



## FACT SHEET:

### The Woodrow Wilson Georgia Teaching Fellowships

#### About the Need

Despite recent improvements, Georgia still has a significant achievement gap, and an urgent need for math and science in high-need schools:

On the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 29% of Georgia's 8th-graders scored at or above the proficient level in mathematics, compared with a national average of 34%. However, students in Georgia's high-poverty schools scored an average of 23 points less on the 8th-grade NAEP math tests. Georgia's four-year high school graduation rate, at 72%, still slightly lags the national rate of 75%. For Georgia's Hispanic and African-American students, however, the graduation rate is 62% to 64%.

Algebra is a gateway subject for advanced math and science coursework in high school and college. Overall, 63% of Georgia students did *not* meet the standard on the state's algebra End of Course Tests (EOCT) in spring 2013—but 79% of African-American students scored below the standard, as did 71% for Hispanic students.

Science score gaps are also troubling:

- In spring 2013, 74% of all students met or exceeded standards on the biology EOCT, but just 61% of African-American students and 70% of Hispanic students.
- In physical science, though all students did better, just 72% of African-American students and 80% of Hispanic students, as compared to 83% of students overall, met or exceeded standards.

In recent years, as few as 12% of teachers produced in Georgia have been secondary-level STEM teachers, but nearly half of the state's teaching vacancies (49% in 2013) are middle- and high-school STEM positions.

Teacher attrition in Georgia is a concern: Studies show that about 9% of math and science teachers leave Georgia's classrooms every year. Nationally, between 30% and 40% of new teachers leave within their first three years on the job—more in the neediest districts.

Statewide, 14% to 15% of Georgia's math and science teachers are teaching without full certification in their area.

The number of Fellows produced by this program will fill most of the anticipated STEM vacancies for one year in the participating districts.

#### About the Fellowships

The goals of the Woodrow Wilson Georgia Teaching Fellowships are to:

- attract the very best candidates to teaching;
- put strong teachers into high-need schools;
- cut teacher attrition and retain top teachers; and
- create model programs to transform teacher preparation in and beyond STEM education.

The Fellowships recruit teachers—both recent college graduates and career changers—with strong backgrounds in the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics).

Each WW Georgia Teaching Fellow receives a \$30,000 Fellowship to complete a specially designed, cutting-edge master's degree program, as preparation to teach in Georgia's high-need urban or rural secondary schools.

The first Woodrow Wilson Georgia Teaching Fellows will start their academic programs in fall 2015. Recruitment of Fellows begins in spring 2014.

Fellows commit to teach for three years in the state of Georgia, with ongoing mentoring.

Universities agree to redesign their teacher education programs to create model 21<sup>st</sup>-century teacher preparation.

#### About the Participating Institutions

Five Georgia colleges and universities will participate in the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship:

Columbus State University

Mercer University

Georgia State University

Piedmont College

Kennesaw State University

These institutions were selected based on rigorous statewide review of their leadership, academic resources, commitment and capacity to create world-class program, history of work with local schools, and state of their teacher preparation programs.

Each participating college or university will host 12 Fellows annually.

Each participating college or university will receive a matching grant of \$400,000 (total \$2.0 million).

The program will fund at least three cohorts (classes) of Fellows, with each pursuing a year of master's work and clinical placement, followed by ongoing mentoring during the three-year teaching commitment.

Each university will work with several school districts to create clinical experiences for teacher candidates. Some two dozen school districts (pending completion of MOUs) are potential partners:

- The Atlanta Public Schools
- The Banks County School System
- The Bibb County Public Schools
- The Chattahoochee County Schools
- The Clarke County School District
- The Cobb County Public School District
- The Dodge County Schools
- The Franklin County School System
- The Fulton County Schools
- The Gwinnett County Public Schools
- The Habersham County Schools
- The Hall County Schools
- The Houston County School System
- The Marietta City Schools
- The Marion County Schools
- The Monroe County Schools
- The Muscogee County School District
- The Paulding County School District
- The Rabun County School System
- The Stephens County School System
- The Union County Schools
- The Walton County Public Schools
- The White County School District

#### **About the Program Leadership**

The program is created and administered by the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (Princeton, NJ), with the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education as in-state coordinating partner and with support from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation.

Current program funding is \$9.36 million.

Georgia is the first Southern state to launch the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship, which has enrolled more than 600 Fellows in four other states to date.