



Family-Friendly

PARTNERSHIP SCHOOLS

2017-2019 OVERVIEW

Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership School Initiative

HISTORY

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) launched the Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership School initiative in the summer of 2010 to assist Title I schools, families, and communities in working together to create welcoming environments that lead to increased student achievement. Based on the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) Standards for Family-School Partnerships, which the Georgia State Board of Education (SBE) endorsed in 2010, the FFPS initiative highlights the first standard—Welcoming All Families. Since 2012, this initiative was most noted for its annual awards in partnership with the Georgia Foundation for Public Education (GFPE), The Ritz-Carlton Hotels of Georgia, and the Georgia Association of Educators (GAE). At the end of the 2016-2017 school year, the FFPS initiative phased out the awards program and in 2017-2018 transitioned to supporting schools that voluntarily invested time and resources in improving their welcoming environments over a period of two school years.

In 2017, the GaDOE developed a framework, Georgia's Systems of Continuous Improvement, to assist school systems in the “what” and “how” of school improvement. The Family and Community Engagement System is one of the five systems in the framework and has six structures. These six structures are based on the six standards of the National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships. The first standard of—Welcoming All Families and the Community—aligns with the purpose of the FFPS initiative. The FFPS initiative will support Title I schools in planning their improvement efforts based on the Welcoming All Families standard as well as to measure their progress in that standard.



ELIGIBILITY

All Title I schoolwide schools are invited to submit an online application to join a two-year professional development opportunity to improve its welcoming environment. All previous finalist schools of the Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership School Awards program during 2012-2017 are welcome to apply. A previous Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership School Winner from 2012-2017 is ineligible to apply. Please note that the five schools chosen to be a part of the two-year cohort of schools in need of progress may not apply again after its completion of the program so that other Title I schoolwide schools may participate.

The GaDOE will use the recognition process from previous years to develop a professional development model for the cohort of five selected Title I schools and will reach out to award winning schools to become partners and mentors to the new cohort. In addition to the award winning schools, partners from the GAE, the State Superintendent's Parent Advisory Council (PAC), the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network, the Georgia Family Connection Partnership, other GaDOE programs, and The Ritz-Carlton Hotels of Georgia will be invited to continue their roles as application readers, site judges, or professional development specialists. A panel of representatives will review the online applications and select up to five schools based on geographical location in Georgia, location of available site judges, representation of small, medium, and large school systems, and other factors. Each school team's application must identify two S.M.A.R.T. goals to focus its improvement efforts related to the Welcoming All Families and the Community Standard of Georgia's Systems of Continuous Improvement.

TWO-YEAR COHORT OF SCHOOLS

Five separate groups of judges will conduct a surprise school site visit in the winter to provide feedback to the school team. Site visits are not announced in advance. During the site visits, judge will use a rubric to conduct a surprise walk-through and interview school staff and visitors to assess each school's welcoming environment. After the site visit, the judges will provide their feedback to the school team and discuss the school team's chosen S.M.A.R.T. goals.

In previous years, The Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center provided a special professional learning opportunity for the cohort of school teams. This opportunity is designed to further enhance the school teams' ability to provide welcoming environments to increase family engagement to help improve student academic achievement. Toward the end of the second school year, the same group of judges will again visit the school and use the same rubric to conduct a second surprise walk-through and interview school staff and visitors to assess its improvement in the school's welcoming environment. After the site visit, the judges will provide their feedback to the school team and its growth in achieving the selected S.M.A.R.T. goals.

Following the second school visit during the second school year, the judges will select one school that has demonstrated the most growth. The GaDOE will coordinate a special visit from the State School Superintendent to celebrate and honor the selected school's designation of Most Growth.

TARGETS FOR SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

Part of the GaDOE Strategic Plan and Georgia's Systems of Continuous Improvement is to provide opportunities for all stakeholders to play active roles in the education decision-making process. The FFPS Initiative ensures that school leaders, teachers, parents, students, and community members have opportunities to provide feedback on the welcoming environment of the school by using a survey as well as a walk-through tool for the school staff to conduct. The walk-through tool is a scoring rubric that also allows site judges to use as a measurement of a school's welcoming environment. Site judges will use the walk-through tool twice, once at each of the five schools identified as the cohort at the beginning of the initiative and again at the same five schools at the end of the second year. In addition, schools in Georgia will become knowledgeable in the SBE's endorsed Welcoming All Families standard as well as the Family and Community Engagement System of Georgia's Systems of Continuous Improvement.

EXPENSES

There is no cost to apply or register for this initiative. All applicable travel expenses, staff time, and/or materials are the responsibility of the school or school system. Federal Title I funds may be used in alignment to its Comprehensive Needs Assessment and approval of the school system's Federal Programs Director. The travel costs for the site judges will be reimbursed by the Georgia Foundation for Public Education.

TIMELINE

Date	Activity
Fall 2017	2017-2019 Georgia Family-Friendly Partnership Schools Application Packet Available Online
October 2017	Deadline for Application Packet to be Received by the GaDOE
November 2017	Cohort of Schools Selected by Partner Application Readers and GaDOE Team; Principals Notified by the GaDOE
Winter 2018	Surprise School Site Visits by Partners including invited previous Family-Friendly Partnership School Winners; Feedback Provided to School Team by Site Judges to Review Improvement Goals; GaDOE Team Given Copy of Feedback
Winter 2018	Schools Begin Working on Improvement Goals Related to its Welcoming Environment
Spring 2018 (Tentative)	Schools Participate in a Professional Development Day Focused on Improvement Goals
Spring 2018	Schools Continue to Improve Its Welcoming Environment Based on its Improvement Goals
Fall 2018	GaDOE Team Follow up with Schools on their Improvement Goals and, if Applicable, Set New Improvement Goals
Fall 2018 – Spring 2019	Schools Continue to Improve Its Welcoming Environment Based on its Improvement Goals
Spring 2019	Surprise School Site Visits by Same Site Judges; Feedback Provided to School Team to Highlight Growth in Improvement Goals; GaDOE Team Given Copy of Feedback
Spring 2019	School that Demonstrated the Most Growth Announced by the GaDOE
Spring 2019 or Fall 2019	School with the Most Growth Visited by the State School Superintendent, As Schedule Allows