

What is the Georgia Future Problem Solving Program?

The Future Problem Solving Program International engages students in critical thinking and creative problem solving. Founded by creativity pioneer, the late Dr. E. Paul Torrance, professor at the University of Georgia, FPSP stimulates critical and creative thinking skills and encourages students to develop a vision for the future. FPS activities are not mathematical problem solving or hands-on creation of a physical object to solve a problem but involve thinking, writing, and oral communication.

GA FPSP sponsors five different academic components for students during the school year. Four of the components are competitions for students in grades 4 through 12. The Global Issues Problem Solving and Community Problem Solving components are direct applications of the six-step creative problem solving process. In the Scenario Writing and Scenario Performance components, students are encouraged to apply critical thinking, creative problem solving, and their vision of the future. Two other components, Action-based Problem Solving and Novice Problem Solving, are similar to Global Issues Problem Solving but non-competitive.

Submissions for each component are evaluated by trained FPSP evaluators, and students receive scores and feedback. The winners in each division of the competitive components are invited to attend the FPSP International Conference in late May or early June.

Global Issues Problem Solving (GIPS)

Individuals or teams of no more than 4 students read a short scenario set in the future based on a given topic. They then apply the six-step process to the scenario, writing a 12 to 15-page booklet (fewer pages for individuals) that is submitted for evaluation by trained FPSP evaluators. There are three booklet competitions during the school year – Practice Problem 1 (October due date), Practice Problem 2 (December due date), and Qualifying Problem (February due date). Based on the work students do on the Qualifying Problem, they may be invited to compete at the State Bowl in March. State Bowl winners advance to the FPSP International Conference.

Scenario Writing (SW)

Individual students write a future scenario of 1,500 words or less, set at least 20 years in the future, based on one of the year's topics. The due date for submission of scenarios is mid-January. The first place state winners in each division are invited to the FPSP International Conference.

Scenario Performance (ScP)

In the spirit of Appalachian storytelling, individual students create a future scenario, based on one of the year's topics, and relate the story orally, in 4 – 5 minutes. The due date for electronic submission of the scenario performance is mid-January. The first place scenario performance winners in each division are invited to compete at the FPSP International Conference in late May or early June.

Community Problem Solving (CmPS)

Individuals or teams of any size attack a local, national, or world problem of their own choosing. Students follow guidelines to produce a Project Proposal, a Project Report, and the supporting Portfolio and Media Presentation tracking their work – their progress, accomplishments, and obstacles. There are two due dates for this competition: The Project Proposal is due in mid-December and the rest of the project is due in late March/early April. Winners in each division are invited to attend the FPSP International Conference.

Action-based Problem Solving/Novice Problem Solving

These are non-competitive component, similar to Global Issues Problem Solving. Teams of any size use the six-step process to write a written response to a scenario about two of the topics during the school year. The Action-based scenarios may be topic-based but not necessarily set in the future.

Information on the topics for the year for Global Issues, Scenario Writing, Scenario Performance, and Action-based/Novice Problem Solving as well as examples of some of the components can be found at www.georgiafpssp.org or www.fpspi.org.

Calendar

GA FPSP follows the calendar of most schools in Georgia. Registration takes place in the fall, and the year ends with the FPSP International Competition in late May or early June. See the year's Calendar at the GA FPSP website. There are deadlines for the competitive components; the due dates for Action-based/Novice booklets are more lenient.

Who Can Participate?

In Global Issues, Scenario Writing, Scenario Performance, and Community Problem Solving, the divisions for teams and individuals are grades 4 – 6 (Junior), grades 7 – 9 (Middle), and grades 10 – 12 (Senior). Action-based Problem Solving and Novice Problem Solving are open to grades K – 3 (Primary), grades 4 – 6 (Junior), and grades 7 – 9 (Middle).

Affiliation with a school *is not required*.

Coaching

Each team or individual is required to have an adult sponsor, referred to as the “coach.” The coach is any adult who agrees to sponsor, oversee, and be the contact for the student participants. This could be a teacher or a parent. Virtual training for coaches in any component can be scheduled for the convenience of the coach. The best time for training in order to participate during that school year is spring, summer, or early September. Find more information at www.georgiafpssp.org.

The coach registers with GA FPSP, trains the students for the work in the specific component, submits the work by the due date, and receives all the evaluations after the

work is evaluated. Registration forms for the current school year are posted on the Georgia FPSP website in early August.

We encourage parental participation, particularly as coaches. However, it must be pointed out to both teachers and parents that after the initial coach's training in the fall, it is up to the coach to carry out the student training for the competition(s) they will be entering. Coaches/parents may be interested in the training for students offered by FPSPI, called the FPS Academy. These trainings are combinations of video presentations and practice activities that students can work through at their own pace.

Costs

Costs for training and each competition can be found at www.georgiafsp.org on the registration forms.

Coaches may also need to plan for any materials purchased from FPSP International.

There are additional fees for Global Issues Problem Solving competitors at State Bowl. State Bowl winning Global Issues teams, scenario writers, scenario performers, and community problem solvers are responsible for their own costs to the International Conference.