**Document 1: Jason Carter’s Platform on Key Issues**

**Access to Education For All***“The single biggest failure of Georgia’s current leadership — and the biggest drain on our economy is the dismantling of our education system.”*

**K-12 Funding**  
Governor Deal’s administration has slashed billions of dollars from public education, resulting in teachers being furloughed, larger class sizes, and less individual attention for struggling students. While Georgia schoolchildren are getting shortchanged in the classroom, many Georgia families are paying more in property taxes. In fact, dozens of districts raised local property taxes to make up for the Governor’s cuts to education. Setting out clear priorities for how our tax dollars are spent — and living by those priorities — is what it means to be fiscally conservative. That’s why Jason proposed a separate Education Budget – essentially a trust fund for education that will prevent politicians in Atlanta from mortgaging our future to pay for other things. Today education funding in Georgia is a shell game. A separate Education Budget will ensure that investing in education is Georgia’s top priority.

**HOPE Scholarship**  
HOPE is vanishing. Under Governor Deal’s failed reforms, HOPE continues to cover less and less of the costs of attending college. Every year more high-achieving students will be left behind, unable to go to college. It’s already happening: for the first time in decades, enrollments at two-year, four-year, and technical colleges across Georgia declined in 2012.

A HOPE plan that reduces the number of students who get degrees can only be called one thing: a failure, both for our students and for our economy. Jason has sponsored numerous proposals that would reform the Zell Miller Scholarship and preserve HOPE for future generations.

**Early Childhood Education**  
Investment in early learning does more than any other investment to close achievement gaps and to help ensure that all children get the education they deserve. Georgia has long been a leader in early childhood education because of the investment of Lottery for Education dollars in universal Pre-K. Governor Deal, however, has slashed that investment by $56 million, which has meant fewer Pre-K slots, longer wait lists, larger classroom sizes, and a shorter school year. These cuts make it harder to retain qualified Pre-K teachers and to meet the needs of our communities. Jason understands the value of Pre-K, and as a first step toward fixing these problems, he proposed fully funding incentives for new and existing highly qualified and experienced Pre-K teachers.

**Supporting Our Teacher Workforce**  
Since 2009, Georgia’s public schools have lost more than 9,000 classroom teachers while the number of students has gone up. Class sizes are up in 95 percent of school districts across the state. Nearly three-quarters of Georgia school districts fail to teach students the full 180 days per year. The most important thing we can do to improve educational outcomes is to support our teacher workforce. That means not only recruiting and retaining quality teachers, but supporting them throughout their careers. In Georgia, a lack of leadership on the issues that matter to teachers is holding back our entire educational system.

Jason has proposed measures – including reinstating National Board Certification bonus pay and restoring HOPE Scholarship Programs designed to train and recruit our teacher workforce – as critical first steps for rebuilding trust and recruiting new teachers.

**An Economy That Works for The Middle Class**

“Here’s the simple truth: it is getting harder and harder for middle-class people in Georgia to make it.”

Right now, there are 363,000 Georgians still looking for work. Our state ranks 50th in the nation in unemployment. One out of every four children in Georgia lives in poverty, the sixth worst poverty rate in the country.

Adjusted for inflation, the average Georgia family takes home $6,000 less than they did a decade ago. Georgia’s median income has slipped from 18th in 2002 to 33rd today. Middle-class incomes have dropped twice as fast in Georgia as it has in the rest of the country. That’s a real pay cut. We need a strong climate for business. And you can’t have a strong economy if the middle class and small business owners are being left behind.

**Promoting Small Business**  
We all have a stake in ensuring that communities statewide are good places to do business. Smarter tax policies and other incentives will attract businesses searching for a new home and will reassure workers and employers that we are committed to creating new jobs.

Unfortunately, under Governor Deal’s leadership, Georgia is failing to recognize the contribution of small businesses to job creation in our state. Jason has proposed initiatives to expand benefits for small businesses, and for his work in the Senate has earned the endorsement of the National Federation for Independent Business as well as an “A” grade from the Georgia Chamber of Commerce.

**Preparing the Workforce of Tomorrow**  
We must do better at educating and training Georgians for jobs that pay well and help families get ahead.

Governor Deal’s policies have resulted in 45,000 fewer Georgians attending technical colleges, with enrollment slipping from 195,000 to 150,000 in just two years. Not only is that a crisis for those students and their families, it’s an economic disaster for Georgia.

Jason has proposed measures to fix these failed reforms – for the sake of both our students and for our economy.

Source: <https://carterforgovernor.com/issues/>

**Document 2: Nathan Deal’s Platform on Key Issues**

**Jobs and the Economy**

By cutting taxes and reducing bureaucratic red tape, he’s helped to create nearly 300,000 private-sector jobs. As a result of his fiscally conservative leadership, Georgians enjoy one of the lowest tax burdens in the nation.

Gov. Deal has overseen three balanced budgets without raising taxes, saved millions of taxpayer dollars by maintaining Georgia’s AAA bond rating, and increased our rainy day fund by more than 500%.

In his second term, Gov. Deal will work to make it easier for our state to keep the jobs we have by making it easier for Georgia companies to gain state contracts. He’ll also expand programs like the Strategic Industries Workforce Development Grant and the High Demand career Initiative, which help increase enrollment at technical colleges so our state will remain on the cutting edge of labor force growth. That’s in addition to keeping taxes low, encouraging job growth, and promoting workforce development initiatives.

**Education**

A strong education system leads to a strong economy. Both Gov. Deal and Sandra’s parents were teachers, so improving education has been and always will be a top priority for Georgia.

On the heels of the Great Recession, Gov. Deal knew it would be more important than ever to give our state’s schools more support and reward teachers with more take-home pay. That’s why Gov. Deal has taken action to increase education spending by including an additional $530 million this year, and is working to provide even more tools and technology to Georgia’s classrooms.

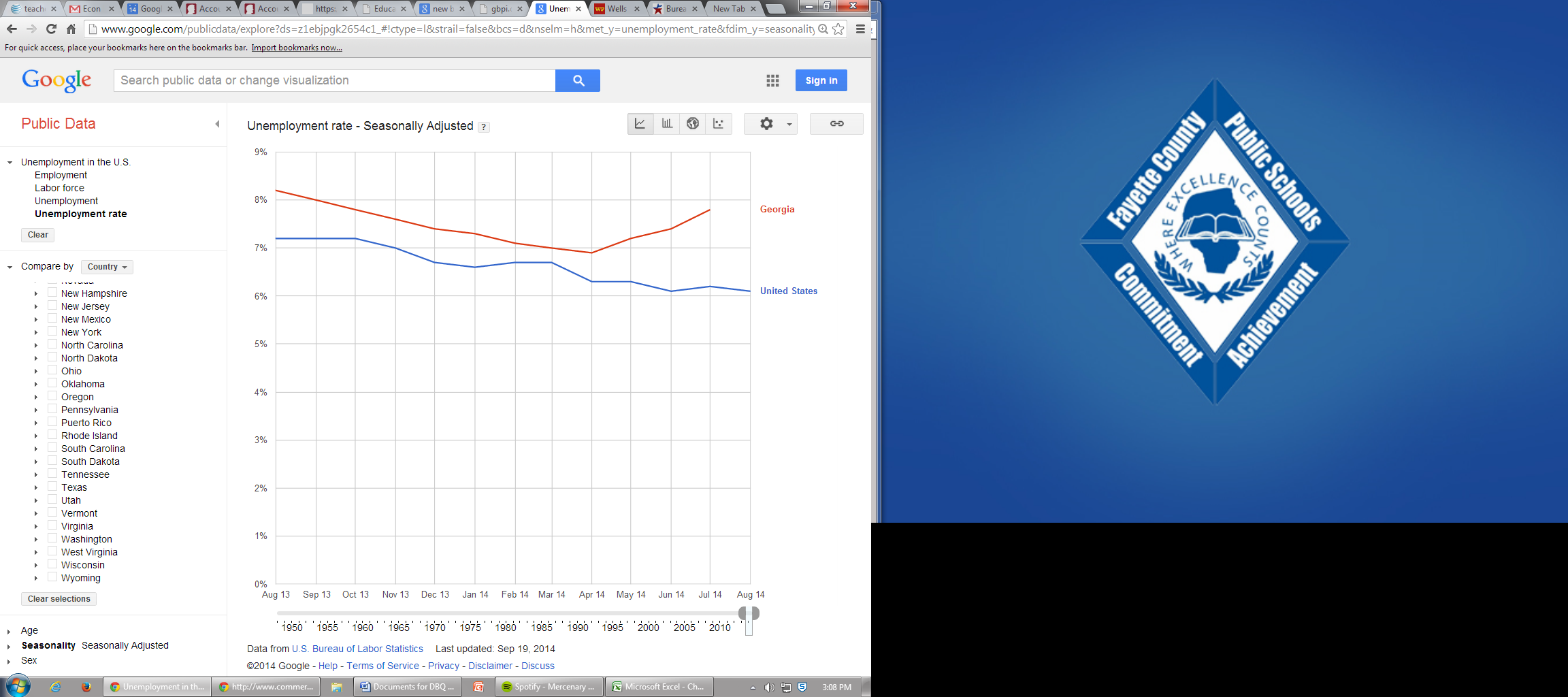
When Gov. Deal took office, Georgia’s Pre-K program and HOPE scholarship were on the brink of bankruptcy. Gov. Deal worked closely with Republicans and Democrats in the General Assembly to save the HOPE scholarship, one of the most generous in the nation, for future generations. Under Gov. Deal’s leadership, HOPE is thriving once again. Gov. Deal was also able to restore our universal Pre-K to a full-day program, ensuring Georgia’s youngest scholars would continue to receive a high-quality education.

Gov. Deal believes that the quality of a child’s education shouldn’t be determined by his or her ZIP code. That’s why he advocated for the charter school amendment, which gives parents more options for starting a school in their community. In his next term, the governor will fight to implement Recovery School Districts to turn around schools that have consistently underperformed academically. More options and more flexibility will bring better results for our children.

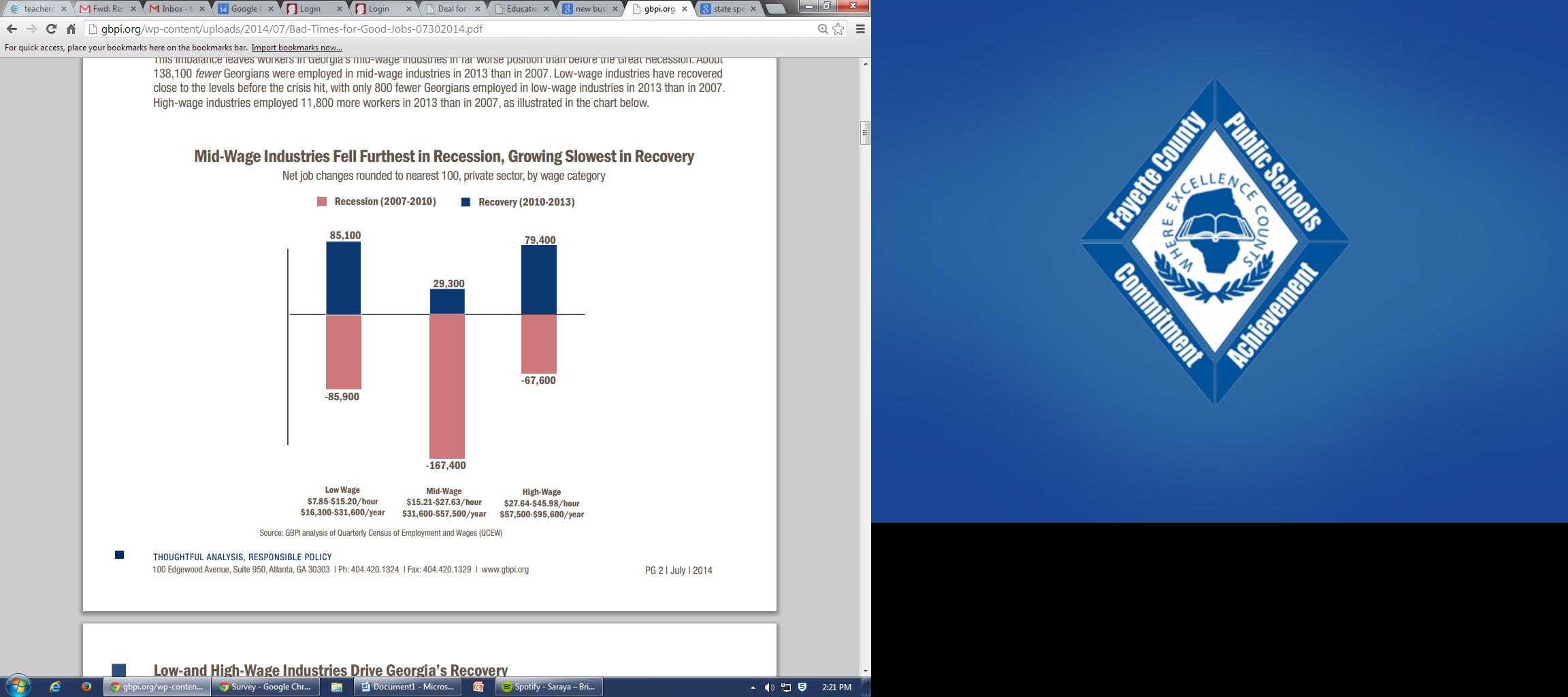
Our state cannot afford to fail our students. That’s why Gov. Deal will continue to prioritize education spending in Georgia, starting with updating the 1985 school funding formula. Gov. Deal understands that Georgia’s budget must meet the needs of today’s classrooms, and will advocate for new technology that will give our students an edge in our state’s growing economy.

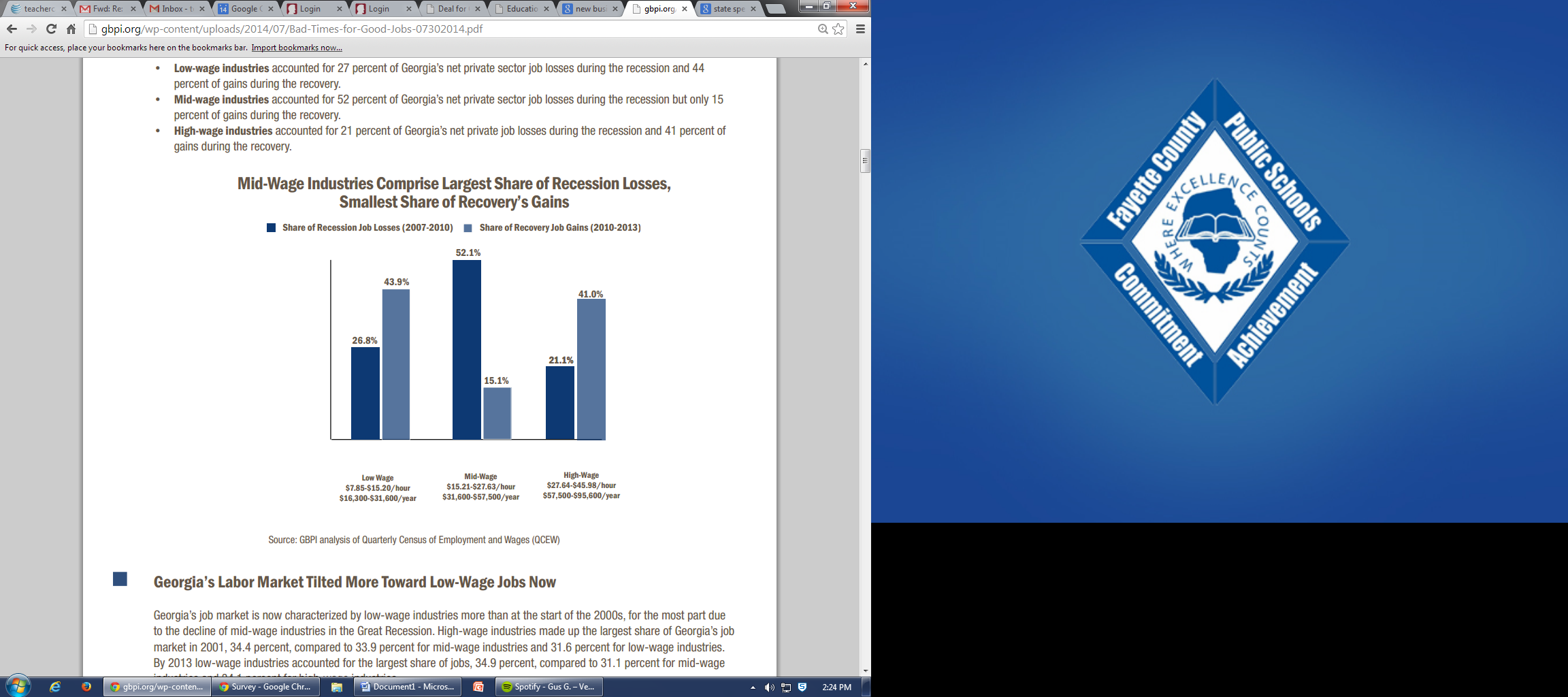
Source: <http://nathandeal.org/visionissues/jobs/> and <http://nathandeal.org/visionissues/education/>

Document 3: Georgia Economic Data

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Unemployment Rate August 13 through August 2014 Source: Bls.gov

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**Document 4: Press Release Regarding Site Selection Magazine 2014 Rankings**

**GEORGIA NAMED NO. 1 MOST COMPETITIVE STATE IN NATION**

**ATLANTA, May 6, 2014 -** Gov. Nathan Deal announced today that Georgia was named the No.1 most competitive state in the nation by Site Selection magazine.

“When I took office in January 2011, I made a promise to the people of Georgia that we wouldn’t stop until our state was the No. 1 place in the nation to do business,” said Deal. “We earned that designation in November for the first time ever, and now we’re adding ‘most competitive’ to our accomplishments. These rankings are not only a testament to our strong business climate, but they also speak to the commitment and support from our industry partners, communities and the people of Georgia.”

The magazine releases its [Top 10 Competitive States](http://www.siteselection.com/issues/2014/may/top-states.cfm) every year in May. The Top 10 Competitive States ranking is based on an index of 10 criteria, most of which are tied to new projects and expansions tracked by Site Selection’s New Plant Database.

“Remaining competitive is key to staying ahead in the global marketplace,” said Chris Carr, commissioner of the Georgia Department of Economic Development. “With critical factors such as a qualified workforce, solid logistics infrastructure and connections in key international markets, it’s no surprise that Georgia outranks other states in this category and our state continues to be the best choice for industry-leading companies.”

Site Selection’s Top 10 Competitive States has given Georgia 426 points — 12 more than the 414 that won last year’s first place. Last year, Georgia ranked as the nation’s third most competitive state and has remained in the top 10 most competitive states since 2010.

Site Selection states that what makes a state competitive is the total number of new and expanded facilities; capital investment in new and expanded facilities; new jobs created; rank in the corporate real estate executive portion of the 2013 Site Selection Business Climate Ranking; state tax climate as ranked by the Tax Foundation; performance in the Beacon Hill Institute’s State Competitiveness Index and the number of National Career Readiness Certificates per 1,000 residents aged 18-64, according to ACT — Workforce Development Division, administrator of the ACT Certified Work Ready Communities initiative.

Site Selection magazine, published by Conway Data Inc., delivers expansion planning information to 49,000 executives of fast-growing firms. The senior publication in the development field, Site Selection is also available online at siteselection.com. The publication also co-publishes e-newsletters, including The Site Selection Dispatch, Life Sciences Report, Aerospace Report and Energy Report; Site Selection International; The FDI Report; Trust Belt.com and the OnSITE Travel blog.

Source: <http://www.georgia.org/newsroom/press-releases/georgia-named-number-one-most-competitive-state/>