

Courtney D. English

Chief of Staff, City of Atlanta

Courtney D. English believes in leaving things better than he found them. An Atlanta native, English made history as the youngest person ever elected to citywide office, first winning a seat on the Atlanta Board of Education at age 24. In 2014, at just 28, he was unanimously elected by his colleagues to serve as the board's chairman—the youngest in the school system's history.

During his tenure, English led efforts to raise teacher pay, increase classroom spending, and boost Atlanta Public Schools' graduation rate from 51% to a record high of 79%, sending more students to college than ever before.

A former classroom teacher, English understood that strong schools require strong communities. He later worked for a nonprofit affordable housing developer, helping to create and refurbish thousands of affordable housing units across metro Atlanta while adding wraparound services to strengthen families and neighborhoods.

During the height of the 2020 COVID housing crisis, English served as Director of Community Development for the affordable housing nonprofit Star-C, where he raised \$11 million to help more than 4,000 Atlanta-area residents avoid eviction. His work expanded access to affordable housing, reduced tenant transiency, and improved student outcomes through innovative programs and partnerships.

In 2025, Mayor Andre Dickens appointed Courtney English as Chief of Staff for the City of Atlanta, following his service as Chief Policy Officer and Senior Advisor to the Mayor. In this capacity, English oversees the operations of the Mayor's Executive Offices, intergovernmental coordination, and the strategic implementation of the administration's priorities.

He has spearheaded major citywide initiatives, most recently leading the Neighborhood Reinvestment Initiative, a transformational \$5 billion plan to invest in housing, infrastructure, and community development to make Atlanta the best city in the nation to raise a child.

English has also played a central role in advancing Atlanta's efforts to address homelessness, helping to drive the \$60 million Homeless Opportunity Bond—the single largest investment in the city's history. Under his leadership, the Mayor's Affordable Housing Strike Force has delivered nearly 12,000 units of affordable housing in less than four years.

In partnership with Invest Atlanta, his team also led the creation of Azalea Market, the city's first municipal grocery store, designed to expand access to healthy food and spur neighborhood revitalization. He was a key architect of rapid housing projects such as The Melody and Ralph David's House, providing critical pathways to stability and dignity for Atlanta's most vulnerable residents.

English was also instrumental in shaping Mayor Dickens' signature Year of the Youth initiative, expanding opportunities, programs, and support systems that have impacted more than 30,000 young people across the city.

He earned his bachelor's degree in political science from Morehouse College and his Master of Arts in Organizational Psychology and Leadership from Columbia University.

A sought-after public speaker, English has shared insights on topics including global engagement, neighborhood advocacy, public-private partnerships, and strategic policy development. He has presented at leading institutions including Harvard University, Morehouse College, Spelman College, and Emory University.

A pioneer in building partnerships and creating solutions, English was raised in Atlanta's West End and credits his mother for his community-driven spirit. Her unconditional love and steadfast work ethic continue to guide his commitment to public service, leadership development, and mentorship of emerging leaders.

Courtney English is a devoted husband to his wife, Kelly, who, as he often says, "is better than I am at pretty much everything."