

24 High Schools

7 Specialty Schools

1 Charter School

Student Services (October 2024)

Gifted Education 18%
Special Education 13%
English Learners 21%
Economically Disadvantaged: *This information not reported in FTE*

Transportation

GCPS is the **third largest** transporter of students in the country.

GCPS is the largest employer in Gwinnett County and 4th largest in metro Atlanta.

The district has earned recognition as a top employer by *Forbes* magazine.

Shortfalls in State Funding

The QBE formula does not fully fund many mandates.

FY2025	School Bus Transportation	Safety & Security	Classified Health Ins.	Sick Leave	Special Education*	Pre-K**
GCPS Total Cost	\$156,105,000	\$22,028,000	\$89,748,000	\$21,225,000	\$485,313,000	\$42,626,000
State Funds	\$41,001,883	\$6,550,000	\$0	\$2,081,000	\$250,682,000	\$9,668,000
State %	26.27%	29.73%	0%	9.8%	51.65%	22.68%

*GCPS receives Federal funding of \$36.3M for Special Education.

**Pre-K Program: Preschool Disability Services – state grant program. No funding for Pre-K through QBE formula.