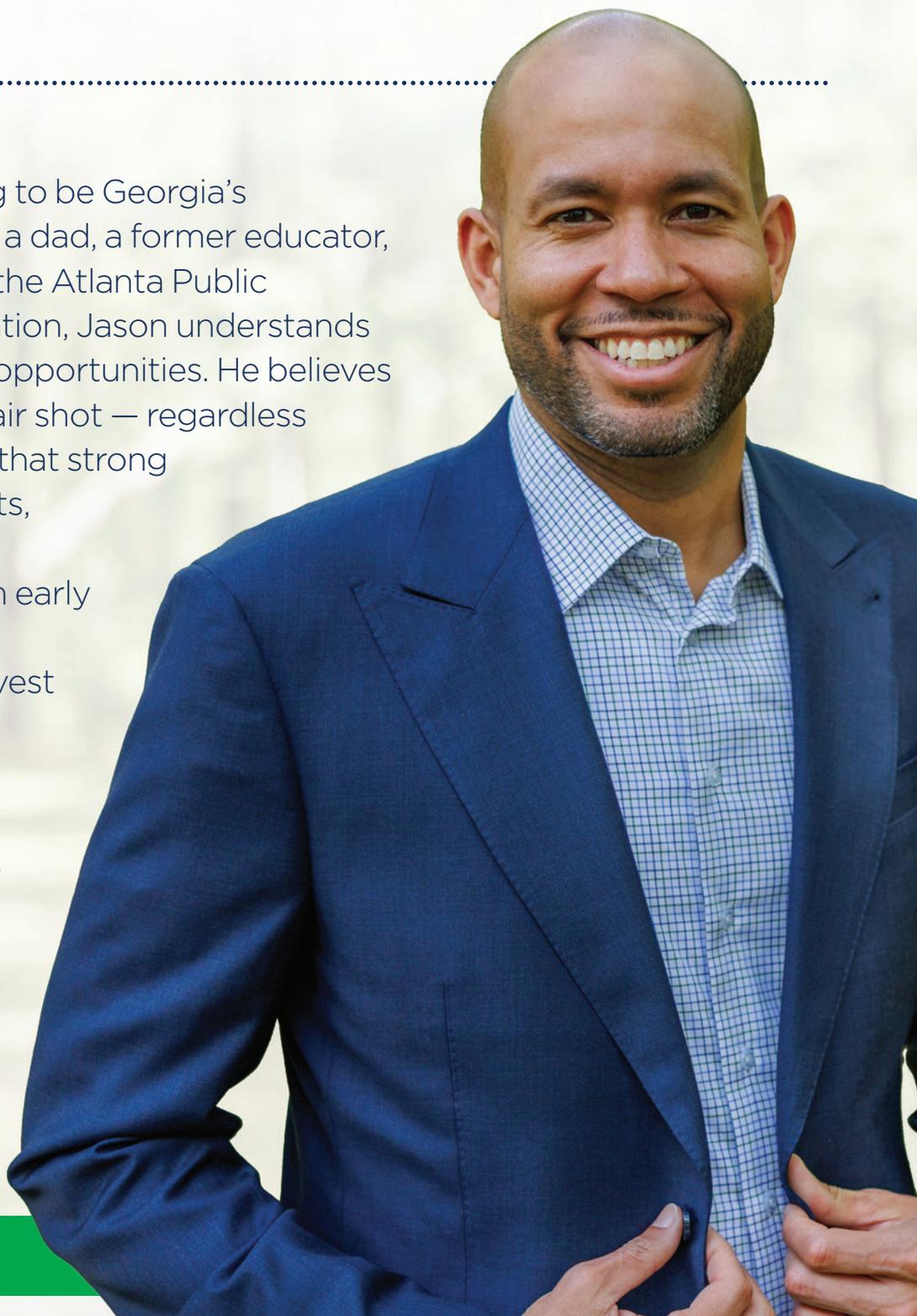


JASON ESTEVES'S EDUCATION PLAN TO INVEST IN GEORGIA'S FUTURE

Jason Esteves is running to be Georgia's Education Governor. As a dad, a former educator, and the former chair of the Atlanta Public Schools Board of Education, Jason understands that education unlocks opportunities. He believes every child deserves a fair shot — regardless of their ZIP code — and that strong schools support students, parents, educators, and communities alike. From early childhood through adulthood, Jason will invest in our public education system so that every Georgian has the opportunity to succeed.



Investing In Families Through Safe And Affordable Universal Childcare



Jason knows that building opportunity for every Georgian begins with investments in early childhood education. The foundation laid in early learning is what every teacher builds upon for literacy and the long-term educational success of every child. That is why having the right curriculum and well-trained educators who understand child development matters. As governor, Jason will build upon Georgia’s successful public/private provider model to ensure that every child in Georgia has access to affordable early learning programs, regardless of income or zip code. He’ll guarantee access to affordable, high-quality child care so parents can stay in the workforce, children can get the educational building blocks they need, and the child care providers who make it all possible are supported.

Provide safe and affordable childcare for every 3 and 4 year old to get a head start. By the end of his first

term, Jason will expand the existing Pre-K model to all three and four-year-olds. The program will use existing Georgia Lottery funds, which currently sit at \$2.4 billion as of FY24. By 2035, he will establish universal access to child care by building a diversified funding stream that includes state resources, federal funds, public-private partnerships, and parental contributions.

Reduce class sizes while raising our standard of care.

Require early childhood programs to maintain safe teacher-to-student ratios. Establish and maintain strong, developmentally appropriate classroom standards. Keenly focus on providing children with individualized attention. Emphasize play-based learning that supports social, emotional, and cognitive development.

Guarantee that early child care providers are paid fairly to recruit and retain top talent.

Ensure early childhood educators are paid a living wage so families can rely on stable, experienced caregivers and educators. Expand credentialing and training pathways through Georgia’s technical colleges to increase our early child care workforce. Continually assess worker wages to make sure pay keeps up with the cost of living.

Upgrade our existing early learning facilities and strategically invest in new ones.

Create the Office of Early Childhood Expansion to implement a comprehensive plan across the state. Determine necessary facility upgrades to increase quality of care. Target child care deserts to make facilities accessible to families throughout the state. Offer grants and low-interest loans for classroom expansion, materials, and facility upgrades through a Provider Support Fund.

Guarantee that every child has access to a child care site, regardless of where they live.

Expand existing child care facility availability so that every county in Georgia is served by at least one 3-K site by the end of his first term. Facilitate and expand home-based care opportunities. Based on utilization rates at existing sites, develop a strategic expansion plan for 4K by 2035.

Investing In Education For Our K-12 Schools, Students, And Teachers



A public school graduate himself, Jason understands how strong schools open doors. It's why he became a middle school social studies teacher right out of college, where he expanded opportunities for students. Later, as a member of the Atlanta Public Schools Board of Education, he raised graduation rates from 55 percent to over 80 percent and rebuilt community trust in the aftermath of the largest cheating scandal in history. Jason will continue delivering for students and teachers as governor. He's committed to making historic investments in public schools by updating the Quality Basic Education formula. As an educator, he believes we must trust and empower teachers to do what they do best: teach. That means respecting their expertise and stopping the constant shifting of standards and expectations that make it harder to focus on students. He'll also prioritize school safety, so kids can focus on learning, educators can focus on teaching, and parents can have peace of mind.

Update our 40-year-old Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula to reflect the realities facing today's teachers and students. Modernize how Georgia funds and supports its schools so every child has a real chance to succeed. Incorporate and adequately account for student poverty when determining funding. Properly weight special education and disability needs to increase equity of services. Account for regional cost differences to ensure equity for children regardless of location.

Fill funding gaps for public schools so every kid has what they need to learn regardless of where they live. Work with the General Assembly to ensure that public schools are fully funded. Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Education, State Board of Education, and State Superintendent to identify and address limited resources for students in high-poverty areas throughout the state. Implement free breakfast and lunch for all public schools so hunger isn't a barrier to learning.

Increase student outcomes and reduce class sizes by supporting our teacher and paraprofessional pipeline. Strategically expand the existing recruitment pool to boost the number of teacher applicants. Expand early childhood workforce pathways through dual enrollment and community college programs. Increase educator and paraprofessional pay to retain high-quality, high-capacity educators. Partner with colleges and technical schools to eliminate the red tape between graduation and employment.

Overhaul the Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) system so that children with special needs are provided with a quality education. Ensure that students are placed in the least restrictive environment and have access to a full curriculum that meets their individualized academic needs. Increase funding for necessary therapeutic and behavioral services. Systematically evaluate student outcomes to track progress. Make program evaluation results public to increase state oversight and accountability by parents.

Keep schools safe so students and teachers can focus on learning instead of lockdowns. Work with the General Assembly to repeal campus carry and permitless carry. Strengthen safe firearm storage requirements in homes with children. Invest in school safety infrastructure and mental health supports that do not burden educators.

Address educator burnout by increasing teacher, student, and parent support. Provide bonuses for early childhood educators working in hard-to-staff regions. Ensure teachers have and are paid for adequate planning time to reduce exhaustion and attrition. Minimize excessive time spent on standardized testing by modernizing assessments. Expand school-based mental health services and telehealth so teachers can focus on teaching. Shift responsibility for food insecurity, healthcare access, and crisis response away from educators by increasing access to wraparound services.

Address our youth mental health crisis by focusing on prevention and early detection of emerging mental health issues. Integrate social services and family supports into schools so students get help and educators can focus on teaching. Increase funding for adequate

staffing of counselors and nurses to identify and address mental health and substance use issues early. Develop best practices to address bullying and online harassment. Remove cell phones from classrooms so students can focus on learning. Collaborate with Georgia’s top research institutions to evaluate the effect of social media on students and educate parents on how to protect their children online.

End Georgia’s Literacy Crisis. Achieve at least 80% of 3rd graders reading at or above grade-level by 2035. Prioritize evidence-based reading instruction grounded in the science of reading. Build strong reading foundations early so students succeed in every subject that follows. Assess gaps in literacy early to minimize learning gaps over time. Support teachers with training and high-quality literacy curriculum that works.

Investing in Workforce Opportunity Through Higher Education



Jason will make sure that Georgia’s students have access to every opportunity they deserve after graduating high school, whether they want to go to college or pursue a skilled trade. He’ll make higher education more affordable by creating needs-based scholarships, investing in HBCUs, and making technical colleges free. Jason will also grow our talent pipelines and provide opportunities for adults to get the specialized training they need in emerging industries and technologies. Above all, Jason will give every Georgian a fair shot — no matter what path they choose.

Create multiple pathways to good-paying jobs and sustainable careers through a thriving apprenticeship and technical college system. Make tuition free at Georgia’s technical colleges to qualified attendees. Expand paid apprenticeship and earn-while-you-learn programs in partnership with labor unions and private employers. Recruit enrollment in courses and certifications for high-demand jobs and emerging industries. Create clear career pathways in high school so students graduate with skills and job opportunities.

Expand the HOPE scholarship program to include needs-based scholarships. Offer needs-based scholarships so every child has access to a college education. Create support for first-generation, rural,

working, and student parents to prevent dropout. Increase scholarship funding to cover the full cost of attendance, including housing, food, and transportation.

Invest in our HBCUs so they can grow our talent pipeline. Work with both the Georgia General Assembly and federal government to increase funding and access to infrastructure grants. Address longstanding inequities in facilities, research funding, and student services. Strengthen partnerships between HBCUs, employers, and state agencies.

Provide opportunities for adults to reskill and train on new and emerging industries and technologies. Expand access to short-term credentials and reskilling programs. Prepare workers for rapid technological change, including automation and artificial intelligence. Increase part-time programs so workers advance without leaving the workforce.

Make college more affordable so every student gets a fair shot. Address housing, food, transportation, and textbook costs that drive students out of school. Support the creation and expansion of emergency grants to help students stay enrolled when students face short-term financial crises. Reduce hidden fees to require institutions to make the full cost of enrollment transparent.

Streamline the transfer process for college credits to increase degree completion. Guarantee seamless credit transfer across Georgia’s higher education systems. Make the system easier to navigate and finish.

Protect our colleges and universities from political interference and coercion. Safeguard academic freedom and accreditation independence. Reduce political interference in hiring, curriculum, and research. Ensure institutions can recruit top faculty and conduct world-class research.