

Speaker Biographies

Vett Vandiver, GEEARS

Born and raised in Georgia, Vett is passionate about increasing awareness for early education in the state. She is the Director of Communications for GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students, and has been on the GEEARS team since 2016. Vett has experience in strategic communications, public engagement, digital communications, and photography in both government and non-profit sectors. She earned her B.S. in Literature, Media, and Communications and her M.S. in Public Policy, with concentrations in Education and Health Policy, from Georgia Tech. Vett also earned a Spanish minor, and speaks Spanish fluently. Before joining GEEARS, Vett worked in the communications offices at the University System of Georgia, the City of Atlanta, and the Office of the Governor. She is currently participating in the 2017-2018 GPEE Education Policy Fellowship Program.

David Sjoquist, Georgia State University

David Sjoquist is Professor of Economics, former director of the Fiscal Research Center, and founding holder of the Dan E. Sweat Chair in Educational and Community Policy in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University. His research focuses on public finance, particularly state and local public finance, urban economics, and educational policy. He is a member of several professional associations, is on the Board of Editors of the *National Tax Journal*, and has been on the boards of many local civic organizations including the Atlanta Regional Commission and on the Special Council on Tax Reform and Fairness for Georgians. He holds an M.A. and Ph.D. in economics from the University of Minnesota.

Nicholas Warner, Georgia State University

Nicholas Warner, a research associate at the Center for State and Local Finance and Fiscal Research Center at Georgia State University, specializes in education finance. His recent research has focused on school district expenditure and revenue portfolio analysis, tax expenditure estimation, examination of Georgia's special option sales tax for school facility funding, and school districts' responses to the Great Recession. His work has been published in the *Journal of Education Finance* as well as by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. Warner received his master's degree in economics from the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies.