

# Be Recognized as Georgia's Best

All of the photographs in this brochure were shot on location at the 2008 Georgia Master Teachers Conference in St. Simons Island, Georgia.

Over the course of three days, more than 140 Georgia Master Teachers converged on the island to celebrate their successes, to be recognized by their peers, and to take part in professional development opportunities.



Apply to  
Be Certified  
as a Master  
Teacher

## Your Invitation to Become a Georgia Master Teacher

Every year, Georgia recognizes its best teachers. These professionals receive a Master Teacher designation on their certificates, identifying them as educators who have positively influenced student achievement in the classroom.

### Be Honored.

Educators built and tested the Georgia Master Teachers program, and they continue to coach it, making sure that unlike a lot of teacher-recognition programs, it's not a popularity contest, and it's not based on seat time in the classroom. You are certified as a Georgia Master Teacher based on the clear criterion of your students' achievement.

*“We should recognize teachers who best inspire their students and give them an opportunity to serve as role models and mentors for their peers.”*

—Sonny Perdue, Governor, Georgia

### Be a Leader.

Georgia Master Teachers gather annually to share knowledge, skills, and best practices. The meeting and seminar takes place at the Sea Palms resort on beautiful St. Simons Island.

### Be Heard.

As a Master Teacher, you'll be part of the go-to group for insights, actions, reactions, and recommendations in education. Master Teachers are frequently invited to serve in local, state, regional, and national education groups as the voice of Georgia educators, and as influential professionals in their communities.

### Be of Help.

Georgia's Master Teachers help build better schools by mentoring new teachers and coaching peers. Those who qualify for the Academic Coach program have even more opportunities to advance their careers while helping others develop.

**This is your invitation to become a Master Teacher. To learn how, see inside.**



For more information on Master Teachers, visit [www.gamasterteachers.org](http://www.gamasterteachers.org) or contact us at:

### Georgia Professional Standards Commission

Two Peachtree Street  
Suite 6000  
Atlanta, GA 30303

404-232-2500—Metro Atlanta and Long-Distance Line  
800-869-7775—Toll Free Outside the Metro Atlanta Area  
404-232-2560—Fax Line  
404-232-2510—Certification Status Line

[www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com)

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## Master Teachers: Road to Rewards

The Master Teachers program was created during the 2005 session of the Georgia Legislature to recognize teachers who are driving gains in student achievement. According to Kelly Henson, executive secretary of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, the Georgia Master Teachers program is unique in that it actually designates educators as Master Teachers on their certificates.

“There are many honors out there for educators,” Henson says, “but very few of them focus on students. In developing this program, educators told us, ‘Please make sure it’s rigorous.’ That makes the designation meaningful—for the state, the community, and the local school.”

When the program was launched, an impressive number of applicants responded from throughout Georgia’s 180-district public-school system, and in 2006 and 2007 a total of nearly 300 educators were designated Master Teachers.

The Governor and legislature have increased the rewards for Master Teachers. In addition to special certification, Master Teachers will be eligible for an annual \$500 stipend for serving as mentors for new teachers and an annual \$2,000 stipend for being Academic Coaches. Master Teachers will also automatically earn renewal of their Georgia Educator Certificates as long as they maintain Master Teacher status.

## How to Apply to Be a Master Teacher

To earn the Georgia Master Teacher certificate, you must have at least three years of experience in the classroom on a Georgia Clear Renewable Certificate, and evidence that links classroom instruction to your students’ achievement and progress.

Applying is easier than ever, thanks to updated features on the program’s new website, [www.gamasterteachers.org](http://www.gamasterteachers.org).

Simply click on the links for Master Teacher applicants, the school level, the grade level, and the specialty group you teach. Then follow the step-by-step instructions. Printable documents, including full guidelines and an up-to-date checklist, are available on the website.

The instructions lead you through the process of supplying your personal information and gathering supporting evidence of achievement for the appropriate academic period. You are asked to show that you’ve fulfilled a list of 10 professional responsibilities. These are keyed to four areas of practice:

- Teaching and testing
- Professional development
- Communicating with parents and colleagues
- Leadership

You then submit your application to your local school system management team, which reviews, signs, and submits it to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission via a secure website portal.

### Dates for Applicants

#### 2007–2008

- Applications Available: November 1, 2007
- Application Deadline: March 7, 2008
- Selection: May 2008

#### 2008–2009

- Applications Available: November 1, 2008
- Application Deadline: January 31, 2009
- Selection: March 2009

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission and a State Review team review your application and the supporting data.

In addition, the Georgia Department of Education Accountability Staff evaluates your students’ achievement and gains using data from student rosters.

Once you are approved for Master Teacher certification—within two months of the application deadline—you and your superintendent are

notified.

A short time later, you will receive a packet of Master Teacher recognition materials, including your Georgia Master Teacher certificate.

**Get started on the road to being named a Georgia Master Teacher by visiting [www.gamasterteachers.org](http://www.gamasterteachers.org).**



“The Master Teachers program keeps good teachers in the classroom by allowing them to be not only educators, but leaders and facilitators to their peers as well as young people. Being selected as a Master Teacher means you have been recognized as a professional and your work has made a positive impact on student achievement.”

—Pam Walker, science teacher,  
Alexander High School, Douglas County  
Georgia Master Teacher,  
2007 Georgia Teacher of the Year

