



Dean, College of Education & Human Development

Leadership Profile

Fall 2025



WittKieffer

Executive Summary

Georgia State University (GSU) welcomes applications and nominations for an innovative and mission-driven leader to serve as Dean of the College of Education & Human Development (CEHD).

Blending academic rigor with a rich college experience since 1913, Georgia State transforms the lives of students, advances the frontiers of knowledge, and shapes future leaders. Enrolling one of the most diverse student bodies in the nation, the University provides associate-to-graduate-degree-level educational opportunities for tens of thousands across its downtown Atlanta Campus and five Perimeter College campuses. The University has been ranked among the nation's top five most innovative public institutions and is recognized as the national model for how novel, data-informed initiatives drive student achievement. Conferring degrees to 10,000-plus students each year, GSU has experienced the most dramatic graduation-rate increase of any university in the country since 2003.

The College of Education & Human Development is a nationally recognized leader in urban education and human development. With more than 50 years of history, CEHD offers undergraduate, graduate, and non-degree programs across seven academic departments, preparing professionals in education, counseling, human development, learning sciences, sport business, and health-related fields. The College is deeply committed to high-quality instruction, high-impact research, and community engagement, and serves a diverse student population reflective of Atlanta and the nation. CEHD is ranked 11th nationally in research expenditures by the National Science Foundation and attracts significant funding from local, state, and federal agencies. Its research enterprise includes multiple centers and clinics dedicated to addressing critical educational and social issues. The College is comprised of 155 full-time faculty, 137 staff employees, and serves over 3,500 students.

As the Chief Academic and Administrative Officer of the College, the Dean reports to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and serves on the Deans' Council. The Dean is responsible for strategic planning, academic program development, the research enterprise, faculty and staff recruitment and retention, fundraising, and external engagement, and manages a budget of approximately \$28.5 million and approximately \$35 million in dollars raised/won through grants and contracts. The next Dean will lead CEHD through a period of transformation and opportunity, while advancing the College's commitment to innovation and impact.

GSU seeks a Dean who will elevate CEHD through strategic vision, academic excellence, and collaborative leadership. The next Dean must bring strength in building excellent and innovative academic programs in education and human development, including experiences with interdisciplinary initiatives, and possess the vision and demonstrated experience to engage faculty, staff, and students in research, teaching, and outreach that address educational issues and supports collaborative partnerships in the context of urban communities.

Candidates must have progressive leadership experience, the academic background and accomplishments commensurate to the rank of full professor with tenure in one of the departments in CEHD, and a record of success in competing for sponsored funding. Direct experience in K-12 educational settings is a plus.

To submit a nomination or express personal interest in this position, please see the "Procedure for Candidacy" section at the end of this document.

Role of the Dean, College of Education & Human Development

As the College's academic leader, the Dean reports directly to the University's Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs and serves as a member of the Deans' Council and the President's Administrative Council. The Dean serves as a liaison between the College's programs and the University, as well as works collaboratively with other deans and administrators throughout the University. The Dean manages the resources, including personnel and financial, to achieve the College's mission. The Dean oversees a budget of approximately \$28.5 million and approximately \$35 million in dollars raised/won through grants and contracts, and provides leadership to 155 full-time faculty, 137 staff employees, and over 3,500 students.

Job Responsibilities¹:

- Provide strategic vision for the College and serve as its academic leader
- Foster a culture to promote the success of students, faculty, and staff within the College
- Uphold the highest commitment to quality and excellence in the College's teaching, research, scholarship, service, and academic development
- Promote interdisciplinary collaboration among the College's departments, across colleges, and with external partners
- Oversee all faculty and staff personnel processes, including hiring, annual evaluations, promotion and tenure, and workload adjustments
- Oversee accreditation and compliance standards
- Enact data-based decisions to guide resource allocations within the College
- Create and sustain positive and strategic relationships with the College, University, and external constituencies
- Ensure College and University targets are met in the areas of enrollment, graduation rates, degrees conferred, graduate admissions, student quality, fund development, and sponsored research
- Maintain accountability and oversight of the College's budget
- Work proactively with alumni and donors to secure internal and external funding
- Serve as an advocate for the College with state and governmental officials
- Promote a transparent and collaborative governance structure within the academic units and the College

¹ The full list of powers and duties of deans of colleges or schools at Georgia State University are outlined in Article VIII, Section 2 of the GSU university statutes <https://senate.gsu.edu/#university-statutes>.

Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership

As the Chief Academic Officer of the College, the Dean will address the following leadership opportunities:

Articulate and champion a compelling and unifying vision for the College

The next Dean of Georgia State University's College of Education & Human Development will be expected to collaboratively lead a forward-looking vision that builds upon the College's existing strengths and aligns with [*GSU's Blueprint to 2033: Our Place, Our Time*](#). This vision should elevate the College's commitment to student engagement and success, impactful research, teaching excellence, and community partnerships. It must promote and expand interdisciplinary research and education, while being responsive to the current historical and political context. Additionally, it must align with workforce and economic priorities in Georgia.

Strategic planning will be essential, requiring agile and transformative leadership that amplifies the College's legacy of excellence and positions it to address the most pressing educational challenges of our time. The ability to unify diverse units under shared objectives will be essential.

The incoming Dean will also be well-positioned to build on initiatives that support visionary, interdisciplinary research, and innovation. As a champion of the College, the Dean will facilitate cross-campus partnerships and catalyze new collaborative opportunities. Further expanding the College's research impact will require growing its research infrastructure and external funding, ensuring the College remains a leader in shaping the future of education and human development. The ideal candidate will embrace and advocate for the full breadth of academic programs within the College, serving as a unifying leader who represents and supports all disciplines equitably.

Support the College's research enterprise

As an integral part of a premier research university, the Dean will facilitate connections internally and externally to ignite opportunities and support the pursuit and production of knowledge across the College. CEHD has an established research infrastructure, including a college-level sponsored research office that facilitates external funding. The College is regularly ranked as a top producer of funding from the NSF. The Dean should have experience securing and managing grants and be committed to advancing CEHD's research mission. Strengthening mechanisms for recruiting, funding, and supporting doctoral students to build a sustainable pipeline will be a priority.

Advance and support interdisciplinary collaboration

CEHD is home to a diverse range of programs and centers that span multiple disciplines and has a reputation as an active collaborator and partner across GSU. The next Dean will build off this work to continue to facilitate internal collaboration across departments and continue to support and promote cross-college initiatives and centers. The Dean will be joining a highly collegial group of deans and administrators, so they must be energized by the potential to work with others to further the mission and impact of CEHD and GSU.

The Dean must foster an environment within CEHD that not only supports interdisciplinary partnerships but also encourages a culture of innovation and collaboration to address complex and multifaceted challenges facing society and education. This approach will be vital for GSU to continue to foster a dynamic and resilient research community that continues to address the most vexing challenges facing our world.

Expand CEHD's external presence and intellectual leadership

Located at the intersection of three major school districts in Atlanta, CEHD is the premier institution for educator preparation in Georgia. The College has been successful in creating and providing innovative, tailored, and community-driven solutions to education and human development challenges and inequities faced by Georgia communities. The Dean will act as a conduit to understand the needs of the community and the unique contributions that CEHD and GSU can make in the Atlanta region and beyond. The incoming Dean must be

comfortable navigating complex educational and political ecosystems and committed to advancing access and excellence in urban education and human development.

The Dean will be expected to bring knowledge of the K-12 and human development environments, deepen relationships with public, private, and charter school systems, and position the College as a central hub for K-12 support and leadership development. The Dean must be willing to collaborate with other deans of education across the University System of Georgia who meet regularly, and be a visible, engaged, bridge-builder between GSU and the broader community. Increasing visibility with industry, funders, policy makers, and community stakeholders to attract philanthropic and grant support, shape public conversations on urban education and human development, and ensure workforce-aligned programs are available to students will be a priority.

Foster a culture of collaboration and inclusion

The next Dean of CEHD at Georgia State University must be an inclusive and visionary leader who fosters a culture of collaboration, engagement, and innovation. Building on the College's strong foundation of mutual respect, the Dean will cultivate a unified college identity and will work to reduce silos. Further, the Dean will support an environment where faculty, staff, and students feel empowered to bring their full selves to their work and learning.

This leader will unify the College around a shared sense of purpose and values, strengthening collaboration across departments and deepening connections with the broader University community to attract and retain top talent. With a deep understanding of the educational landscape across Georgia's urban, suburban, and rural settings, the Dean will cultivate an environment where all members of the College can excel and contribute meaningfully to advancing the mission of CEHD.

The Dean will lead with integrity, humility, and emotional intelligence, serving as a facilitator of democratic dialogue and collaborative decision-making. By valuing diverse perspectives and promoting mutual understanding, the Dean will inspire pride, trust, and a sense of ownership throughout the College, ensuring CEHD continues to thrive as a dynamic and impactful academic community.

Manage and grow the College's financial resources

The Dean bears responsibility for managing the College's resources wisely and productively. Concomitant with sound financial stewardship, the Dean will be a successful fundraiser and relationship builder, providing a compelling vision to potential donors and external partners, and leading efforts to expand engagement with supporters of CEHD and a broader community. The Dean must be a compelling and persuasive communicator who will promote the quality and impact of the College and advocate for the resources needed to maintain its prominence.

Professional Qualifications and Personal Qualities

Candidates must have progressive leadership experience, the academic background and accomplishments commensurate to the rank of full professor with tenure in one of the departments in CEHD, and a record of success in competing for sponsored funding. Direct experience in the K-12 educational setting is a plus.

Additionally, candidates should have many of the following qualifications and qualities:

- Significant leadership abilities in higher education, experience in direct supervision of staff and/or faculty, and a strong vision for a modern college of education located in a cosmopolitan city
- High standards for research excellence and a strong understanding of disciplines and directions in the field
- Experience with fundraising and development
- Exceptional communication skills, with the ability to convey the value of research, education, and specific initiatives to stakeholders
- Demonstrated capacity in strategic planning and evaluation
- Demonstrated ability to work with personnel from diverse backgrounds and experiences
- A record of fostering teamwork, collegiality, relationship building, and integrity
- The ability to form relationships with superintendents and pre-collegiate personnel in schools and other external constituents that could lead to collaborative partnerships
- Strengths in building excellent and innovative academic programs in education and human development, including experiences with interdisciplinary and international initiatives
- Vision and demonstrated experience to engage faculty, staff, and students in research, teaching, and outreach that address educational issues and support collaborative partnerships in the context of urban communities



About Georgia State University

Overview

Georgia State University (GSU) is a nationally recognized R1 public research university located in the heart of downtown Atlanta, Georgia. Founded in 1913, GSU has grown into one of the largest and most diverse institutions in the country, enrolling over 53,000 students from 155 countries and 49 states.

GSU is widely celebrated as a national leader in student success, particularly for its ability to graduate students at the same rate regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic status. Its innovative, data-driven approach to student support has become a model for institutions across the country. The National Institute for Student Success, created and housed at Georgia State, disseminates these evidence-based best practices to colleges and universities across the country and around the world.

The University is also known for its entrepreneurial spirit and rapid growth in research. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, GSU ranks #1 in the nation for its commitment to undergraduate teaching and as one of the top 5 most innovative public institutions for 11 years. Georgia State is also one of the fastest-growing research universities in the country. In total, GSU has invested more than 1.88 billion dollars in research over the last 10 years.

GSU offers more than 250 undergraduate and 180 graduate degree programs across 12 colleges and schools. Its urban location provides students with unmatched access to Atlanta's industries, cultural institutions, and government agencies. With a strong emphasis on equity, innovation, and impact, Georgia State continues to redefine what a public research university can achieve in the 21st century.

Mission Statement

Georgia State University, one of the largest, most innovative multi-campus public research universities, transforms the lives of students, advances the frontiers of knowledge, and strengthens the workforce of the future. With campuses in and around metro Atlanta, Georgia State readies students for professional pursuits, educates future leaders, and prepares citizens for lifelong learning. Enrolling one of the most diverse student bodies in the nation, Georgia State prioritizes student success, ensuring that students from all backgrounds graduate at high rates. The University provides outstanding experiential educational opportunities and exceptional support for students seeking degrees from the associate to the doctoral level.

One of the nation's fastest-growing research institutions, Georgia State's scholarship and research focus on solving complex issues ranging from the most fundamental questions of the universe to the most challenging issues of its day, while creative activities expand and enrich the world.

Strategic Plan

Georgia State University launched a bold 10-year [strategic plan](#) to guide its growth, innovation, and impact through 2033. The plan reflects GSU's identity as a diverse, urban, multi-campus institution committed to student success, research excellence, and community engagement. This strategic plan also reflects GSU's commitment to inclusive excellence, innovation, and social mobility, aiming to prepare students and faculty to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Colleges

Georgia State University is composed of 12 colleges and schools, each offering a wide range of academic programs and research opportunities. These units reflect the University's commitment to interdisciplinary learning, innovation, and student success:

- [Andrew Young School of Policy Studies](#)
- [Byrdine F. Lewis College of Nursing and Health Professions](#)
- [College of Arts & Sciences](#)
- [College of Education & Human Development](#)
- [College of Law](#)
- [College of Arts](#)
- [Institute for Biomedical Sciences](#)
- [J. Mack Robinson College of Business](#)
- [Perimeter College](#)
- [School of Public Health](#)
- [Honors College](#)
- [The Graduate School](#)

About the College of Education & Human Development

The College of Education & Human Development (CEHD) currently enrolls over 3,500 students (over 1,500 undergraduate and over 1,900 graduate) through more than 70 degree programs, administered across seven academic units:

- [Communication Sciences and Disorders](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#)
- [Early Childhood and Elementary Education](#)
- [Educational Policy Studies](#)
- [Kinesiology and Health](#)
- [Middle and Secondary Education](#)
- [Learning Sciences Division](#)

The College is committed to high-quality instruction, research, and service to a student population that reflects the diverse composition of Georgia and beyond. The College's degree programs range from [undergraduate](#), [graduate](#), [doctoral](#), and [non-degree programs](#) in areas such as early childhood and elementary education, middle and secondary education, counseling, special education, communication sciences and disorders, leadership, learning sciences, exercise science, sport administration, and health and physical education. Understanding, embracing, and addressing the multifaceted needs of tomorrow's learners, while offering effective and accommodating programming, are essential to the College's continued success. In addition to its emphasis on teacher preparation, the College is making advancements in the fields of mental and physical wellness.

The CEHD also serves the Atlanta community and the state of Georgia through several service-oriented centers and programs: the Urban Literacy Clinic, the Principals Center, After-School All-Stars Atlanta, Saturday School, the Center for School Safety, School Climate and Classroom Management, and the Alonzo A. Crim Center of Urban Educational Excellence.

Other CEHD highlights include:

- 200+ new teachers produced by CEHD each year

- 1st in Georgia and 5th in the nation for conferring bachelor's degrees in education to African-American students.



Research

Georgia State University's College of Education & Human Development (CEHD) is nationally recognized for its commitment to community-grounded research in education, human development, and health-related fields. Ranked 11th in the nation for research expenditures by the National Science Foundation's Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey, CEHD is a leader in producing impactful scholarship that addresses today's most pressing educational challenges.

The College attracts substantial funding from local, state, and federal agencies and supports a robust network of research centers, clinics, and labs; the College has raised/won approximately \$35 million through grants and contracts. These entities foster innovation in areas such as teacher education, educational policy, adult learning, communication disorders, mental health, movement disorders, and community outreach. CEHD's research culture is collaborative and interdisciplinary, with faculty and students working together to advance knowledge and practice.

Signature initiatives like the Dean's Research Doctoral Fellowship recognize and support emerging scholars, while ongoing studies, ranging from esports branding to literacy instruction for multilingual learners, demonstrate the breadth and relevance of CEHD's research portfolio.

The College is deeply committed to community-engaged research and outreach that addresses real-world challenges in education, human development, and health. With approximately \$35 million in funding across recent years, CEHD supports a wide array of initiatives through its Office of Research and Sponsored Projects (ORSP), which assists faculty, staff, and students with pre- and post-award activities.

CEHD houses numerous [research centers and programs](#) that span topics such as urban education, sport and urban policy, language and literacy development and challenges, movement disorders, school safety, stress and resilience, and atypical learning.

Research Centers

- Adult Literacy Research Center
- Center for Movement & Rehabilitation Research
- Center for Research on School Climate
- Center for Sport & Urban Policy
- Center for Urban School Leadership
- Ken Matheny Center for the Study of Stress, Trauma, & Resilience
- SNAP Inc Center on Computer and Teacher Education
- Urban Child Study Center

Outreach and Engagement Centers

- Alonzo Crim Center for Urban Educational Excellence
- Center for Evaluation and Research Services
- Principals Center
- Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic

Joint Centers

- Center for Research on Atypical Development and Learning (CRADL w/ COAS)
- Research on the Challenges of Acquiring Language & Literacy (w/ COAS)

Leadership

M. Brian Blake, Ph.D., President



As the eighth President of Georgia State University, Dr. M. Brian Blake leads the State of Georgia's largest university, spanning six campuses and a community of nearly 51,000 students and 8,000 faculty and staff. Georgia State is the most ethnically and socioeconomically diverse Research-1 institution in the nation. Dr. Blake introduced a strategic vision for Georgia State that emphasizes four pillars: Identity, Placemaking, and Belonging, Research, Scholarship, and Creativity, Student Success, and College to Careers. Georgia State's strategic plan, "The Blueprint to 2033 – Our Place, Our Time", sets a path for the University to continue to enhance its academic excellence and student success, scholarship and creativity, and campus vibrancy.

During Dr. Blake's tenure, Georgia State University has set several new milestones. With its increasing reputation, the University received the largest number of applications ever for admission to its fall 2023 entering class. In the same year, the research enterprise exceeded \$200 million in sponsored awards – the highest in history. Dr. Blake oversaw the acquisition of more than \$60 million in government support for a new 120,000 square foot Research Tower that broke ground in 2024 and will open in 2026. In FY22, the University also raised a one-year amount of more than \$107 million in philanthropic gifts for the first time in history. An advocate for campus experience, Dr. Blake is leading the effort to establish new interconnected green spaces and enhanced facilities to activate the center of Georgia State's downtown campus.

Prior to Georgia State, Dr. Blake had over 25 years of faculty and administrative experience across five comprehensive research universities, including Provost at George Washington University and Drexel University, Dean at the University of Miami, and Associate Dean for Research at the University of Notre Dame. During the first 10 years of his academic career, he was Professor and later Department Chair of Computer Science at Georgetown University. Dr. Blake serves on the Board of Directors for Grady Memorial Hospital Corporation, Metro-Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, Junior Achievement of Georgia, and the Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Dr. Blake has been included on the 2022 and 2023 lists of the Georgia 500 – The State’s Most Influential Leaders, as well as recognized as a 2023 Most Admired CEO. In 2023, he was also inducted into Georgia Tech’s College of Computing Hall of Fame. In addition to several honorary degrees, Dr. Blake has a Bachelor of Electrical Engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology, a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering from Mercer University, and a Ph.D. in Software Engineering from George Mason University. Blake grew up in Savannah, Ga., and attended Benedictine Military Academy. He and his wife, Dr. Bridget Blake, have two sons, Brendan and Bryce.

Nicolle Parsons-Pollard, Ph.D., Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs



Nicolle Parsons-Pollard, Ph.D., was appointed by Georgia State University President M. Brian Blake as Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, effective Feb. 1, 2023.

She served as Interim Provost in 2022. Prior to her appointment in this leadership role, she was appointed in 2020 as Georgia State’s Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs.

As Provost, Dr. Parsons-Pollard serves as the University’s Chief Academic Officer. Her portfolio includes the development and implementation of the University’s academic programs and policies; supervision of deans and associate provosts; and direction for international initiatives and study abroad, graduate policy and programming, institutional effectiveness (institutional research and reporting), strategic planning, and assessment of learning outcomes and academic programs. Additionally, she directs activities

in the recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion processes for faculty positions.

Under the University’s new strategic plan, [Blueprint to 2033](#), Dr. Parsons-Pollard is an essential leader in the implementation of a plan that maps Georgia State’s path for the decade ahead. Under the new plan finalized in spring 2023, she will work alongside colleagues in leadership for four crucial pillars of the University’s future: identity, placemaking, and belonging; research, scholarship, and creativity; student success 2.0; and supporting students beyond college and into their careers.

In support of student success, she has undertaken a reorganization to create the Office of Academic Affairs, bringing together units responsible for academic strategic planning, innovation, and faculty support in teaching and learning, institutional research and assessment, curriculum, program development, and other key functions.

As Provost, she is dedicated to innovative, impactful education that meets the needs of students where they are, with excellence in learning and student success regardless of modality. Dr. Parsons-Pollard has tasked a cross-disciplinary team with coordinating online education efforts across academic and non-academic units. The team has been charged with addressing the distinctive requirements of online programs and students while ensuring that online education is integrated into all academic and student support services and all appropriate academic units.

Since arriving at Georgia State, she has created, implemented, and championed a variety of faculty development programs to support and strengthen faculty in teaching and research, as well as leadership programming for department chairs and other administrators. She has also developed and implemented faculty policies and procedures, managed university awards and recognition events for faculty, and assisted with the promotion and tenure process.

She has also provided leadership in Georgia State's multi-year improvement cycle through the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Faculty Satisfaction process. This process, which is considered a "gold standard" in the field, aims to improve the academic workplace and increase the retention and engagement of university faculty. This cyclical process has begun anew to continue assessment, planning, implementation, and refinement of actions to make Georgia State the best place to work in higher education.

Dr. Parsons-Pollard was responsible for the oversight of the Implementation Steering Committee of the Next Generation of Faculty initiative, which has also brought truly impactful measures to bear for faculty recruitment, retention, engagement, and belongingness.

In her previous role as Vice Provost for Academic and Faculty Affairs at Monmouth University, Dr. Parsons-Pollard led efforts to ensure academic program integrity and student success, oversaw faculty promotion and tenure processes, and developed initiatives to attract and retain high-quality faculty. She also served as Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Operations at Virginia State University and completed the American Council on Education (ACE) Fellows Program in 2014-15.

Dr. Parsons-Pollard's academic field of interest is in criminal justice, and she holds an appointment as Professor of Criminal Justice in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State. Her research and scholarship have focused on program evaluation, juvenile justice, and disproportionate minority contact by the criminal justice system.

She earned her Ph.D. from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in public policy and administration, as well as a master's degree in criminal justice, and a bachelor's degree in mass communications from VCU.



Atlanta, Georgia

Atlanta is a vibrant, diverse, and rapidly growing metropolitan hub in the heart of the Southeast. Known for its rich history, dynamic culture, and global influence, Atlanta offers a unique blend of Southern hospitality and urban innovation. As the capital of Georgia, it is home to major Fortune 500 companies, world-class healthcare and research institutions, and a thriving arts and entertainment scene.

The city is a center for higher education, with numerous colleges and universities contributing to its intellectual and cultural vitality. Atlanta's diverse population and international reach make it an ideal setting for inclusive learning and community engagement. Its location places it at the crossroads of rural, suburban, and urban communities, offering rich opportunities for educational partnerships and outreach.

With its temperate climate, expansive green spaces, and robust public transportation system, Atlanta is both livable and accessible. From historic neighborhoods and civil rights landmarks to cutting-edge innovation districts, Atlanta is a city that honors its past while shaping the future.



Procedure for Candidacy

All applications, nominations, and inquiries are invited. Applications should include, as separate documents, a CV or resume, and a letter of interest addressing the themes in this profile.

WittKieffer is assisting Georgia State University in this search. For fullest consideration, candidate materials should be received by January 20, 2026.

Nominations and inquiries can be directed to:

Christine Pendleton, Alejandra Gillette-Teran, and Cathryn Davis

GSUDeanCEHD@wittkieffer.com

Georgia State University is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate against applicants due to race, ethnicity, gender, veteran status, or on the basis of disability or any other federal, state or local protected class.