



Georgia School Boards Association

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EDUCATION POLICY FORUMS PLANNED FOR SCHOOL BOARD, LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES

Georgia Partnership, School Boards Assn. Offer Valuable Half-Day Sessions

ATLANTA -- The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education and the Georgia School Boards Association will soon be holding half-day sessions around the state for local school board and state legislative candidates. The Education Policy Forums are designed to provide future education decision makers with factual, research-based information on which to develop positions.

The Forums, which began in the 2002 election year and were repeated in 2004 and 2006, feature experts who address areas that are consistently local and state-wide items of interest. Topics include: choices in education; early learning; education finance; governance and policymaking; school leadership; standards, assessments and accountability; student achievement; and teacher workforce. The information provided is based upon non-partisan research and is compiled in a Primer that covers each topic in-depth. All participants receive one of the resource books.

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EDUCATION POLICY FORUMS 2-2-2

The first session will be held June 3, 12:30 – 4:45 p.m., at the North Georgia Technical College, Clarksville. Six sessions will follow over the next nine days: Clayton State University, Morrow, June 4, 12:30 – 4:45 p.m.; Dalton State College, Dalton, June 6, 8:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.; Columbus Technical College, Columbus, June 9, 12:30 – 4:45 p.m.; Albany Technical College, Albany, June 10, 12:30 – 4:45 p.m.; Valdosta Technical College, Valdosta, June 11, 12:30 – 4:45 p.m.; and Central Georgia Technical College, Macon, June 12, 12:30 – 4:45 p.m.

The Forums will resume June 23 at North Metro Technical College, Acworth; June 24, Athens Technical College, Athens; June 25, Sandersville Technical College, Sandersville; and June 26, Savannah Technical College, Savannah. All sessions will be held 12:30 – 4:45 p.m. A final Forum will be presented, June 27, 8:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. at the Heart of Georgia Technical College, Dublin.

Dr. Steve Dolinger, president of the Georgia Partnership, explained the value of the sessions. “There is nothing more important to our state’s future than our public education system. The legislatures we elect will ultimately set education policy that will affect all of us and have a direct impact on Georgia’s prosperity.”

He added, “This is why the Forums are so valuable. We present expertly researched in-depth, non-partisan information that helps explain the intricacies of our education system. Attendees will leave the session with a wealth of information on which to base their campaign and future education decisions.”

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EDUCATION POLICY FORUMS 3-3-3

Jeannie M. (Sis) Henry, executive director of the Georgia School Boards Association, also stressed the importance of the Forums. “It is critical to all legislative and governmental decision makers to have an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a school board, and to have a working knowledge of how school systems are governed and operated.”

She continued, “Not only are school systems usually one of the largest employers in a county, but in teaching our children, schools systems have a direct effect on the future of our country.” Henry stressed that as a co-sponsor of the Forums “GSBA welcomes the opportunity to provide information on school board governance to candidates and potential candidates in any political race.”

Registration is available on line at both the Georgia Partnership (www.gpee.org – Home Page) and Georgia School Boards Assn. (www.gsba.com – click On-Line Registration on Home Page) web sites. Questions may be directed to the Partnership at 404-223-2280 or GSBA at 770-962-6843.

A participant in one of the 2006 Forums, Amy Carter, now a member of the House of Representatives, District 175, clearly defined the importance of attending a session. “As a current high school teacher, I thought I had a clear understanding of the public education process. The Education Policy Forum was an eye opener!

“Believe me,” she emphasized, “this is a very complex subject and this session provided expert insight that I could never get anywhere else. The knowledge gained here will allow me to make more informed education-related decisions.”

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