

DECAL - Bright from the Start**Meeting Minutes**

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**Board of Early Care and Learning Meeting
2/11/2010 9:00:00 AM**Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of
Early Care and Learning
10 Park Place - 6th Floor Boardroom - Atlanta,
GA

Holly A. Robinson, Commissioner

Attendees - voting members

Dr. Luann Purcell	Board Chair, District 8
Ted Mallory	Board Vice Chair, District 3
Carlene Talton	Board Secretary, District 5
Darrell Wilder	Board Member, District 1
Carolyn Ormsby	Board Member, District 4
Ms. Susan Harper	Board Member, District 2
Mr. Phil Davis	Board Member, District 7
Gabrielle Braswell	Board Member, District 6
Dixie Kinard	Board Member, District 9
Janice Gallimore	Board Member, District 10
Victor Morgan	Board Member, District 11

Attendees - other

Craig Detweiler	CIO/COO
Cecelia Dorsey	Administrative Assistant
Sopha Lackey	Board Liaison
Megan Larkins	Office of Planning & Budget
Leslie Lowe	Chief Financial Officer
Mary Mazarky	Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K
Stacey Moore	Public Relations Director
Rob O'Callaghan	Research & Evaluation Assistant
Ashley Peacock	Chief Legal Officer
Holly Robinson	Commissioner
Karen Robinson	Assistant Commissioner for Programs
Justine Strickland	Assistant Commissioner for Child Care

Meeting Minutes

Public Guests in Attendance: Julie Barnett, Frank Bennett, Carolyn Salvador, Pam Tatum

1. Call to Order

Chair Luann Purcell called the meeting to order, welcomed attendees, and invited guests to introduce themselves. Board member Janice Gallimore was welcomed via teleconference.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Vice Chair Ted Mallory moved to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2009, meeting of the board. Minutes were unanimously approved. The agenda was unanimously accepted.

Motion made by: Ted Mallory

Voting

Unanimously Approved

- a. *Approve agenda for 2/11/2010 meeting
- b. *Approve minutes from 11/12/09 meeting

3. Inspiration

Chair Luann Purcell reviewed the history of Valentine's Day. She indicated the people who receive the most Valentine's cards are teachers, and second are children. With that in mind, board members were given a Valentine's pencil or pen and asked to commit to write an encouraging note to someone.

4. Bright from the Start Presentations

Commissioner Holly Robinson stated many of the department updates would concern American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) projects. The department is now pursuing nine projects totaling \$19.5 million dollars. The department has focused its stimulus dollars on teachers and early learning centers and homes for quality enhancement.

- a. Pre-K Update

Mary Mazarky presented updates on Pre-K. (See slides.) The Pre-K Mandarin Program now has seven classes at three locations and will expand in the 2011 school year. A video news report from Donna Lowry (11Alive News) interviewing Commissioner Robinson on the program was shown.

The Millionth Child webpage features many of the activities taking place around the state. The first million pennies have already been collected and matched by School Specialty. The collection of pennies will be donated to a Georgia charity chosen by First Lady Mary Perdue.

Commissioner Robinson reported the location of the millionth child was announced as Sumter County Primary School in Americus. The specific child and class will not be identified. A celebration ceremony with the Governor and First Lady will be held at the site in the following week. Georgia Public Broadcasting will record the event. All board members are invited to attend. The book honoring the event will be presented by author John Archambault and First Lady Mary Perdue on March 12 at the Atlanta Zoo.

Ms. Mazarky presented an overview of Pre-K related ARRA projects: a deep alignment of content standards from birth through third grade, the development of online teaching modules for birth through five teachers, and redesigning the Professional Development Registry (PDR) in house.

Dr. Ormsby asked if stimulus funds came as a lump sum for the agency to use at its discretion or were dedicated to each project. Ms. Lowe responded the department first identified eight original projects and submitted an application to the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) for funding.

Vice Chair Mallory commented on the value of teaching languages to Pre-K children. In his 12 years of local school board experience (11 years as

chairman), as well as his experience as President of the Georgia School Boards Association, he has seen tremendous concern with saving school language programs. He asked Ms. Mazarky to keep the board informed on the Mandarin program.

b. Technology Update

Commissioner Robinson shared an email received from a parent stating how impressed she was to have all her questions answered through the department's website. The Commissioner congratulated Craig Detweiler for making these improvements possible.

Mr. Detweiler presented updates on technology. (See slides.) Comparing website usage between January 2009 and January 2010, the number of visitors is up 58%. Time spent on the site is up 315%. Over 19,000 provider searches and 16,600 hits to the statewide Pre-K provider job listings were received. The most searched terms in January were "employment" and "jobs." The number of books logged has increased; one county submitted 17,000 books at once.

The advantages of an in-house Professional Development Registry were shared. The new system will be integrated with PANDA, the teacher training approval system and the Professional Standards Commission (PSC). The registry will be automatically updated with teachers' continuing education. These enhancements are far ahead of most states.

Development of the new Child Care Services (CCS) application database is funded through ARRA funds. The new version will have expanded and enhanced functionality, such as automated tasks, to shorten procedures and increase staff efficiency.

Vice Chair Mallory inquired where the money for the PDR is being spent. A substantial amount is going to PSC contractors.

c. CCS Update

d. Rule Update

Ashley Peacock presented an update on rule revisions. (See slides.) Rules effective as of December 2009 were noted, and proposed rules for the board's consideration and approval were presented. Ms. Talton observed the new rules are housekeeping measures. Mr. Peacock concurred, and these changes make the rules consistent with previously enacted rule revisions of the last two years.

i. *Voting on Rules

Mr. Morgan reported the Programs Committee has reviewed the proposed rules via teleconference and recommends their approval. The board voted, and proposed rule revisions were unanimously approved.

Voting

Unanimously Approved

e. Quality Initiatives & Nutrition Services Updates

Karen Robinson presented updates on Quality Initiatives and Nutrition Services.

(See slides.) An ARRA project is providing mini grants to providers to help them pursue national accreditation. The First-time Incentive to Raise Standards for Teachers (FIRST) Program provides scholarships, under contract with Care Solutions, for teachers to pursue their first credential. Over a thousand teachers have already applied and are in various approval stages; so far 585 applicants have been preapproved. The Commissioner added this incentive supports a career step for early childhood workers.

The numbers of meals served through the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program were reported. The numbers continue to increase, building towards the goal of serving meals in every county of the state.

A USDA grant funds the Team Nutrition project to observe the impact of wellness policies in child care environments, focusing on healthy eating and increased physical activity in 30 centers in southwest Georgia.

f. Budget Update

Commissioner Robinson stated the budget situation has been and continues to be challenging. She emphasized the department is doing the best it can with the very limited resources.

Leslie Lowe updated the board on the budget status. (See slides.) The Governor's recommended budget was presented January 19, and the House is now taking up the budget. Three additional furlough days have been mandated agency wide (statewide) and will include Pre-K teachers. Agency phones will still be monitored for emergencies on furlough days. Pre-K programs have the option of furloughing their teachers or keeping them in the classroom and paying for those days with local funds.

Reductions of \$2.5 million were recommended for the 2010 amended budget and the 2011 budget in CCS. A request was made for 2,000 additional slots in Pre-K, in response to this year's waiting list of 10,000 children. However, the Resource Coordinator (RC) program has been reduced by \$14 million. The proposed budget is working to keep up with Pre-K demand and continue to offer access. The Commissioner commented on the need to keep the program growing, having observed the detrimental effect in other states when they allow their pre-kindergarten programs to level off.

Mr. Davis asked what happens with the lottery funds saved through furloughs. These remain in the Treasury's lottery reserve or go to Georgia Student Finance for HOPE scholarships.

Mr. Morgan commented providers often blame the agency for cuts in programs, when these cuts are beyond the agency's control. Chair Luann Purcell commented on the need to provide access for the children who need it most, even though the RC program, which normally supports these children once they enter the classroom, is reduced in the process. The Commissioner remarked these times are very difficult and pointed out the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget did not want to have to recommend these cuts. The RC program is not alone; many good and needed programs are being cut across the state. Dr. Purcell noted state government is typically the last to see the effects of an economic recovery, and four to six years for state budgets to recover is likely.

Ms. Lowe presented an overview of ARRA projects. One of the projects provides

one-time classroom equipment refreshment funds for Pre-K classes, which have been in the program 10 or more years. These funds allow the department to provide equipment refreshment funds for the second year in a row. The department hopes it can continue to do so in coming years. The agency's projects have been designed to have a lasting effect even after the one-time funds are spent.

ARRA stimulus dollars come with increased accountability and transparency. Every dollar is tracked separately and all expenditures are audited. Georgia has a website for accountability, where the agency's dollars are reported under DHS. Chair Luann Purcell recommended a link be placed on the agency's website.

g. Break

5. Board Member Updates

a. Dalton's Legislation Appreciation Luncheon

Ms. Kinard reported good attendance at a legislative appreciation reception. The questions most asked of her concerned the agency's stimulus projects. She also reported interest in the FIRST Program scholarships. The President of Shaw Industries regularly recommends students to learn Chinese and was impressed with the Pre-K Mandarin program.

b. Race to the Top

Chair Purcell reported on her involvement in the state's Race to the Top federal grant application. A total of 40 states and the District of Columbia applied for the grant, but only 11 states (including Georgia) met all of the criteria. The narrative proposals of all applicants are available online. Chair Purcell noted Georgia is well ahead of other states, in part because of the presence of the Alliance of Education Agency Heads (AEAH) and the Joint Education Board Liaison Committee (JEBLC). In JEBLC meetings, the vision is focused not on each agency's prestige but on what is right for children. She was particularly impressed with the progress made by AEAH and with the state's ability to work together for quality education starting at birth. Dr. Purcell concluded Georgia did not have to expend the same amount of effort as other states for the Race to the Top application because the state had already identified its goals, based on best practices, and created collaboration among agencies.

6. Commissioner's Report

a. State Advisory Council

The Commissioner reported Georgia's State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care has been formed, with the department as the lead agency. Council members include six agency heads, education representatives, community representatives, grassroots organizations, a business person and a philanthropic person. The Council's first step is to apply for the federal grant to support its work.

Dr. Ormsby, a member of the Council, shared the work of developing an action agenda with three objectives: needs assessment for quality, empowering parents with information and developing an integrated technology system. The Council decided it needed a definition of quality. She reported positive

movement to develop a plan and sees agencies working together with a common vision for children birth through third grade.

The Council is discussing the possibility of pursuing not a unitary data system, but linking data systems across the state agencies, with different portals appropriate for parents, providers or agencies. The initial grant would provide seed money for building the infrastructure.

b. Legislative Session

The Commissioner reported on the legislative session's current focus on the state budget. The state has been pushing hard for all agencies to be paperless to reduce costs, with increased use of technology and the Internet. Vice Chair Mallory added the Governor and legislators are trying to do the right thing.

c. Commissioner's Roundtable

The Commissioner reported Board members are encouraged to help identify participants for the roundtable she will be hosting later in the month. Field staff members are also working to identify participants. The roundtable discussions are an opportunity to receive input from child care providers.

d. 30 Years of Service Ceremony

Six employees were recognized for thirty years of service in state government. Joe Doyle, head of the Governor's Office of Customer Service, attended the ceremony.

e. The One Millionth Child Campaign

The agency continues to be excited about the campaign. In addition to the tremendous state media attention, the campaign has begun to receive some national attention. The one million child milestone is a first in the nation. The state remains one of the nation's leaders in pre-kindergarten quality as well. The Georgia Lottery Corporation's television advertisement on the millionth child was shown.

In response to a question from Susan Harper, the Commissioner reported the agency has only now assigned a Georgia Testing ID for Pre-K children so longitudinal data on the effects of Pre-K can begin to be tracked. Chair Purcell emphasized this data ability is another criterion in which Georgia leads the nation.

7. Committee Meetings/Lunch

8. Committee Reports

Committees met during lunch break and reported on their work upon reconvening.

a. Communications

Ms. Braswell reported for the Communications Committee. Talking points for the board related to the millionth child campaign were discussed. The board's support of the millionth child celebration in Americus is appreciated. The committee will look into ways board members can help with the implementation

of the Professional Development Registry in July.

b. Budget & Finance

Ms. Talton reported for the Budget and Finance Committee. The projected budget figures were reviewed, including budget status reports and the process for reporting ARRA project expenditures. Mr. Detweiler distributed details of ARRA funded technology projects to the committee. DHS hired auditors for ARRA projects. These auditors are completing a 100% audit of supporting documentation, creating an intensive review process for the agency. Chair Purcell recommended a pie chart of the agency's funding sources be posted on the web.

c. Programs

Mr. Morgan reported for the Programs Committee. No further updates were necessary.

d. Ethics

Ms. Harper reported for the Ethics Committee. The committee held a conference call in the previous week to finalize recommendations for the board. The documents have already been distributed to the board comparing the board's rules with those of other agencies and proposing changes to the rule making process. (See documents.)

Dr. Ormsby asked about the recommendation to forward all questions to the board liaison; should all questions from the public now be forwarded, or can some questions be answered by board members directly? Vice Chair Ted Mallory commented the Department of Education board members receive a large number of questions and have instituted a similar policy to ensure the right answer is always provided. Chair Purcell commented one concern is to help board members stay unbiased, since they would have to recuse themselves from board decisions if they discussed the issue with interested parties.

Ms. Braswell inquired in what capacity board members are able to represent the constituents of their district. Dr. Purcell responded when board members receive an email they are still able to read it and gauge their constituents' interest, only they should not answer the constituents' questions themselves. Ms. Harper stated she sees her role as a liaison pointing constituents to the department, where they can receive an appropriate response. She tries to do more listening than speaking. Dr. Purcell affirmed this practice is an appropriate board member role. Mr. Morgan inquired if it would be appropriate to listen and voice the concern to the agency on behalf of a constituent. Mr. Peacock stated board members should explain they would have to recuse themselves and invite constituents to submit their concerns to the agency in writing or voice them in a public hearing. Constituents should be informed oral and written comments are all reviewed by the agency, and both receive the same weight.

The committee also recommends revisions to the rule making process. One revision is to hold the public hearing before the board prior to the board meeting instead of before a hearing officer. Thus, this change would allow the public to make oral comments before the board. Vice Chair Mallory noted the board considers rules twice, once to approve for the public hearing process and a second time following the public hearing. This process aids board members to

fully understand the implications of the rules under consideration, and gives the board more control on properly explaining the rules publicly.

Mr. Peacock stated the agency will continue to hold community forums throughout the state prior to submitting substantial rule changes to the Programs Committee.

The committee also recommends renaming and restructuring board committees: renaming Programs Committee to Program and Rules Committee and dissolving the Communication Committee. For communications, agency staff would instead submit actions to all board members at quarterly meetings.

i. Recommendations

The Ethics Committee unanimously recommends these proposed procedural changes. Implementing the recommendations would require board bylaw changes, which will be voted on by the board at the subsequent board meeting. No objections were raised with moving forward with the recommendations.

Voting

Unanimously Approved

9. Adjournment

Board Chair

Board Secretary

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**Board of Early Care and Learning Meeting
5/13/2010 9:00:00 AM**Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of
Early Care and Learning
10 Park Place - 6th Floor Boardroom - Atlanta,
GA

Holly A. Robinson, Commissioner

Attendees - voting members

Luann Purcell	Board Chair, District 8
Ted Mallory	Board Vice Chair, District 3
Carlene Talton	Board Secretary, District 5
Darrell Wilder	Board Member, District 1
Carolyn Ormsby	Board Member, District 4
Susan Harper	Board Member, District 2
Phil Davis	Board Member, District 7
Gabrielle Braswell	Board Member, District 6
Janice Gallimore	Board Member, District 10
Victor Morgan	Board Member, District 11
Maggie Martinez	Board Member, District 13

Attendees - other

Craig Detweiler	CIO/COO
Cecelia Dorsey	Administrative Assistant
Kay Hellwig	Assistant Commissioner for Child Care
Sophal Lackey	Board Liaison
Leslie Lowe	Chief Financial Officer
Mary Mazarky	Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K
Rob O'Callaghan	Research & Evaluation Assistant
Ashley Peacock	Chief Legal Officer
Holly Robinson	Commissioner
Karen Robinson	Assistant Commissioner for Programs

Meeting Minutes

Dr. Bentley Ponder was present to share the FPG Quality Study Findings with the board.

Public Guests in Attendance: Carolyn Salvador, Glen Sloan

1. Call to Order

Chair Luann Purcell called the meeting to order. Board members Janice Gallimore and Darrel Wilder were welcomed via teleconference.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- a. *Approve agenda for 5/13/10 meeting

Vice Chair Ted Mallory moved to accept the agenda for the day. Phil Davis seconded. The agenda was unanimously accepted.

Motion made by: Ted Mallory
Motion seconded by: Phil Davis

Voting
 Unanimously Approved

- b. *Approve minutes from 2/11/10 meeting

Vice Chair Mallory moved to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2010, meeting of the board. Carlene Talton seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Motion made by: Ted Mallory
Motion seconded by: Carlene Talton

Voting
 Unanimously Approved

3. Inspiration

Chair Purcell shared her experience as part of a church group visiting Kamensk-Uralski, Russia. The mayor of the town had asked them to help the community accept the responsibility for doing good works. Board members represent the department, and what the board says reflects on the department. She reminded board members to be the face of their constituency, the children of Georgia.

4. One Millionth Child Campaign

Commissioner Holly Robinson presented on the final celebrations of the One Millionth Child Campaign, including events at Sumter County Primary School, the Atlanta Zoo, and the State Capitol. A video feature was shown from Georgia Public Broadcasting of First Lady Mary Perdue at the Atlanta Zoo reading A Million Starts with Me!, a book written by John Archambault for the campaign. On April 30 at the State Capitol, Governor Sonny Perdue presented a check for \$33,000 from money raised in the campaign's penny collection to Canine Assistants, a non-profit organization that trains and provides helper dogs to handicapped children.

5. Overview of FPG Quality Study

Commissioner Robinson reported the agency commissioned a study of quality from the FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Findings have been released from this statewide representative study of quality across licensed child care centers and Georgia's Pre-K programs. Family day care home findings are expected in the fall.

Dr. Bentley Ponder presented study findings. (See slides.) Dr. Ormsby asked if the infant toddler findings show any specific items for improvement. The lowest scored findings are typically related to personal care routines instead of instruction. Phil Davis asked why interactions are poor even though ratios are generally good. Dr. Ponder responded teacher training and teacher turnover affect the quality of interactions. Mary Mazarky added directors learn about appropriate practices but do not always monitor classrooms adequately. Dr. Ponder stated public schools typically are not designed for 4 year olds (e.g., location of bathrooms) and this lowers their scores on the ECERS-R instrument. Ms. Mazarky shared how this affected the agency's consideration of using ECERS-R to measure Pre-K classrooms. She also stated the study findings validated plans for the Pre-K program to implement the

CLASS instrument and to move from monitoring compliance to offering instructional support.

Vice Chair Mallory commended the department for commissioning the study. He added both business and education settings are able to move forward when tough questions are asked. He also asked who would receive results of the study. Dr. Ponder stated besides the press release and public release on the website, study copies have been given to many stakeholders. A stakeholder meeting has been held and results will be presented at Project Director training. The Vice Chair asked how the agency plans to move forward on instructional support. Commissioner Robinson replied the agency's study response includes implementing CLASS observations in Pre-K classrooms, revising professional development and trainings, and developing standards for ages zero to eight. All divisions of the agency have reviewed the findings. For example, one of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus projects directly addresses the lowest quality child care programs.

Chair Purcell commented many government institutions do not ask the tough questions, and pursuing the study shows a visionary aspect to the agency staff, while the findings validate steps the department has already taken. She stated the ARRA projects directly address many of the issues raised by the findings, and she believes the agency has been "ahead of the game."

6. Bright from the Start Presentations

a. Pre-K Update

Ms. Mazarky presented updates on Pre-K. (See slides.) The newest ARRA project is a Summer Transition Program for students entering Kindergarten to address the drop-off in learning gains over the summer. The program will target low-income children, both current Georgia's Pre-K students and those from the waiting list. The program is designed as a model summer program. Transition coaches are built into the program as support staff. Dr. Ormsby asked about how to ensure parents participate in the parent education; in her experience, the parents who least need it are the ones who show up. Ms. Mazarky answered weekly parent education hours will be a requirement to participate in the program. Dr. Ormsby expressed approval and commented the programs have to reach parents to make a true difference.

Ms. Mazarky reported demand remains very high for providers to participate in Georgia's Pre-K, and the agency will have no problem meeting capacity for the additional 2,000 slots. Mr. Davis asked whether the number of requested slots from programs applying for Pre-K classrooms correlates with parent demand. Ms. Mazarky replied this is so; providers apply because they know the demand is out there. Parent demand also remains very high. Parents do not always understand the limits placed on the Pre-K program, which is dependent on the number of slots appropriated in the state budget. Susan Harper asked about the difference between new and expansion applications. Ms. Mazarky stated new applications are providers who have never participated in Georgia's Pre-K, and expansion applications are existing Pre-K providers who wish to add more Pre-K classrooms. The agency must be careful not to overfund in any area and run the numbers down for current quality providers. Dr. Ormsby stated her school could not qualify for Pre-K until they became a Title I school. Ms. Mazarky replied the Title I requirement is school system's decision, not a Pre-K program requirement.

The Resource Coordination (RC) grant is being redesigned following the program's budget being cut 50 percent. Instead of Resource Coordinators there will be Transition Coaches. Other options available were to keep the program intact but cut every program's funding in half or to only fund half as many programs at current levels. Both options would directly impact services to children. Therefore, the RC program as it is currently operating will no longer exist. A new application will be released this summer for the new program model, with an anticipated September start date. The current RC credential requirements will remain the same for Transition Coaches. While 500 are currently employed through the RC program, less will be employed by the new program.

b. Technology Update

Mr. Detweiler presented updates on technology. (See slides.) The process is on schedule with the Georgia DOE for Kindergarten teachers to be able to look up the Georgia Testing Identifier of students and determine if they participated in Georgia's Pre-K. The redesigned Professional Development Registry (PDR) is on schedule to go live July 1. Testing continues for KOALA, the new Child Care Services database. Because of a new law, the database will be required to integrate the collection of licensing fees, which was an unexpected complication. The agency's training system has also been expanded.

The agency's new website is now a year old. An unexplained drop in visits to the site from March to April occurred last year and the same time this year. Nonetheless, the number of visits this April was still much higher than a year ago. The provider jobs page went up in visits from March to April. Photos on the website from Millionth Child celebrations were displayed. The research page on the website has been revamped, with several documents posted related to the FPG quality study. A page for ARRA projects has been posted. Information on the new quality continuum is also posted. Through a partnership with PBS Kids, a link has been placed to their Raising Readers website, which includes online literacy games. Vice Chair Mallory commented the website has really matured since Mr. Detweiler joined the agency.

c. CCS Update

Commissioner Robinson shared Justine Strickland has decided to leave the agency to be at home with her family. Kay Hellwig has been promoted to Assistant Commissioner for Child Care Services.

Kay Hellwig presented updates on Child Care Services (CCS). (See slides.) The Quality Improvement Program is an ARRA project targeting over 600 low-quality child care programs. Technical assistance teams have been set up and trained. Each center or home in the project will work with one primary person for 6 months. Professional development will be made available through Georgia State University's Best Practices. The project will also include monetary support for equipment (such as resilient playground surfaces) and training and compliance. For the first time, the state has had the money and the opportunity to provide this type of support.

Also for the first time, the agency is implementing a technical assistance plan with all non-compliant programs. CCS is working on interrater reliability among all lead consultants to ensure rules are evaluated the same way by all consultants, starting with lead consultants. Every year steps will be taken to

maintain reliability.

d. Rule Update

Ashley Peacock presented an update on rule revisions. (See slides.) Proposed rules were presented at a public hearing at Clayton State University. Turnout was very low.

e. Quality Initiatives & Nutrition Services Updates

Karen Robinson presented updates on Quality Initiatives and Nutrition Services. (See slides.) The statewide child care referral system has had over 19,000 referrals, a 22% increase in usage. For the FIRST program, which offers a financial incentive for child care workers to obtain their first credential, over 1,700 pre-applications have been processed and over 1,000 approved. The program will continue to accept applications through July 2011.

The number of meals served through the Child and Adult Care Food Program was reported, with a 1% increase over the previous year. Interrater reliability among nutrition consultants is also being pursued. Mini-grants of up to \$2,000 to support child care programs implementing Wellness Policy training have been awarded to nine providers; more applicants are being recruited to reach the target of 24 providers.

The Infant Toddler Project, an ARRA project, aims to infuse the state with knowledge of quality practices for infant toddler care. The Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC) training is being provided, and six specialists will provide intensive technical assistance in the field. Over 1,000 child care programs have indicated their interest in participating.

The agency is introducing a framework for a Quality Continuum. Less than 10% of child care programs in the state are noncompliant and less than 10% are nationally accredited, with the majority of programs somewhere in the middle. This data shows a need for measuring intermediary stages of quality. The agency is working with FPG Child Development Institute to develop the Quality Continuum. Staff members are currently testing measurement tools and models of assistance in the field.

f. Budget Update

Leslie Lowe updated the board on the budget. (See slides.) Amended fiscal year 2010 appropriations, which include cuts already made by the agency, have been signed by the Governor. Fiscal year 2011 appropriations await the Governor's signature and include a state funds reduction, 2,000 new Pre-K slots, and a 50% reduction RC program funding. State funds over the last year have reduced from .8% to .26% of the total agency budget. Total funding for each ARRA project and the total amount of funds spent or committed were presented. All ARRA funds must be spent or committed by September 2010 and liquidated by September 2011.

The Commissioner commented all state agencies have taken major cuts. No raises have been provided over the last few years, and only critical staff vacancies may be filled.

g. Break

7. Board Member Updates

a. JEBLC Meeting (Vice Chair Ted Mallory)

Dr. Ormsby gave an update on the activities of the Joint Education Board Liaison Committee (JEBLC). This committee is a high level meeting of education agency leadership. She commented on the group's impressive ability to work together for a single purpose. Items discussed at the last meeting include the state's Race to the Top application, fees for licensing, and common core standards. A draft of a National Governors Association (NGA) common core curriculum for the entire nation, agreed to by 48 states, was released by Governor Sonny Perdue, who chaired the drafting committee. JEBLC will recommend Georgia adopt the common core curriculum as a step in the right direction to help children who move across state lines. Chair Purcell commented how wonderful it is to see the state agency boards working together and added the state should be proud its Governor has taken a lead in educational issues.

b. State Advisory Council (Dr. Carolyn Ormsby)

Dr. Ormsby reported on the March 25, 2010, meeting of the Georgia State Advisory Council for Early Childhood Education and Care. She stated Commissioner Robinson has done an excellent job chairing the Council and is amazed at the ability of the participants to work together, including the heads of five state agencies. The Council discussed the draft of its federal funding application, revised to reflect previous Council discussions. The application was submitted on April 23, two months prior to the deadline. Commissioner Robinson reported she just received an email from the federal government with three very minor changes to the application. The Council has had large participation, with 19 members involved in all aspects of early care in the state. Three major points of its work are quality improvement, parental information, and an integration of data systems across state agencies. Dr. Ormsby shared some of the state data included in the application. In children's mobility, Georgia ranks seventh among all states in children moving out of state and fourth in receiving children from other states. These data points support Georgia's need for the work the council is undertaking.

8. Commissioner's Report

a. Legislative Session

Commissioner Robinson reported the recently concluded session was the longest in state history. House Bill 1055, signed May 12, requires the agency to collect licensing fees. The Commissioner testified against passage of these provisions, arguing it is not the right economic time for additional fees. The agency is meeting with other agencies that collect fees and developing an implementation plan for this requirement. Fees collected go directly into the state budget and range from \$50 to \$250 annually based on capacity. Dr. Ormsby requested information concerning important early learning issues on which to seek political candidates' positions; the agency will develop bullet points to share.

b. Provider's Roundtable

The Commissioner reported she had a productive meeting in February with providers. Many attendees have expressed their appreciation for these

meetings, which started two years ago and will continue.

c. Early Education Commission

Three goals have been identified by the Early Education Commission. Stephanie Blank of the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation will lead the effort to implement the rollout of recommended activities, including a public relations campaign. The agency will continue to participate.

d. ARRA Projects

The Commissioner stated the agency will continue to work hard on ARRA projects, which have provided additional funding focused on quality for young children.

9. Committee Meetings/Lunch

Chair Purcell expressed the Board's confidence with the Commissioner representing the agency extremely well.

Sophal Lackey reminded board members the deadline for filing their financial disclosure statement with the State Ethics Committee is July 1. She will send a link to the website.

Committees met during the lunch break and reported on their work upon reconvening.

10. Committee Reports

a. Budget & Finance

Ms. Talton reported for the Budget and Finance Committee. The Information Technology project was discussed. The committee also discussed the new licensing fees, fee ranges, and how fee collection will be implemented. To keep collection expenses down, the agency will make fee collection internet based.

b. Programs

Mr. Morgan reported for the Programs Committee. Kay Hellwig was acknowledged as the new Assistant Commissioner. The committee reviewed the Quality Continuum framework, made some recommendations, and discussed ways the department might acknowledge programs that reach proficiency. Karen Robinson commented one point being developed is how to share Quality Continuum information with parents.

c. Ethics

Ms. Harper reported for the Ethics Committee. Proposed changes to bylaws will be distributed to board members and are available on eBOARD. Board members are invited to review these before the August meeting when the board will vote on their acceptance. Ms. Braswell asked if deadlines for getting items on the board agenda will be posted. Mr. Peacock stated the agency follows the open records act and post agendas accordingly. Ms. Harper stated beginning in November a public hearing will be held before the Board at 8:00 a.m. prior to the board meeting; rules for receiving oral comments at these meetings are included in the recommendations. The Programs Committee will be renamed

Programs and Rules. The Communications Committee will be disbanded. A summary chart outlines how recommendations compare to the bylaws of other state agencies. The Department of Education board, for example, requires each board member to hold a meeting in their district. Ms. Harper stated what is appropriate for other agencies is not mandatory for this board and may be adapted as appropriate for the agency's population.

Vice Chair Mallory commented reviewing the procedures of other boards has been worthwhile, and the proposed changes are valuable. He commended the committee's work. Chair Purcell stated the board is young and has come a long way. Ms. Harper stated a review of the bylaws would be addressed at the August meeting.

i. Recommendations

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11. Adjournment

Chair Purcell shared her experience speaking English with high school students in Russia. She encouraged the students to find their passion and shared her passion is education. She told them teachers have to love learning; they have to believe one person can make a difference; and they have to have a passion for teaching others. She affirmed her belief each person on the board and in the agency can make a difference.

The next meeting will take place August 12, 2010. Vice Chair Mallory motioned to adjourn. Mr. Davis seconded. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:57 p.m.

Motion made by: Ted Mallory

Motion seconded by: Phil Davis

Voting

Unanimously Approved

Board Chair

Board Secretary

DECAL - Bright from the Start**Meeting Minutes**

Printed : 7/23/2014 9:15 AM EST

**Board of Early Care and Learning Meeting
8/12/2010 9:00:00 AM**Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of
Early Care and Learning
10 Park Place - 6th Floor Boardroom - Atlanta,
GA

Holly A. Robinson, Commissioner

Attendees - voting members

Dr. Luann Purcell	Board Chair, District 8
Mr. Ted Mallory	Board Vice Chair, District 3
Carlene Talton	Board Secretary, District 5
Carolyn Ormsby	Board Member, District 4
Susan Harper	Board Member, District 2
Mr. Phil Davis	Board Member, District 7
Dixie Kinard	Board Member, District 9
Victor Morgan	Board Member, District 11

Attendees - other

Craig Detweiler	CIO/COO
Cecelia Dorsey	Administrative Assistant
Kay Hellwig	Assistant Commissioner for Child Care
Sophal Lackey	Board Liaison
Megan Larkins	Office of Planning & Budget
Leslie Lowe	Chief Financial Officer
Mary Mazarky	Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K
Rob O'Callaghan	Research & Evaluation Assistant
Ashley Peacock	Chief Legal Officer
Holly Robinson	Commissioner
Karen Robinson	Assistant Commissioner for Programs

Meeting Minutes

Other Guests included, Megan Larkins, Julie Barnett, Frank Bennett, Kwame Griffith, William McQueen, Ellen Williams Reynolds, Carolyn Salvador, Elisa Shepherd, and Shyan Kumar.

1. Call to Order

Chair Luann Purcell called the meeting to order. All attendees were welcomed.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- a. *Approve agenda for 8/12/10 meeting

Phil Davis moved to accept the day's agenda. Victor Morgan seconded. The agenda was unanimously accepted.

Motion made by: Mr. Phil Davis

Motion seconded by: Victor Morgan

Voting

Unanimously Approved

b. *Approve minutes from 5/13/10 meeting

Vice Chair Ted Mallory moved to approve the May 13, 2010 board meeting minutes. Carlene Talton seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Motion made by: Mr. Ted Mallory

Motion seconded by: Carlene Talton

Voting

Unanimously Approved

3. Inspiration

Chair Purcell read a motivational poem illustrating teamwork behavior found in migratory geese. She distributed to board members calculators, which symbolized how each board member "counts." She also made available some CDs on education personnel shortages.

Dr. Holly Robinson shared an article appearing in the magazine of Kennesaw State University on their partnership with Georgia's Pre-K and the Confucius Institute. The Pre-K Mandarin program has expanded to Cobb and Whitfield counties.

4. Bright from the Start Presentations

a. CCS Update

Kay Hellwig presented updates on Child Care Services (CCS). (See slides.) The Quality Improvement Program, an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) project, includes 31 contractors and consultants from all of the department's divisions. This team provides technical assistance to programs. A second component of the program is teacher training institutes that began in July and will take place across the state. The training is delivered by Best Practices at Georgia State University on all core rule areas. Comments from teachers on these changes have been positive. A third component of the program is monetary support, including \$100 per teacher who attends training and up to \$1,000 per provider for equipment (such as playground surfaces) to support compliance in core rules. Ms. Harper asked how a provider is determined to be noncompliant. Ms. Hellwig responded core rule noncompliance is based on multiple rule violations and a history of visits over the course of a year, not a single visit. Vice Chair Mallory asked about evaluations. Ms. Hellwig replied Dr. Bentley Ponder is working on training evaluations; responses are already being collected.

CCS has been restructured based on the division's consolidated priorities of consistent, efficient and effective monitoring. CCS went to two division directors in June and is now moving from six to four state regions, to be completed September 1. CCS has added a specialized unit, the Complaint and Adverse Action Unit, to free consultants to focus on monitoring. The other three specialized units are the Applicant Services Unit, which offers assistance to potential providers pursuing licensing; the Quality Assurance Unit, which works on quality assurance reviews and professional development for consultants; and the Administrative Unit, which provides office support to the division.

CCS began an interrater reliability process with the lead consultants, who have

additional responsibilities and work with the other consultants. The next step is to identify and align one or two anchor consultants in each region, then expand the reliability measures to all consultants. The goal is for all consultants to be reliable by June 2011.

CCS has started to review the rules pertaining to exemption from licensing. An internal workgroup is considering the input received at stakeholder and community meetings. Ms. Harper asked if this is related to the recent news item regarding summer camps. Ms. Hellwig replied yes.

Vice Chair Mallory commented consistency among consultants on interpretation of rules is difficult to obtain, and he commended the agency for pursuing reliability. Mr. Morgan asked if directors are also trained on what consultants are expected to look for in various scenarios. Ms. Hellwig responded yes; the guidelines on core rules have been recently revised and consultants are now sent to the same training directors attend.

b. Pre-K Update

Mary Mazarky presented updates on Pre-K. (See slides.) Three ARRA projects have been completed, expending \$1.7 million on Pre-K materials, the Professional Development Registry (PDR), and the Summer Transition Program. Two ARRA projects are ongoing: standards alignment from birth through third grade, which is part of an initiative for children to be read at grade level by third grade, and the Online Learning Library, with resources being developed in partnership with Georgia State University. The Summer Transition Program was a six week program for children entering Kindergarten either from a year in Pre-K or from waiting lists. The program was able to serve 900 children in 60 classrooms. Evaluation is ongoing.

Previously, the PDR was operated through an outside contract and was not widely used. The agency has been fortunate to have ARRA funds to develop the new version of the system. The registry has a professional ladder for teachers to follow. Teachers can see where they are in their development and track their progress. The Professional Standards Commission (PSC) verifies the credentials. PDR Registration is mandatory this year for Pre K lead and assistant teachers.

Operational changes have been implemented in the Pre-K program for the 2010-2011 school year. The 90% salary option built into Pre-K funding for teacher assistants, allowing providers to retain 10% for other costs, will be eliminated. Vice Chair Mallory inquired about feedback on this change. Ms. Mazarky stated teachers recognize it as a fair requirement. The agency is also considering this change for lead teachers.

The new Pre-K program evaluation model will be used this school year. The responsibilities of directors and teachers are now differentiated through new program checklists. The agency has added support for classroom instructional quality using the CLASS observation, developed by Bob Pianta of the University of Virginia, which measures interactions between teachers and students. The agency will establish a baseline state average on the CLASS this year. The CLASS will be used to guide individual professional development for teachers, as well as to guide state teacher trainings. The agency expects to see an immediate impact. Dr. Ormsby asked how changes are being communicated to school principals. Ms. Mazarky explained informational sessions conducted for project directors, site directors and teachers; the new model has been

presented to over 10,000 people across the state. The Commissioner added providers have been told over the last year to expect these changes. Ms. Mazarky stated the checklists, while they were being developed, were presented to providers for feedback.

The agency has received over 220 applications for the Transition Coach Grant and expects to fund 112 grants by the end of August. The Commissioner reminded the board this program was redesigned because of budget cuts, and the agency has taken this opportunity to improve the model. Ms. Kinard asked about the new program's relation to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Ms. Mazarky responded Transition Coaches will link to Department of Education's Title I liaisons.

Mr. Davis commented he is impressed the ARRA money is being put to good use so quickly. The Chair seconded this opinion based on her experience in other federal initiatives.

c. Quality Initiatives & Nutrition Services Updates

Karen Robinson presented updates on Quality Initiatives and Nutrition Services. (See slides.) A total of 306 recipients have received the FIRST Program grant for their first child care worker credential, and another 1,460 applicants have been pre-approved.

The Infant Toddler Project, using ARRA funds, is pursuing not just providing services but systemic changes in infant toddler care in the state. In its implementation, the agency has sought input from the FPG Child Development Institute and from WestEd.

The project will use the ITERS-R measure and one component of the PARS measure, which focuses on interactions between infants/toddlers and caregivers. A total of 1,500 providers have expressed interest in the project. The agency has sampled providers for intensive technical assistance and is holding two-day conferences for the providers who were not sampled. Measures are being developed to assess the impact of technical assistance. The project is also working to increase infant toddler care in the state training system and in technical colleges.

Another ARRA project has provided \$477,000 to programs to support their pursuit of national accreditation. The statewide referral system increased significantly (107%) in the number of parent referrals. Meals served through the Child and Adult Care Food Program has a 1% increase over the previous year. The Nutrition division is planning additional training for nutrition consultants. The Nutrition Education Project is providing technical assistance and menu analysis for participating providers.

d. Break

e. Technology Update

Mr. Detweiler presented updates on technology. (See slides.) Data for the Georgia Testing Identifier project has been delivered to the Georgia Department of Education for processing. This project will allow Kindergarten teachers to see children who have participated in Georgia's Pre-K. The technical process for verifying credentials in the PDR is ongoing. The next stage will be for departmental trainings to automatically transfer into the PDR without having to go through the Professional Standards Commission first. KOALA development

has been stalled by the legislature's requirement for the agency to collect licensing fees from child care providers beginning November 1. Vendors have been identified for processing payments online. The structural changes to CCS are being incorporated into KOALA, and the agency is looking to streamline database processes. Website visits are up almost 50% over the previous year, with very large increases in average website page views and website time spent. The IT unit is also working on implementing the Windows 7 Operating System to the entire agency, as well as an updated version of Microsoft Office and a change of email client.

The Commissioner commented the move away from paper to a greater use of technology will continue to be a boon to the agency.

f. Legal Update

Ashley Peacock presented legal unit updates. (See slides.) The latest board-approved rule revisions were presented at a public hearing and will become effective at the end of August. Vice Chair Mallory inquired why so few showed up at the public hearing. Mr. Peacock stated the meeting was well announced, but the rule changes mostly concerned housekeeping items; the only new requirements were enhanced hand washing measures. The agency did receive some written comments.

g. Finance Update

Leslie Lowe updated the board on the agency's finances. (See slides.) ARRA funds are 78% committed and will be at 100% by the end of September. The agency has been instructed by the Governor to submit further reductions at three levels: 4, 6 and 8% for FY 2011 amended budget, and 6, 8, and 10% for the FY 2012 budget. The board will vote on the agency's proposals after the Budget and Finance Committee meets.

Concerning licensing, online fee collection will open November 1, with payment due December 31. A 50% late fee will be assessed January 1, as the legislation authorizes. The fee collection is expected to generate an additional \$700,000 for the state. Chair Purcell asked since the agency does not keep the fee, if it would be reimbursed for the added cost of collecting it. Ms. Lowe responded no. Ms. Talton commented this seems like a fairness issue. Vice Chair Mallory recommended the agency keep a file on the collection cost and report this to the board.

5. Board Member Updates

a. Core Curriculum

Dr. Carolyn Ormsby reported the national core curriculum has been adopted by the state, and she believes this adoption is a necessary move. Chair Purcell also agreed; and she is proud Georgia pursued adoption through a collaborative effort across seven state agencies. She commended the agency for its commitment to developing standards. Ms. Kinard asked if mathematics needs are addressed in the core curriculum. Dr. Ormsby responded school systems must adopt 85% of the core curriculum, allowing room for them to adapt it to local needs. The Chair added a large amount of information is available on the National Governors Association website.

b. Pre-K at Blue Ridge School

Ms. Kinard reported on visiting the Georgia's Pre-K Summer Transition Program at the International School at Blue Ridge, in Dalton. She observed children were healthy and happy. Many of the children were English Language Learners, but in the fifth week of the program children were making good progress in receiving instructions in English. She expressed confidence these children would be much better prepared to enter Kindergarten as a result of the program. She also noted because this program participates in Bright from the Start's Nutrition Program, the children are served nutritious meals each day.

Ms. Kinard also reported on instruction of the Mandarin language is now introduced in Whitfield County's Pre-K program this school year through the partnership between Georgia's Pre-K and the Confucius Institute at Kennesaw State University. Mr. Davis and Vice Chair Mallory agreed on the the importance of this program and its relevance to the global trends involving China's economic growth. Ms. Kinard stated it is imperative for languages to be a mandatory part of the daily curriculum, not left to the local school system to decide whether to fund. Chair Purcell commented on the value of hearing reports from board members on their field visits, bringing to life the information presented at board meetings.

6. Commissioner's Report

a. US Senate Testimony

Commissioner Holly Robinson reported on her visit to a Senate committee to testify on early learning. In her testimony, she presented an overview of the agency and its programs and fielded a large number of questions. Early education remains a popular topic in Washington, but this attention has not yet translated into federal grants.

b. State Advisory Council

The Commissioner reported the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care held a data roundtable meeting with statewide representation to identify data needs related to the Council's work.

c. ARRA Projects

The Commissioner stated the agency's ARRA funds had to be focused on the agency's mission and vision for quality and access, had to go out into the community, and had to have lasting effects after the funds were spent. She believes the project managers have done a superb job of meeting these goals.

d. Media Coverage

The Commissioner stated the department has received positive media attention and encouraged the board to share any news they receive.

e. Lottery Update

The Commissioner reported potential changes to the Georgia Lottery for Education are the most important issue facing early education in the state. Any cuts to the Pre-K allocation will result in closing a large number of Pre-K programs across the state. Although lottery dollars have increased, they have

not increased in proportion to the demand for the HOPE grant and the HOPE scholarship, which have seen dramatic increases. Meanwhile, Pre-K spending per child has barely increased in 18 years.

Neuroscience research shows clearly the dramatic amount of learning takes place in the zero to five years. Georgia's Pre-K has made impact for several reasons. 1) It is universal, and research shows universal programs with heterogeneous classrooms are more effective than targeted programs with homogeneous classrooms. A recent study also shows a quality Pre-K program has a greater impact on the child than socio-economic factors. 2) Georgia's Pre-K is also voluntary, allowing parents to choose to participate and to choose the location and kind of learning setting their child will attend. Unlike the HOPE programs, Georgia's Pre-K is a capped program, with the number of slots determined by the legislature. All early care and learning groups across the state must mobilize to protect the Georgia Lottery for Education's funding for Georgia's Pre-K as a universal, voluntary program. Ms. Kinard requested names of legislatures participating on the lottery committees. The Commissioner responded Ms. Lackey will send a link to this information, but she also reminded the board every legislator is important. Mr. Davis commented evidence exists across states that college tuition rates rise to meet the available funding, while the agency has demonstrated exemplary financial management with limited funds.

f. Customer Service Award

The Commissioner reported Marissa Hamm, Nutrition Program Manager, received a state Customer Service Award. Karen Robinson added Ms. Hamm continued to provide customer service soon after having delivered a child. She stated Ms. Hamm has been an excellent manager, and the agency is proud of her. Chair Purcell asked Ms. Robinson to convey the board's congratulations to Ms. Hamm.

7. Committee Meetings/Lunch

Mr. Davis inquired about the agency's office move. The Commissioner reported the Department of Corrections has vacated space in the state's Twin Towers office building that fits the size requirements of Bright from the Start, so the agency is being relocated there next year. This move will save the agency rent funds.

Committees met during the lunch break and reported on their work upon reconvening.

8. Committee Reports

a. Budget & Finance

Ms. Talton reported for the Budget and Finance Committee. Ms. Lowe was asked to present the agency's proposed budget cuts. For the FY 2011 amended budget, the agency has proposed two items for an 8% reduction of state funds: charge USDA funds for partial attorney salary and the elimination of one staff position. These cuts have already been implemented. Mr. Davis commented questioned why the department is submitting a higher cut than the minimum requested. The Commissioner emphasized the agency is not being singled out, but based on past experience in submitting cuts over the last years, the agency decided to go ahead and submit at the higher level. Chair Purcell inquired what is the agency's total accumulated loss in state funds. Ms. Lowe responded the

portion of the agency's budget from state funds went from \$4 million in fiscal year 2010 to slightly over \$1 million. For FY 2012, there will be a savings in rent with the office relocation, but agency needs to retain those funds to cover moving costs; these savings will represent a reduction in expenses beginning in FY 2013. Lottery funds are restricted funds by the state constitution.

i. Vote

The committee recommended approval of the proposed amended budget for FY 2011; the budget was unanimously approved. The committee also recommended approval of the proposed budget for FY 2012; the budget was unanimously approved.

Voting

Unanimously Approved

b. Programs

Mr. Morgan reported for the Programs Committee. The committee expressed its approval of how programs are moving forward. Consultant reliability and quality support for programs were discussed. The committee noted lower quality programs are often the programs lower income families need, but still it is not desirable to exempt these programs from basic quality expectations. The committee is excited about the review of exemption rules. They also discussed the loss of 600 child care providers in the state and the economic downtown's impact on young children. Dr. Ormsby remarked she usually thinks of the agency as serving children zero to five, but through afterschool programs, its oversight includes zero to twelve. Chair Purcell inquired what happens to providers in the Quality Improvement Program that do not become compliant. Ms. Hellwig responded the agency will continue to work with them; cases are turned over to the Department of Human Services for subsidy issues. The Chair stated consequences are needed if providers cannot manage to improve after having received help. She also noted less than 10% of child care providers are noncompliant.

c. Ethics

Ms. Harper reported for the Ethics Committee. Proposed board bylaw changes include instituting a one-hour comment period at 8:00 a.m. prior to board meetings. The public would be allowed to make comments of three to five minutes before the board. Comments may not be repetitive, and the board will not respond to comments. Community forums will still be held across the state where discussion of rule changes may take place. This bylaw change is being introduced to align board practices with the best practices of other education boards. This change will prevent the department from having to schedule separate hearings and pay for a public hearing officer. Vice Chair Mallory asked if written comments would also be delivered to the board at that time; these will be mailed prior to the meeting. The Vice Chair also asked about procedures if no one signs up to comment. Chair Luann Purcell responded the comment period will not be canceled since the public may sign up the day of the meeting; when it becomes obvious there will be no more comments, the board meeting may begin early.

i. Vote

The committee recommended board approval of bylaw changes. Bylaw

changes were unanimously approved.

Voting

Unanimously Approved

9. Adjournment

Marissa Hamm, Nutrition Program Manager, was introduced and applauded for her customer service award, and Chair Purcell extended the board's congratulation. Mr. Davis expressed his appreciation for the work of the agency. Dr. Ormsby commended the agency's use of funds. Ms. Harper commented on the need for board members to make their feelings known to legislators regarding lottery funds. Vice Chair Mallory expressed appreciation for agency staff, and he reiterated the importance in a political year of speaking to candidates on the agency's behalf. Chair Purcell expressed her pleasure in seeing Ms. Hellwig in her new role. She expressed appreciation for Mr. Detweiler, knowing the importance of information technology to any organization. She commended the agency's clean audits and ability to get the books right in lean budget times. She pointed out board members' responsibility in an election year to make sure the agency's story is told, since a state agency cannot advocate politically on its own behalf. She remarked the entire state advocacy community in the area of early care and learning needs to be on the same page, given the importance of lottery dollars in supporting early education.

The next meeting of the board will take place November 18, 2010, at 8:00 a.m. Mr. Davis motioned to adjourn. Vice Chair Ted Mallory seconded. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.

Board Chair

Board Secretary

DECAL - Bright from the Start**Meeting Minutes**

Printed : 7/23/2014 9:16 AM EST

**Board of Early Care and Learning Meeting
11/18/2010 8:00:00 AM**Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of
Early Care and Learning
10 Park Place - 6th Floor Boardroom - Atlanta,
GA

Holly Robinson, Commissioner

Attendees - voting members

Dr. Luann Purcell	Board Chair, District 8
Mr. Ted Mallory	Board Vice Chair, District 3
Carlene Talton	Board Secretary, District 5
Susan Harper	Board Member, District 2
Mr. Phil Davis	Board Member, District 7
Gabrielle Braswell	Board Member, District 6
Dixie Kinard	Board Member, District 9
Janice Gallimore	Board Member, District 10
Victor Morgan	Board Member, District 11
Maggie Martinez	Board Member, District 13

Attendees - other

Craig Detweiler	CIO/COO
Cecelia Dorsey	Administrative Assistant
Kay Hellwig	Assistant Commissioner for Child Care
Sophal Lackey	Board Liaison
Megan Larkins	Office of Planning & Budget
Leslie Lowe	Chief Financial Officer
Mary Mazarky	Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K
Rob O'Callaghan	Research & Evaluation Assistant
Ashley Peacock	Chief Legal Officer
Holly Robinson	Commissioner
Karen Robinson	Assistant Commissioner for Programs

1. Public Hearing, 8:00 - 9:00 a.m.

The Board of Early Care and Learning meeting was preceded for the first time by a public hearing before the board. A summary of comments follows.

1. Debra Markhan, The Suzuki School, commented rules should not look at the classroom group size alone but must consider the quality of teachers and the philosophy of education.
2. Curlie Douglas, Tara Academy, commented on the difficulty of NAEYC accreditation and how accreditation should relate to the department's compliance level determinations.
3. Hows King, owner of two Discovery Point centers, commented every rule change has the potential to raise the child care costs and force children into unlicensed care. She requested the department expand its unlicensed care regulation.
4. Yvonne Smith, MACCDA, commented raising the required education for child care teachers is unnecessary and will drive child care providers out of business.

5. Elisa Shepherd, Kids 'R' Kids International, commented current Pre-K funding levels make providing the program unaffordable. She expressed concern about the 100% salary requirement and the costs of consumables.

6. Rita Bass, owner/director of Heritage CDC, questioned how Pre-K grants are awarded.

7. Dawn Brown, Boys and Girls Clubs Georgia Alliance, asked the board to positively support draft language for an afterschool exemption from licensure for national organizations with high quality internal oversight.

8. Carrie Edge, Northwest Georgia Boys and Girls Clubs, assured the board of her organization's belief children should be cared for by adult professional staff and their commitment to protecting young people.

9. Carolyn Salvador, Georgia Child Care Association (GCCA), commented the board should continue revising the state's outdated exemption rules. GCCA believes unlicensed care is dangerous and will support the agency in writing legislation to put them out of business.

10. Tony Foskey, Children's Friend, Inc., asked the board to consider the stress caused by unfunded mandates. He expressed support for Pre-K Hope funding and praised the Summer Transition Program and Pre-K's use of Work Sampling Online. He commented the Pre-K funding formula is a generation old; providers cannot continue raising Pre-K quality if funding does not increase. He also stated afterschool programs should be regulated.

11. Angela Martin, Cornerstone Schools, stated a crowded facility near her business received an exemption from licensing and should not have, considering the activities the facility offers and advertises.

12. Michael Martin, Cornerstone Schools, commented the state needs a simple set of rules for all children in out-of-home care in the state, including programs exempt from licensing, to address health and safety, criminal records and CPR training.

13. Chris Hilson, Reading World Academy, commented it is overly punitive to have CAPS affected for compliance issues when in many communities 99% of children are CAPS, and providers need CAPS to survive. She stated the emphasis has become on paper rather than what happens with children.

14. Vivian Smith, Black Chamber of Commerce, commented on the unfairness of her program getting cited for being one child over when every day in exempt programs the department allows 100 children to stay in auditoriums. She also stated providers have no idea how programs are funded or not funded for Pre-K.

2. Call to Order

Chair Luann Purcell called the meeting to order. Board member Janice Gallimore was welcomed via teleconference.

3. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Vice Chair Ted Mallory moved to accept the agenda for the day. Gabrielle Braswell seconded. The agenda was unanimously accepted. Vice Chair Mallory moved to approve the August 12, 2010, board meeting minutes. Phil Davis seconded. Minutes

were unanimously approved.

- a. *Approve agenda for 11/18/10 meeting

Motion made by: Mr. Ted Mallory
Motion seconded by: Gabrielle Braswell

Voting
Unanimously Approved

- b. *Approve minutes from 8/12/10 meeting

Motion made by: Mr. Ted Mallory
Motion seconded by: Mr. Phil Davis

Voting
Unanimously Approved

4. Inspiration

Chair Purcell shared a video from Simple Truths emphasizing the important influence a teacher has on the children's lives, emphasizing "It's not about the subjects we teach, it's about the child." She explained a child arrives in the classroom as a puzzle. The board was encouraged to look at its work as a critical piece of the puzzle. Lapel pins made of puzzle pieces were distributed to each board member.

5. Board Member Updates

- a. State Advisory Council

On behalf of Dr. Carolyn Ormsby, Commissioner Robinson reported on the Georgia State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care's progress. The Council will work for three years on a comprehensive plan, linking the state's diverse early care and learning services. An RFP is being developed for the design of a voluntary, statewide (across agencies and organizations) data system to link information for parents and providers.

- b. JEBLC

On behalf of the Chair and Vice Chair, Commissioner Robinson reported on activities of the Georgia's Joint Education Board Liaison Committee. State Representative Brooks Coleman visited the last meeting to discuss potential legislation related to education, much of which is on hold due to the gubernatorial transition.

- c. Maxwell Elementary - Inclusion Class

Victor Morgan reported on his visit to the Pre-K inclusion classroom at Maxwell Elementary in McDuffie County. He was impressed by the high quality of staff and by their sophisticated data collection process, which supported their work with children in the classroom. He applauded the inclusion project in Pre-K and stated he hopes it will expand. He stated the sooner special needs children are integrated with general education students, the less likely they will need more intensive services when they reach school age.

6. Georgia Pre-K Lottery Data

Commissioner Holly Robinson gave a presentation on the success of Georgia's Pre-K as a voluntary, universal program and on its funding through the Georgia Lottery for Education. (See slides.) She stated research shows the importance of quality early learning. A Tulsa (Oklahoma) study of a voluntary, universal program similar to Georgia's Pre-K shows the benefits of a universal program serving a diversity of children. Georgia's Pre-K is universal, voluntary, and offered in a variety of settings (public, private, military, etc.), adding to the program's diversity. Furthermore, studies show middle income families have the least access to quality education. Provider demand in Georgia is extremely high and the grant process is highly competitive; last year, over 12,000 new slots were requested in applications, while the agency had funding for 2,000 additional slots. With a wait list of 10,752, Georgia's Pre-K has the highest wait list in the last three years despite yearly increases in slots. This increase is partly attributable to the publicity generated through the Millionth Child Campaign, and the current economic situation. Unlike HOPE, Georgia's Pre-K is a capped program, and the program cannot increase the number of slots unless enacted by legislation. The per-child funding for the program has only increased \$226 dollars in 18 years.

Board members were urged to be in contact with their elected representatives on this issue. They were invited to access the full presentation on the agency's home page under the "News" section. The Chair requested Sophal Lackey resend bullet points on the issue for board members' use.

7. Bright from the Start Presentations

a. Finance Update

Leslie Lowe presented updates on the agency's finances. (See slides.) State revenues are up 7.6% year to date. The cost for Pre-K slots is going down. The agency has been required by the legislature to collect licensing fees in a short time frame. The online fee payment system went live on November 1. Providers have 60 days to pay before considered late, and a late fee of 50% of the licensing fee will be assessed January 1. The licensing fee is \$50 to \$250 based on licensed capacity. The ratio of fees collected online to manual is two-to-one; if manual payments were higher, the agency would have been swamped with checks to process. The agency was not reimbursed by the legislation for the cost of implementing the fee collection, which has been calculated at \$118,000. Chair Purcell stated she would like to write a letter detailing the total cost to the agency.

Ninety-four percent of ARRA dollars have been committed or spent, reaching 100% in January. The move to the Twin Towers state office building will take place in June. The move will lead to savings in federal and lottery dollars but no savings in state dollars. Ms. Lowe reported the agency's eighth consecutive year with no audit findings, which was applauded by the board. The agency was again recognized with a Governor's Customer Service Award; the Commissioner received the award for her leadership of the Pre-K Millionth Child Campaign. The award review committee received 580 nominations from 42 agencies for 16 total prizes.

b. Technology Update

Craig Detweiler presented updates on technology. (See slides.) He displayed

the licensing fee payment website where the fee structure is posted. Close to 25% of fees have been collected already. The agency anticipates a large amount of activity at the end of year in response to late notices. The licensing fees collection was preceded by a large effort to ensure the licensed capacity on record is correct. Online payments are handled through a contract with PayPoint, an outside vendor. A process is in place for email payment status notifications to providers. Commissioner Robinson noted the step-by-step process is clearly outlined for providers on the website.

In the coming year, the agency will be able to collect updates on provider information online rather than receiving forms in the mail. Chair Purcell reminded the board the KOALA project had to be put on hold to address the license fee mandate.

c. CCS Update

Kay Hellwig presented updates on Child Care Services (CCS). (See slides.) The Quality Improvement Program is working with noncompliant programs receiving CAPS subsidies from the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS). A total of 2,300 TA visits have been conducted through October. TA consultants report most programs are motivated to work on improvement. Less than 10% have not participated or attended training. Consultants report the center director's leadership is the key factor. Teachers have been through two days of teacher institutes already and are now on their third day. The progressive training was developed by Best Practices at Georgia State University around core rules. Training is at no cost to programs. Teachers receive incentive funds to attend training. Up to \$1,000 is also available to programs to spend for improvements to meet core rules. Repeated visits are made to programs to monitor compliance. The agency is working with nonparticipating programs to emphasize the importance of participation.

As part of the interrater reliability process, CCS has revised the tools used for monitoring visits to build consistency among consultants. CCS will also address reliability among managers, to include consistency in how managers review consultant visits as well as consistency side by side with consultants on visits. Vice Chair Mallory commented the importance of treating centers fairly, and he stated the agency's work on achieving reliability is a model for other state agencies.

CCS has been reviewing exemption rules and collecting comments. An internal work group has researched the exemption rules of 23 other states. After December community meetings, the agency will recommend some changes. Proposed changes gathered from other states include: Parents who go to a licensed program see a licensing report posted; parents will know whether a program is exempt from the agency's oversight on health and safety by requiring exempt programs to post this; when programs expand from other services to provide child care, licensure will be required; and if programs operate outside exemption limits, the agency will rescind the exemption and place them in an investigation process.

Community meeting locations and the draft proposed rules will be posted next week on the website. These will be advertised in an e-mail blast to all providers, and large providers of exempt programs will be informed individually. Ms. Martinez suggested a press conference to invite people to community meetings. Vice Chair Mallory commented the meetings have been covered in the press. Mr. Morgan added he has heard from many providers who

are aware of the meetings. Ms. Talton asked how the agency will know if exempt programs expand their services. The agency will require providers to self report through yearly updates. Violations may be reported to the agency by others. Grant applications from other organizations also often require proof of exemption. If providers intentionally misstate the services they offer, the agency has the authority to work with law enforcement to impose an injunction on operating until the issue is resolved. Also, one exemption criteria is oversight by another statewide or national organization such as the Boys and Girls Club. Mr. Davis asked how the agency knows if an overseeing organization is competent. Vice Chair Mallory pointed out parents have a right to make decisions where to place their child, but the board wants parents to be informed of what they sign up for. Mr. Peacock stated one proposal is to have parents sign a letter acknowledging they understand a program is exempt. Ms. Martinez recommended the agency advertise on its website how parents may issue complaints on a program.

d. Break

e. Pre-K Update

Mary Mazarky presented updates on Pre-K. (See slides.) Since the Professional Development Registry launched July 1, there are 8,318 total participants (active, pending, or incomplete) participating in the system. The agency has received positive feedback on its ease of use.

Pre-K is working with the state birth through third grade initiative in collaboration with all education agencies in the state. The initiative's goal is for all children to read at grade level by third grade. The Commissioner added grade level reading as defined in the Annie E. Casey Foundation grant is based on the NAEP standard of proficiency, not the CRCT. The agency's part in the state's Race to the Top grant will be to look at the use of the CLASS observation instrument, currently being implemented in Pre-K, in kindergarten through third grade classrooms. Five sites have been selected by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Use of the CLASS will expand to birth-to-three classrooms as well.

f. Quality Initiatives & Nutrition Services Updates

Karen Robinson presented updates on Quality Initiatives and Nutrition Services. (See slides.) Latest numbers for participation in the FIRST Program were reported. Follow up with FIRST recipients shows 71% are continuing their education and 99% state they intend to stay in the field, demonstrating a systemic impact. In addition to the FIRST Program, over 450 early care and education staff members are receiving scholarships and over 450 are receiving incentives to improve credentials. Quality Initiatives is also working with homes and centers to help them achieve accreditation, distributing \$846,000 in grant aid. All incentives provided by the agency total over \$2 million. Almost 1,000 providers also receive technical assistance from the agency. The Infant Toddler Project is providing free training to providers through mini-conferences across the state. A third of participants in the network receiving WestEd training on infant toddler care are now certified. A total of 67% of infant toddler classrooms in the state are at medium to low quality according to the UNC-Chapel Hill quality study, revealing the need for this type of project.

The number of meals served through CACFP was reported.

Vice Chair Mallory inquired what will happen when the FIRST Program ends in August. Ms. Robinson replied the agency is emphasizing to programs to take advantage while it is available. The agency's other scholarships and incentives will still continue.

g. Legal Update

Ashley Peacock presented updates on the Legal Unit. (See slides.) The unit provides support on open records requests, often pointing inquirers to information already available on the website. The unit works closely with CCS and Nutrition Services on compliance enforcement.

8. Commissioner's Report

a. GEEARS

Commissioner Holly Robinson reported on her participation with the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS). GEEARS has hired Mindy Binderman as the Executive Director. The agency is providing information to them. The Commissioner stated they will be another solid advocate for early learning.

b. Council of Chief State School Officers

The Commissioner reported on her presentation to the Council of Chief State School Officers meeting in Savannah. Many early education units are embedded within K-12 education agencies, and she heard comments from many who regret not having the ability to press early learning goals at a department level. She sees movement toward more early care and education agencies being created across the nation.

c. Race to the Top

The Commissioner stated she is proud the state included early learning in its Race to the Top application. The grant's implementation has been placed under the State Board of Education's authority. They have worked hard on core curriculum, math and science teachers, data systems P-20, and turning around low performing schools. The Commissioner stated she is excited about the state receiving this award and the work to come.

d. Early Education Advisory Council

The Commissioner presented at the Georgia Head Start Fall Conference. She reported all Head Start programs in Georgia will participate in the Professional Development Registry.

e. Pre-K Book Reading

The Commissioner presented each board member with a copy of the Pre-K book, *A Million Starts with Me!*, written by John Archambault in honor of the Georgia's Pre-K Millionth Child Campaign. The book is for sale nationally. Video coverage was shown of First Lady Mary Perdue's visit to College Heights Early Learning Center in Decatur, Ga., for a book reading.

The Commissioner stated the Cabinet is working hard to complete their goals for the year. She reminded the board of the transition to a new governor and

new legislators.

9. Committee Meetings/Lunch

Committees met during the lunch break and reported on their work upon reconvening.

10. Committee Reports

a. Budget & Finance

Ms. Talton reported for the Budget and Finance Committee. The office move will take place in June. The finance unit will be the first to move since work on the budget must be done immediately following this timeframe. The audit was a two month process. One change has been made to the 2012 budget request and must be resubmitted. The cost of the 2,000 slots has been corrected to \$2.3 million. This change requires board approval.

i. Vote

i. The committee recommended approval of the proposed amended budget for fiscal year 2011; the budget was unanimously approved.

Voting

Unanimously Approved

b. Programs

Mr. Morgan reported for the Programs Committee. The committee discussed general updates in program areas.

c. Ethics

Ms. Harper reported for the Ethics Committee. The committee was pleased with the public hearing and will work to ensure a smooth process for speakers given the limited space.

Chair Purcell stated the proposed board meeting dates for 2011 are February 10, May 12, August 11, and November 10. Ms. Martinez raised a concern about the August date coinciding with the first week of school. The Chair responded every system has a different start week, and unfortunately any date in August would interfere with board members' school commitments. The November meeting takes place the day before Veteran's Day. Ms. Talton moved to change this meeting to November 17. Ms. Braswell seconded. The board unanimously approved the final 2011 board meeting to take place on November 17.

The board discussed the morning's public hearing. On the idea of allowing speakers to sign up online, Chair Purcell stated there is a tendency for people to sign up but not show since it is so easy to do. She stated she would be more open to making available on the web a form for submitting written comments, which receive the same weight as oral comments. Written comments are not read at the public hearing but are sent to each board member. Ms. Martinez inquired about not responding to comments; the Chair clarified no responding is the general practice for boards. The speakers should contact department staff with questions. Ms. Harper stated a hearing is not a discussion; points are

raised for the board's consideration when it deliberates together in committees. Vice Chair Mallory added in his experience in public hearings, allowing dialogue can lead to a disorderly hearing. Ms. Martinez noted the comments made concerning negatively impact to child care businesses and asked how the board can address this concern. Mr. Mallory responded board members will know how to address these concerns through the existing board process; when the exemption issue comes before the board, each member will have to decide how to vote based on the available information. Mr. Morgan stated the board has not passed rules that represent high costs to providers; hand washing and other basic safety rules are not prohibitively expensive. Changing ratios would be a different story, but this rule has not been brought before the board.

11. Adjournment

Ms. Kinard pointed out the importance in the next few weeks of advocating with legislators and writing letters to editors. The Commissioner stated Sophal Lackey would send talking points to board members.

The board's next meeting will take place February 10, 2011; at 8:00 a.m. Ms. Martinez motioned to adjourn. Vice Chair Mallory seconded. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m.

Motion made by: Maggie Martinez

Motion seconded by: Mr. Ted Mallory

Voting

Unanimously Approved

Board Chair

Board Secretary