Developing life, college, and work-ready students

Contents

Educational Attainment 71
National Assessments 75
Graduation 83
SAT/ACT Scores 85
Special Education 87
Teacher Salaries 88
Technical Colleges 90
Universities 96
The percentage of Georgians 25 years and older who have completed high school has increased significantly, from 40.6% in the 1970s to 85.8% in 2016.

Georgia lagged behind the nation as a whole with respect to high school completion by the age of 25 years. During the 1970s and 1980s, the discrepancy was at least 10%. Since the 1990s, however, the gap has gradually decreased.

Georgia invests a significant portion of the state's annual budget in educating its citizens. Education represents more than half of the state's total budget.
Education is a crucial element in sustaining and growing the economy of the state. Georgia has made significant investments in education and training in strategic industries and high demand professions, such as health professions with service cancelable loans and other incentive programs.

- The proportion of Georgians 25 years and older completing college tripled between 1970 and 2016, from 9.2% to 29.4%.
- The percentage of adult Georgians completing a college education has remained close to the national average.
- Georgia was the first state in the nation to have a completion plan for every public higher education institution. The plans detailed how the University System of Georgia and the Technical College System of Georgia will attain the state's goal of adding 250,000 postsecondary graduates to Georgia's rolls by 2020.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
Education is a key to earnings, with median income increasing with each level of education completed.

A college graduate with a bachelor's degree in Georgia earns, on average, $23,624 more per year compared to a high school graduate.

Earnings for Georgia's college graduates ($50,340) are comparable to the national average ($51,094). However, earnings for Georgia's adults completing a graduate or professional degree ($61,703) are significantly lower than the national average ($67,832). In 2011, the national average was 5.6% higher than Georgia's average. In 2016, the national average was 9.9% higher.

Median earnings for adults with less than a high school education have increased over the last 5 years. Between 2011 and 2016, these earnings in Georgia increased 17.4%, from $17,318 to $20,339.

Median earnings for Georgia's college graduates increased 4.0% between 2011 and 2016 and increased by 1.3% for adults completing a graduate or professional degree.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
Education prepares adults for labor force participation. The American Community Survey data confirms that the higher the level of education, the more employable an adult becomes.

Less educated working age adults between the ages of 25 to 64 years are more likely to be unemployed compared to college graduates.

1 out of 10 adults in Georgia and 1 out of 9 adults nationwide who had not completed high school were unemployed in 2016.

In Georgia, unemployment rates are lower for high school graduates (6.0%) and adults completing some college (5.1%) compared to high school drop outs (9.9%).

Adults with a college degree or higher are most likely to be employed; only 1 out of 37 adults with college degrees were unemployed both nationally and in Georgia in 2016.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
Georgia was the first state to establish a universal Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) program for four year olds, which is supported with lottery funds. The Georgia Pre-K program is available in public schools, Head Start agencies, private child care centers, faith-based organizations, military facilities, and state colleges and universities.

Since 2010, Pre-K enrollment in Georgia has fluctuated with a high of 82,868 in 2011 and a low of 80,430 in 2014.

As of December 2017, the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning estimates that Georgia's Pre-K program served 57.8% of the 4-year-old population in Georgia.

Source: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
Georgia's 181 public school districts enrolled more than 1.7 million K-12 students in Fall 2017.

Between Fall 2007 and Fall 2017, K-12 public school enrollment increased by about 111,000, a 6.9% increase.

Approximately 1 out of 14 public school students are kindergarten students (7.3%), 2 out of 5 attend elementary school (39.0%), 1 out of 4 are middle school students (23.3%), and approximately 1 out of 3 attend high school (30.3%).

Source: Georgia Department of Education
• Georgia's public school population has become increasingly diverse. In Fall 2017, 60.4% of students were racial or ethnic minorities compared to 54.3% in Fall 2008.

• Between Fall 2008 and Fall 2017, the Hispanic public school student population increased at the fastest pace from 10.0% to 15.6%.

• The percentage of Black students enrolled in Georgia's public schools has decreased slightly from 37.7% to 36.7% during the last decade.

• The Other population includes Asian, American Indian, Pacific Islander, and multi-racial students. Between Fall 2008 and Fall 2017, this population of students increased slightly from 6.6% to 8.1%.

• Georgia's White public school student population decreased between Fall 2008 and Fall 2017, from 45.7% to 39.6%.

Source: Georgia Department of Education
• One out of 11 of Georgia's children attend a private school or are home schooled.
• The number of Georgia students home schooled or attending private schools increased 10.8% between FY 2011 and FY 2018.
• The number of Georgia students home schooled increased 56% between FY 2011 and FY 2018, from 42,474 to 66,149.
• Private school enrollment in Georgia decreased by 7.0% between FY 2011 and FY 2018, from 107,509 to 99,989.
• About 50% more Georgia students attend private school than are home schooled.

Note:
• Home School Reporting transitioned to the Georgia Department of Education during the 2013 school year.

Source: Georgia Department of Education
The No Child Left Behind Act required states to participate in the biennial National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests for 4th and 8th grade reading and mathematics in order to provide a national comparison of student academic progress.

The National Center for Education Statistics administers NAEP to elementary and secondary students in various subjects. Three of the 10 total subject areas are reported at the state level including mathematics. Both private and public school children are assessed, but only public school data is available for state comparisons.

Fourth grade math scores in Georgia have steadily increased between 2005 and 2013, from 234 to 240. However, between 2013 and 2015, the 4th grade average math score decreased by four points, from 240 to 236.
Fourth Grade NAEP Reading Scores: United States and Georgia, 2005 - 2015

Source: National Center on Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress, Nation's Report Card

- NAEP measures 4th grade student reading performance. Students respond to questions that assess comprehension of literary and informational text.
- In 2011, 2013, and 2015, Georgia exceeded the national average in 4th grade student reading performance.
- Since 2005, reading scores for 4th graders have increased 4%, from 214 to 222.
- In 2015, 1 out of 3 (32%) of Georgia's 4th grade students were reading below basic level, and 2 out of 3 (68%) were reading at or above basic level.
• Eighth grade mathematics scores in Georgia have continuously improved over the past decade.
• In 2015, 8th grade students in Georgia scored 7 points higher in mathematics compared to the 2005 NAEP scores.
• Eighth grade mathematics students in Georgia lag behind the national average by 2 points, with a score of 279.
Eighth grade reading scores in Georgia have steadily increased between 2005 and 2013, from 257 to 265. However, between 2013 and 2015, the 8th grade average reading score decreased by three points, from 265 to 262.

On average, 8th grade reading scores in Georgia have lagged behind national reading scores. In 2013, 8th grade students scored only one point below the national average in reading.
In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education published graduation rates based on the 2008 formula meeting federal education regulations that permits uniformity across states. The formula tracks the percentage of 9th grade students who graduate within 4 years.

Nationally, Georgia ranks 44th in high school graduation among all states.

Among the southeastern states, graduation rates in 2016 ranged from a low of 79.4% in Georgia to a high of 88.5% in Tennessee.

**Other Statistical Data:**

In Georgia, Asian/Pacific Islander and White students have the highest graduation rates at 87.8% and 83.1% respectively.
Graduation

Total Dropout Rate in Grades 9-12: Georgia, FY 2008 - FY 2017

Source: Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement

- The dropout rate calculation is the number of students with a withdrawal code corresponding to a dropout divided by the number of students that attended the school.
- Georgia's dropout rate has remained relatively stable during the last decade. It has fluctuated between 3.6% to 3.8%.
- The National Dropout Prevention Center has identified best practices for reducing the number of students dropping out of school. These best practices include use of incentives and sanctions, family involvement, and creation of a supportive environment for students.
• The SAT Reasoning Test is a standardized test used by most colleges to determine admittance, along with other deciding factors including coursework, grades, letters of recommendations, and other criteria.

• The new SAT was introduced in March 2016. Students taking the new SAT are tested in mathematics and evidence-based reading and writing for a composite score of 1,600. In Georgia, the graduating class of 2017 had a mean score of 535 in evidence-based reading and writing and 515 in mathematics.

• In 2017, 63,805 of Georgia's high school seniors took the new SAT Test.
The ACT is a standardized test that colleges use comparably to the SAT to determine admittance. The ACT assesses students' general educational development and ability to complete college-level work.

The ACT tests four subjects which include English, reading, mathematics, and science. Each section is worth a maximum of 36 points and the total score, or composite score, is the average of all four sections.

In FY 2016, 39,416 of Georgia's graduating seniors took the ACT representing 39% of all graduates.

Between FY 2010 and FY 2016, the average composite ACT score for Georgia has fluctuated slightly with a high of 20.9 in FY 2013 and a low of 20.3 in FY 2016. Average ACT scores among Georgia's students were slightly below the national average of 20.8 in FY 2016.
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) assures access to quality education for children with disabilities. In Georgia, 1 in 8 public school children received special education services.

Nationally, during the 2015-2016 school year, 6.7 million children and youth (13% of public school students) received special education services according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Three state schools serve visually impaired and deaf and hard-of-hearing students: the Georgia Academy for the Blind in Macon, Bibb County; the Georgia School for the Deaf in Cave Spring, Floyd County; and the Atlanta Area School for the Deaf in Clarkston, DeKalb County.

Among Georgia's school systems, in FY 2018, the percentage of students served in special education ranges from 7.3% (Chickamauga City) and 7.4% (Echols County) to 19.2% (Baker County) and 19.3% (Meriwether County).
The average public school teacher salary in Georgia was $54,190 during the 2015-2016 school year, while the national average was $58,353.

Georgia is competitive among the six southeastern states with respect to public school teacher salaries. Georgia's average teacher salary is almost $5,000 higher compared to Florida, which recorded the second highest salary in the region.
Teacher Salaries

Average Salaries of Full-Time Faculty at Public Two-Year and Four-Year Colleges: Southeastern States, FY 2016

- Average salaries for full-time faculty at public two-year colleges among the southeastern states ranges from $56,812 in Florida to $42,461 in Georgia.
- Between FY 2011 and FY 2016, the average salary for faculty at Georgia's two-year colleges dropped 11.5%, from $47,972 to $42,461.
- Georgia's public two-year college faculty members are paid $14,300 less than their peers in Florida and $4,900 less than faculty in North Carolina.
- Average salaries for full-time faculty at public four-year colleges in the southeast range from a high of $85,768 in Florida to a low of $70,945 in Georgia.
- Between FY 2011 and FY 2016, the average salary for faculty at Georgia's four-year colleges and universities dropped 2.5%, from $72,774 to $70,945.
- Georgia's public four-year college and university faculty members are paid $14,800 less than their peers in Florida and $4,500 less than faculty in Tennessee.

Source: Southern Regional Education Board
Technical Colleges

Source: Technical College System of Georgia

*Early, Miller, Seminole & Decatur Counties operated by Southern Regional Technical College effective January 1, 2018. Pending SACS approval.

Educated Georgia
Georgia in Perspective
The Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) provides student-centered, high quality, and affordable technical, academic, adult education and training. This system contributes to building literate and economically strong communities and businesses in Georgia.

Georgia’s Technical College System students may enroll in programs that lead to an associate degree, a diploma, or a technical certificate.

Between AY 2010 and AY 2016, TCSG enrollment declined by 32.3%, from 197,059 to 133,455. Between AY 2016 and AY 2017, the enrollment increased by 0.9%, from 133,455 to 134,630.

Note:

Student enrollment includes students enrolled in technical education programs at some University System of Georgia two-year colleges.
• In 2016, more than 1 out of 3 Technical College System students continued their education following completion of a course of study.
• Almost two-thirds (65%) of Technical College System award recipients were employed in the field or a related field in 2016.
• 1 out of 8 (13%) Technical College System award recipients were employed out of their field in 2016.
The Technical College System of Georgia oversees the state’s adult education efforts.

Adult education provides adult learners with the opportunity to study for and earn a General Educational Development (GED) diploma. Students completing a GED are able to attend college or enter the labor force. The curriculum for adult basic education focuses on reading, writing, and math skills.

The Adult Basic Education program is designed to provide special attention to adults returning to school to resume educational programs which were interrupted in earlier years. The goal of the program is a fully literate Georgia.

The number of Adult Basic Education graduates has fluctuated over the past decade from a high of 33,123 in 2009 to a low of 22,186 in 2015.
In 2017, TCGS awarded 10,128 GED diplomas.

The passage rate for Adult Basic Education students intending to obtain a GED has fluctuated over the past decade from a high of 88.9% in 2016 to a low of 66.4% in 2011.

However, the proportion of adult Georgians without a high school education declined from 21.4% in 2000 to 14.2% in 2016.

Source: Technical College System of Georgia
The Technical College System of Georgia has developed educational programs to ensure Georgia businesses have a trained workforce in strategic industries. The customized training assists companies which are starting up or utilizing new technologies or business processes.

In AY 2017, more than 30,000 students enrolled in HOPE Career Grant programs, formerly referred to as Strategic Industries Workforce Development Grant programs.

Students in Technical College programs increase their earnings following graduation. Students training for practical nursing increased their earnings by 50% after completing their studies. Students training for diesel equipment technology increased their earnings by 32%. Students training to be an electrical line worker increased their earnings by 33% after completing their studies.

Students completing training for industrial maintenance earn the highest incomes following graduation ($38,550).
Universities

Enrollment in the University System of Georgia: Fall 2005 - Fall 2017

Source: University System of Georgia Board of Regents, Research and Policy Analysis

- Georgia's public colleges and universities operate under the University System of Georgia (USG). The system consists of research universities, comprehensive universities, state universities, state colleges.
- USG is responsible for providing higher education to Georgia residents in order to create a more educated Georgia through instruction, research, and public service.
- Enrollment in the University System of Georgia has steadily increased over the last five years.
- Between Fall 2005 and Fall 2017, the enrollment increased from 253,552 to 325,203 students, which is about a 28% increase.
The number of minority students attending USG colleges and universities increased by 12% between 2012 and 2017, from 144,450 to 162,089. Minority enrollment increased from 45.9% to 49.8% of total students between 2012 and 2017.

The growth in Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Multiracial students has caused the percentage of Black students to decline from 27.5% in 2012 to 26.7% in 2017.

The percentage of Asian/Pacific Islander students enrolled in the USG system increased from 7.1% in 2012 to 9.0% in 2017.

In 2012, Hispanics represented 5.7% of students enrolled in the USG system. This percentage increased to 8.4% in 2017.

Other Statistical Data:

- Females comprised more than half (56.0%) of the student population enrolled in the University System of Georgia in Fall 2017.
Universities

University System of Georgia International Student Enrollment: Fall 2017

- The University System of Georgia attracts students from around the globe.
- In Fall 2017, international students comprised 7.9% of students in the University System of Georgia. This is 25,588 of more than 325,000 students.
- About 1 out of 3 international students (32.6%) are from the East Asia and Pacific region.
- About one-fifth of international students are from South/Latin America and the Caribbean, and an additional one-fifth are from South Asia.
- The number of non-citizen students enrolled in the University System of Georgia increased by 655 students (2.6%) between Fall 2016 and Fall 2017.

Source: University System of Georgia Board of Regents, Research and Policy Analysis
Universities

USG First-Year Retention Rates: Fall to Fall for First Year Freshmen, Fall 2007 - Fall 2017

- Four out of five students entering a University System of Georgia college or university return the following fall.
- First-year retention rates for university students in Georgia have mostly increased between Fall 2011 to Fall 2017.
- For the Fall 2016 Cohort, the retention rate was 75.8% for degree seeking, full-time freshmen who entered a USG institution and returned to the same institution the following year.
- The retention rate for incoming freshmen returning to any USG institution was 81.7% in Fall 2017.

Source: University System of Georgia Board of Regents
The proportion of Georgia's university students completing their degree peaked in Fall 2013.

Among first-time, full-time bachelor's degree seeking undergraduates at four-year colleges who entered a University System of Georgia college or university in Fall 2011, 49.9% graduated within six years from the same institution and 58.0% graduated from an institution within the system.
There are four research universities within the University System of Georgia: University of Georgia, Augusta University, Georgia State University, and Georgia Institute of Technology.

Between FY 2012 and FY 2017, USG's institutions used almost $7.2 billion dollars for research expenditures.

Overall, research expenditures increased by 31% between FY 2012 and FY 2017.

In FY 2017, research funding increased by $150 million compared to the previous year.

The research awards received by the USG institutions encompass a wide range of topics, such as national security, astronomy, and advances in medicine.

Source: University System of Georgia Board of Regents
Research within the University System of Georgia spans many subject areas and is primarily concentrated in the four research universities.

For FY 2017, 97.6% of the research expenditures were made by the four research universities.

Non-sponsored research accounted for 42.8% of USG's research expenses while the federal government funded 42.0% of USG's research expenses.

State and local government provided funding for 3.4% of USG's research expenses.

Private entities funded 11.8% of USG research expenses.

Source: University System of Georgia Board of Regents
Universities

Percentage of Family Income Required for Annual Tuition: United States and Southeast States, FY 2015 and FY 2016

- Median tuition and fees at Georgia's universities and colleges ($7,117) was more affordable than three other southeast region states in FY 2016. Such costs in Georgia are lower than South Carolina ($10,735), Alabama ($9,358) and Tennessee ($8,356).
- Tuition in Georgia as a percentage of median household income (14.0%) was very close to the national average (14.2%) in FY 2016.
- The percentage of family income required to pay college tuition and fees at Georgia's colleges and universities increased between FY 2009 and FY 2016, from 9.0% to 14.0%.

Source: Southern Regional Education Board
HOPE Programs: Students and Dollars, FY 2013 - FY 2017

Source: Georgia Student Finance Commission Scholarships and Grants database

- HOPE (Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally), Georgia's scholarship and grant program, provides financial assistance at public and private colleges, universities, and public technical colleges.
- HOPE scholarships and grants are available to Georgia residents meeting certain academic requirements. The amount of the award is based upon a per hour rate at the institution the student attends.
- Between FY 2013 and FY 2017, the amount of money awarded for HOPE scholarships and grants increased by 26%, from $503 million to $634 million, while the number of students receiving HOPE scholarships and grants decreased by 10%, from 193,594 to 174,415.
- Between 1993 and 2017, 1,741,471 students received HOPE awards, which include the HOPE Scholarship, Zell Miller Scholarship, HOPE Grant, Zell Miller Grant, HOPE Career Grant, and HOPE GED Grant.
Disbursements of Georgia’s HOPE Scholarships and Grants to Georgia’s Educational Institutions: 1993 - 2017

- Between 1993 and 2017, the Georgia Lottery Corporation provided $9.4 billion to Georgia colleges and universities through the HOPE scholarships and grants program.
- Almost 7 out of 10 HOPE scholarships and grants have been disbursed to students attending University System of Georgia institutions.
- Approximately 21% of scholarships and grants were disbursed to Technical College System of Georgia institutions, while the remaining 9.8% of scholarships went to students attending private colleges and universities.

Source: Georgia Student Finance Commission Scholarships and Grants database