



2026-27 Policy Priorities

66% of jobs in Georgia will require postsecondary education or training by 2031.¹



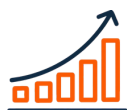
A college degree holder **earns \$1m+ more** over a lifetime than those with a high school diplomas.²

42 % of AATL Scholars report barriers **accessing food, housing, or transportation.**



The average **financial gap** before our scholarship is **\$10,265.**

With every additional postsecondary graduate, **Georgia's economy grows by \$164,000 each year,** generating six additional jobs.³



1. Help Georgia's students afford postsecondary education

2. Increase access to college and career counseling for high school students

3. Strengthen credential completion and workforce alignment

4. Increase the transparency of college admissions and financial aid process

5. Support college students' basic needs

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Achieve Atlanta's mission is to help students access, afford, and earn postsecondary credentials.

HELP GEORGIA'S STUDENTS AFFORD POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Achieve Atlanta urges policymakers to **increase the state's total investment in the DREAMS Scholarship in order to expand the program's reach and support more students with financial need.**

INCREASE ACCESS TO COLLEGE AND CAREER COUNSELING FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS

We recommend policymakers **reduce the student-to-counselor ratio and fund evidence-based advising programs that are already succeeding in Georgia.**

STRENGTHEN CREDENTIAL COMPLETION AND WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT

Policymakers should **expand access to work-based learning opportunities to align with Georgia's workforce development goals.**

INCREASE THE TRANSPARENCY OF COLLEGE ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID PROCESSES

Policymakers can **ensure college application tools and financial aid communications clearly state costs and include important information to allow students to make informed decisions.**

SUPPORT COLLEGE STUDENTS' BASIC NEEDS

Achieve Atlanta recommends state policymakers **expand access to basic needs supports for college students by ensuring priority housing for students from low-income backgrounds, increasing the availability of emergency financial aid, and simplifying enrollment in public benefits programs.**

¹Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education. (2025). Leading indicators report. <https://gpee.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Leading-Indicators-Report-Final.pdf>.

²Carnevale, A. P., Rose, S. J., & Cheah, B. (2011). The college payoff: Education, occupations, lifetime earnings. Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. <https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/collegepayoff-completed.pdf>. ³National College Attainment Network. (2023). The economic value of postsecondary attainment in Georgia. https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ncan.org/resource/resmgr/policyadvocacy/economic_value_one_pagers/ncan_factsheet_ga.pdf