



Welcome to the Board of Early Care and Learning

February 20, 2014





Inspiration





Board Member Updates

Board members report on their recent DECAL-related activities in their districts.





Commissioner's Update

Bobby Cagle
Commissioner



Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

www.dec.al.ga.gov

Introduction of New Staff Member

- Kristen Bernhard
- Deputy Commissioner for System Reform
- Will manage Early Learning Challenge grant
- Previously served as Governor Deal's Education Policy Advisor
 - Governor's lead for K-12 Race to the Top Grant
 - Served as a member of the Georgia Alliance of Education Agency Heads
- Also previously served as Policy Assistant for Governor Sonny Perdue



Report on Three Areas of Focus

- Health and Safety Compliance
- Employee Feedback
- Stakeholder Engagement

Adverse Action Tracking

ADVERSE ACTIONS	2013	2012	2011	2010	% Change
Administrative	237	100	70	0	
Continued Non-Comp	77	22	8	5	
Incident/Injury	131	128	151	86	
Other	6	0	0	0	
Transportation	558	19	0	0	
TOTALS	1009	269	229	91	1008%
Fine Amounts	\$277,993	\$65,947	\$63,853	\$35,417	367%
Emergency Closures	14	9	2	N/A	600%
Revocations	35	20	83	8	337%

Focus: Employee Input

- Feedback Collection Methods
 - 2013 Employee Survey
 - Chats with the Commissioner (included 70% of DECAL employees)
 - AJC Top Places to Work Survey

- Continued Activities for 2014
 - 2014 Employee Survey
 - Chats with the Commissioner (will resume with 30% who have not previously participated)

Responding to Employee Input

- Analyzing information gathered from surveys
- Categorizing information
- Identifying themes/areas of strength and areas to improve
- Work with DECAL leadership and Employee Advisory Group to address areas that need to improve
- Responding immediately on some items

Areas of Strength and Areas to Improve

● Themes/areas of strength

- “I am proud of our achievements as an organization.”
- “Generally speaking, DECAL is headed in the right direction.”
- Responsiveness of Finance, HR, and IT units rated high
- Adequacy, frequency, and quality of agency communication rated high

● Themes/areas to improve

- Pay raises needed
- Heavy workloads/multiple vacancies
- Need more alignment between divisions within the agency

Focus: Stakeholder Engagement

- In a letter to stakeholders: “You play an important role by ensuring that the community has a voice in influencing policy priorities and the direction of DECAL’s work for Georgia’s youngest learners.”
- In a statement to DECAL staff: “I believe that the people most impacted by policies and regulations should have input into what those policies and regulations are.”

Commissioner Bobby Cagle

Focus on Stakeholder Engagement *(continued)*

● WHY?

- Policy is more effective when informed by experience of people/organizations doing the work
- Stakeholders provide a clearer perspective of the “health” of Georgia’s statewide early care and education system
- Fulfills the state’s obligation to engage in an open exchange with Georgia’s citizens and to operate with transparency
- Assists in compliance with Georgia’s Administrative Procedures Act

Activities to Engage Stakeholders

- Initiated Stakeholder Engagement Network
- Conduct webinars on specific, timely issues (safe sleep, dangers of leaving children in vehicles, Pre-K changes, etc.) to communicate information and solicit responses/comments from stakeholders
- Host regional community meetings
- Convene task forces

Questions & Comments from Board





Finance, Nutrition, & Legislative Update

Ray Higgins

Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration



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www.decal.ga.gov

Finance Update

2014 As of December 31th	Budget	Expenditures*	Remaining Balance	50% Remaining
BY PROGRAMS				
Child Care Services	230,872,203.00	129,861,716.72	101,010,486.28	44%
Pre-K + (HS & ES)	312,336,030.00	152,510,966.23	159,825,063.77	51%
Quality Initiatives	25,271,338.00	20,947,998.09	4,323,339.91	17%
Nutrition	122,000,000.00	65,855,311.85	56,144,688.15	46%
Total Expenses	690,479,571.00	369,175,992.89	321,303,578.11	47%
BY FUNDING SOURCE				
State General	55,451,852.00	16,543,278.54	38,908,573.46	70%
State Lottery	312,173,630.00	152,413,268.82	159,760,361.18	51%
Federal	322,714,089.00	200,100,484.33	122,613,604.67	38%
Other	140,000.00	118,961.20	21,038.80	15%
Total Funds	690,479,571.00	369,175,992.89	321,303,578.11	47%
* Includes encumbrances.				

Nutrition Services – SFSP Expansion 2014

Outreach Strategies

- Partnership with Georgia Food Bank Association to offer mini grants up to \$20,000 for sponsors to:
 - Serve more meals or establish more sites
 - Implement weekend backpack programs
 - Implement mobile feeding sites in targeted counties
- Partnership with USDA Rural Development to establish feeding sites at approved housing developments in Georgia's Strike Force Counties (also identified as DECAL's targeted counties)
- Partnership with Governor's Grade Level Reading Campaign to establish feeding sites at local libraries offering summer reading programs

Legislative Update





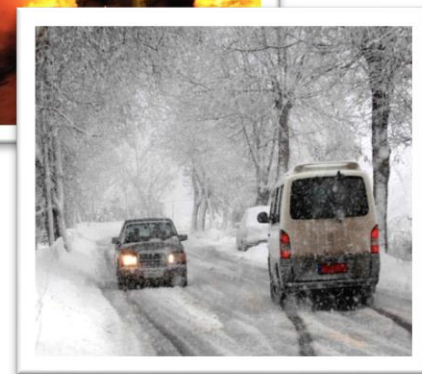
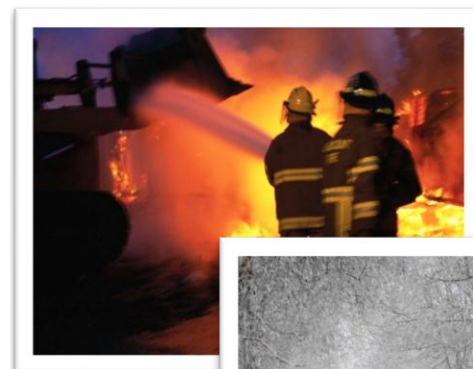
DECAL Emergency Preparation Efforts

Keith D. Bostick, L.C.S.W.
Deputy Commissioner for Programs



DECAL Emergency Preparation Efforts

DECAL's
PLEDGE
to 
PREPARE



DECAL Emergency Preparation Efforts

What we learned

- DECAL has a caring, supportive, and committed staff
- The need to develop an agency-wide DECAL Emergency Preparation System and Practice that applies to all types and levels of emergencies
- Establish greater protocols to ensure the health and safety of our providers and stakeholders



DECAL Emergency Preparation Efforts

What we will do moving forward

- Establish a DECAL Emergency Preparation Committee (representing all DECAL divisions)
- Develop a DECAL Staff/Business Continuity Plan

The health and safety of children and your staff are the most important factors to consider when deciding to close or stay open.



DECAL Emergency Preparation Efforts

What we will do moving forward

- Four areas to be developed for organizational emergency preparedness:
 - Staff
 - Operations
 - Providers/Stakeholders
 - Staff/Business Continuity



Child Care Services Update

Kristie Lewis

Assistant Commissioner for Child Care Services



Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

www.dec.al.ga.gov

Relating to Transportation



Purpose of Revising Transportation Rules

- To simplify and provide clarification in language
- To simplify documentation procedures in accounting for the transportation of children without compromising safety and protection
- To reorganize, group similar rules, and re-number rule sections

Proposed Changes Related to Policies

- Require two checks of vehicle regardless of alarm
- Change wording to require that second check be done by another staff person
- Clarify time frame for when second check should be completed
- Explain transportation requirements for transportation services being provided “on behalf of” a facility

Proposed Changes Related to Policies *(continued)*

- New training requirement
 - For director and staff involved in transporting children
 - Require two hours of training on transportation forms and procedures
- Clarify rule to require that emergency medical information be kept on vehicles when transporting children (Family Day Care Homes)

Proposed Changes to Forms/ Documentation Requirements

- Require a separate passenger checklist for each vehicle being used on the same trip (e.g., field trip)
- Strengthen load/unload documentation requirements to require that every child listed on the checklist is accounted for (e.g., marking with “A” for Absent; documenting when a parent takes the child home; etc.)
- Change wording of *Arrival Time* to *Load/Unload Time*
- Add comment boxes on forms for extenuating circumstances and/or changes in practice

Proposed Changes to Forms/ Documentation Requirements

The following will be removed from forms:

- Indication for type of restraint used
- Authorized persons to release to (Required on transportation agreement, which is already required to be kept in vehicle)
- Drop-off & pick-up times at the top of the forms
- Requirement for full name signature
- Requirement for initials to verify arrival/departure times
- Requirement to document who the checklist was turned in to
- Requirement to identify person responsible for the checklist
- Indication if vehicle has an alarm

School Transportation Form - Before

*New form completed for each route

School Transportation Form

Facility Name: _____ Phone #: _____ Driver Name: _____

	Pick-up Location & Time	Delivery Location & Time	Person to Receive Child	Staff Responsible for Checklist:
AM				
PM				

Week of: _____

Vehicle has child safety alarm device: YES NO

School Transportation Plan (use one form per school)			Mark for each child: √= Load/Unload A= Absent												
Child's First & Last Name	Type of Restraint Seatbelt - S Car Seat - C Booster - B	MON		TUES		WED		THURS		FRI					
		AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM				
		L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U

	Departure Time:	Staff initials	Arrival Time	Staff initials	Return Time:	Staff initials	FIRST CHECK Signature of staff on vehicle-no child left:	SECOND CHECK If <u>NO ALARM</u> Signature of staff not on vehicle -no child left:	If applicable, signature of staff who reported by phone that vehicle checked:	If applicable, name of person reported to:	Name of Person Checklist turned in to:
MON	AM										
	PM										
TUE	AM										
	PM										
WED	AM										
	PM										
THU	AM										
	PM										
FRI	AM										
	PM										

School Transportation Form - After



*New form completed for each route

School Transportation Form

Week of: _____

Facility Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Staff on Vehicle: _____

Vehicle Tag Number _____

	Pick-up Location	Delivery Location
AM		
PM		

School Transportation Plan (use one form per school)	Mark for each child:									
	√ = Load/Unload					A = Absent				
	MON		TUES		WED		THURS		FRI	
Child's First & Last Name	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
		L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U	L

		Depart Time: (from facility)	Load/Unload Time: (at school)	Return Time: (to facility)	FIRST CHECK Signature of staff - no child left:	SECOND CHECK Signature of staff - no child left:	If applicable, signature of staff who reported by phone that vehicle checked:	If applicable, name of person reported to:
MON	AM							
	PM							
TUE	AM							
	PM							
WED	AM							
	PM							
THU	AM							
	PM							
FRI	AM							
	PM							

COMMENT BOX: _____



Legal Update

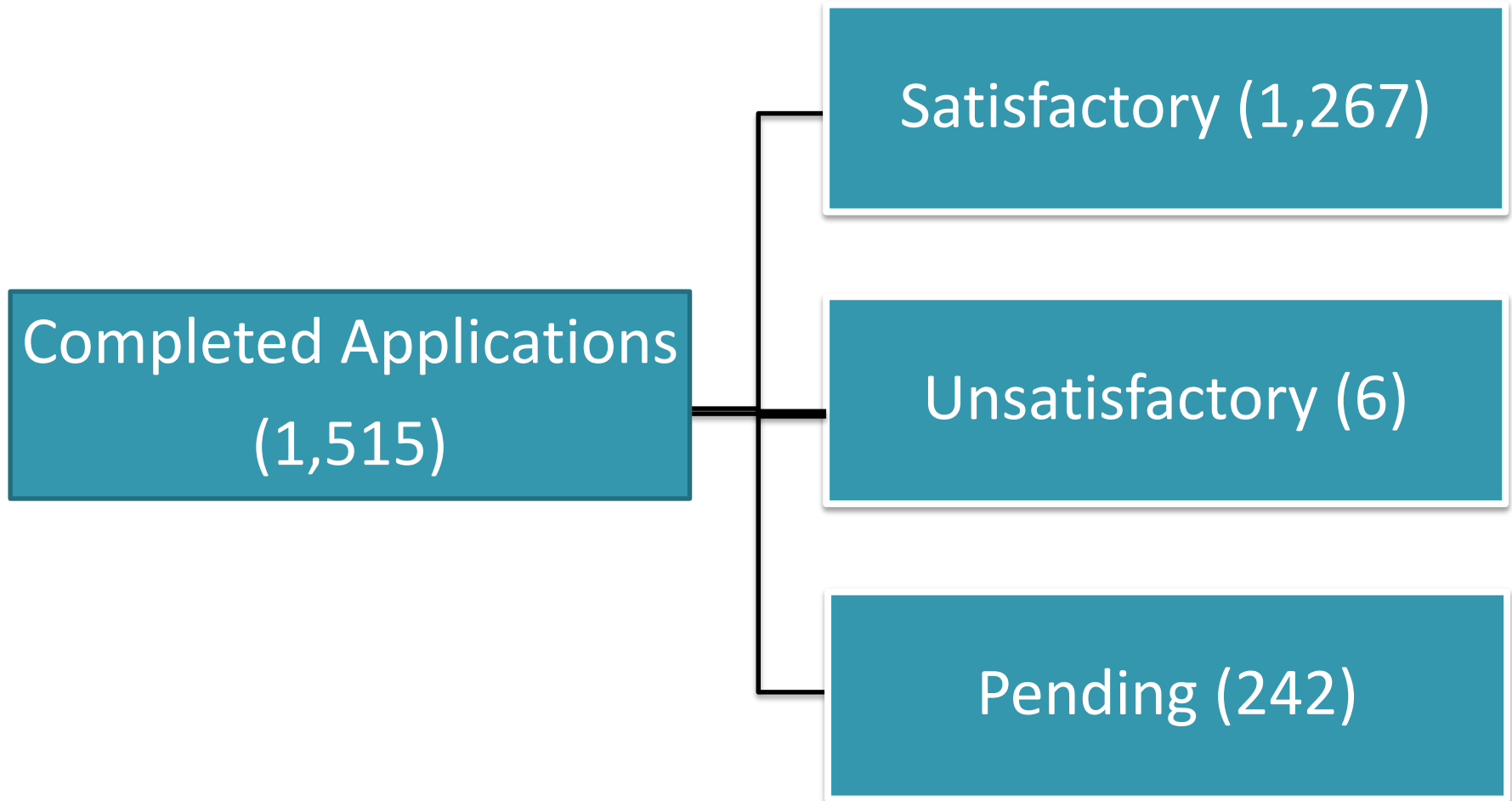
Ira Sudman
Chief Legal Officer



Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

www.dec.al.ga.gov

Initial Criminal Record Check Statistics (1/1/14 - 2/16/14)



Criminal Records Check by Facility Type

(1/1/14 - 2/16/14)

- **Child Care Learning Centers** – 1,322 applications completed
- **Family Day Care Homes** – 87 applications completed
- **Group Day Care Homes** – 20 applications completed
- **Other facility types** – 86 applications completed

Criminal Records Check Timeliness

(1/1/14 - 2/14/14)

- Time to Process Applications
 - ***Processed in 1 day:*** 316
 - ***Processed in 2 days:*** 233
 - ***Processed in 3 days:*** 242
 - ***Process time > three days:*** 482
- Average Time to Process Application = **3.5 days**



Head Start Update

Janice Haker
Head Start State Collaboration Director



Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

www.dec.al.ga.gov

Head Start Collaboration Office

● Sequestration Update

- Head Start funded to serve 25,749 children
- Early Head Start funded to serve 2,383 children
- 31 Grantees in Georgia
- Refund amounts to Head Start/Early Head Start
- Process for refunding not yet determined

Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership Grant

- Purpose: increase access to high quality programs for high needs children
- \$500,000,000 for state and local agencies, for profit and not-for-profit child care programs
- Grants currently open for Public Comment
- Anticipate final proposal format summer 2014
- Awards made by December 31, 2014; encumbered by March 15, 2015
- Must meet Early Head Start Performance Standards
- Partnerships include family and center child care, Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS)

Other Initiatives

- Oral Health study through Department of Public Health
- Head Start Annual Spring Conference May 2014
St. Simons, GA (Members of board invited to attend)
- School Readiness
- Parent Engagement
- Home Visiting Conference (Great Start Georgia)
July 28, 2014

BREAK
(10 minutes)



Georgia's Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge

Kristin Bernhard
Deputy Commissioner for System Reform



Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

www.dec.state.ga.us

Background Information

- Early Learning Challenge grant is administered by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Grant provides funding for states to create an early learning agenda that builds and strengthens **existing** early learning and development systems.

Background Information *(continued)*

The grant required states to detail how they will:

- Improve program quality and outcomes for young children.
- Increase the number of children with high needs attending high-quality early learning and development programs.
- Help close the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers by supporting efforts to increase kindergarten readiness.

Gov. Nathan Deal, State of the State, 2012

“We must make a concerted effort to increase the percentage of children reading at grade level by the completion of third grade...Students must ‘learn to read’ in order to be able to ‘read to learn’ and when we fail to invest in our youngest students, we are forced to spend money on remediation for the remainder of their academic careers.”

Georgia's Award

- Georgia received **\$51.7M** over the four-year grant period.
- Georgia's application received the second highest score among 16 applicants. Other winning states included Michigan, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, New Jersey and Vermont.
- Georgia's application was a culmination of what the state has done in early care and education and a plan for what the state will do to improve and to increase access to high quality early care and education.
 - The two programs most highlighted as proof of Georgia's commitment to early education were Georgia's Pre-K Program and Quality Rated.

Georgia's Application: Created through Collaboration

The following agencies serving Georgia's children and families contributed to and will help implement the grant:

- Governor Nathan Deal's Office
- Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (Lead Agency)
- Georgia Department of Education
- Georgia Department of Public Health
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs
- Georgia Department of Economic Development
- Georgia Department of Human Services
- Governor's Office for Children and Families
- Georgia Public Broadcasting
- Georgia Professional Standards Commission
- Governor's Office of Student Achievement
- Technical College System of Georgia
- University System of Georgia
- Alliance of Education Agency Heads
- Georgia's Children's Cabinet
- Georgia Family Connection Partnership

Georgia's Application

- Details twelve projects divided into five sections:
 - Successful State Systems
 - High-Quality, Accountable Programs
 - Promoting Early Learning Outcomes
 - Great Workforce
 - Measuring Outcomes and Progress
- Focuses on four strategies to achieve the grant's goals:
 - **Access** to high-quality opportunities
 - **Investment** in early childhood educators and high-quality programs
 - **Integration** across programs and services
 - **Measurement** and data capacity expanded

Successful State Systems	High-Quality, Accountable Programs	Promoting Early Learning Outcomes	Great Workforce	Measuring Outcomes and Progress
<p><u>Project 1:</u> Grant Management</p>	<p><u>Project 3:</u> Quality Rated Access and Availability</p>	<p><u>Project 5:</u> Early Learning and Development Standards</p> <p><u>Project 7:</u> Statewide Family Engagement and Community Grants</p>	<p><u>Project 9:</u> Workforce Knowledge and Competencies</p>	<p><u>Project 6:</u> Comprehensive Assessment System</p> <p><u>Project 11:</u> Kindergarten Entry Assessment</p>
<p><u>Project 2:</u> Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs)</p>	<p><u>Project 4:</u> Quality Rated Validation</p>	<p><u>Project 8:</u> Center-Based Home Visitation and Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care</p>	<p><u>Project 10:</u> Supporting Early Educators</p>	<p><u>Project 12:</u> Unified Data Systems</p>

Grant Oversight



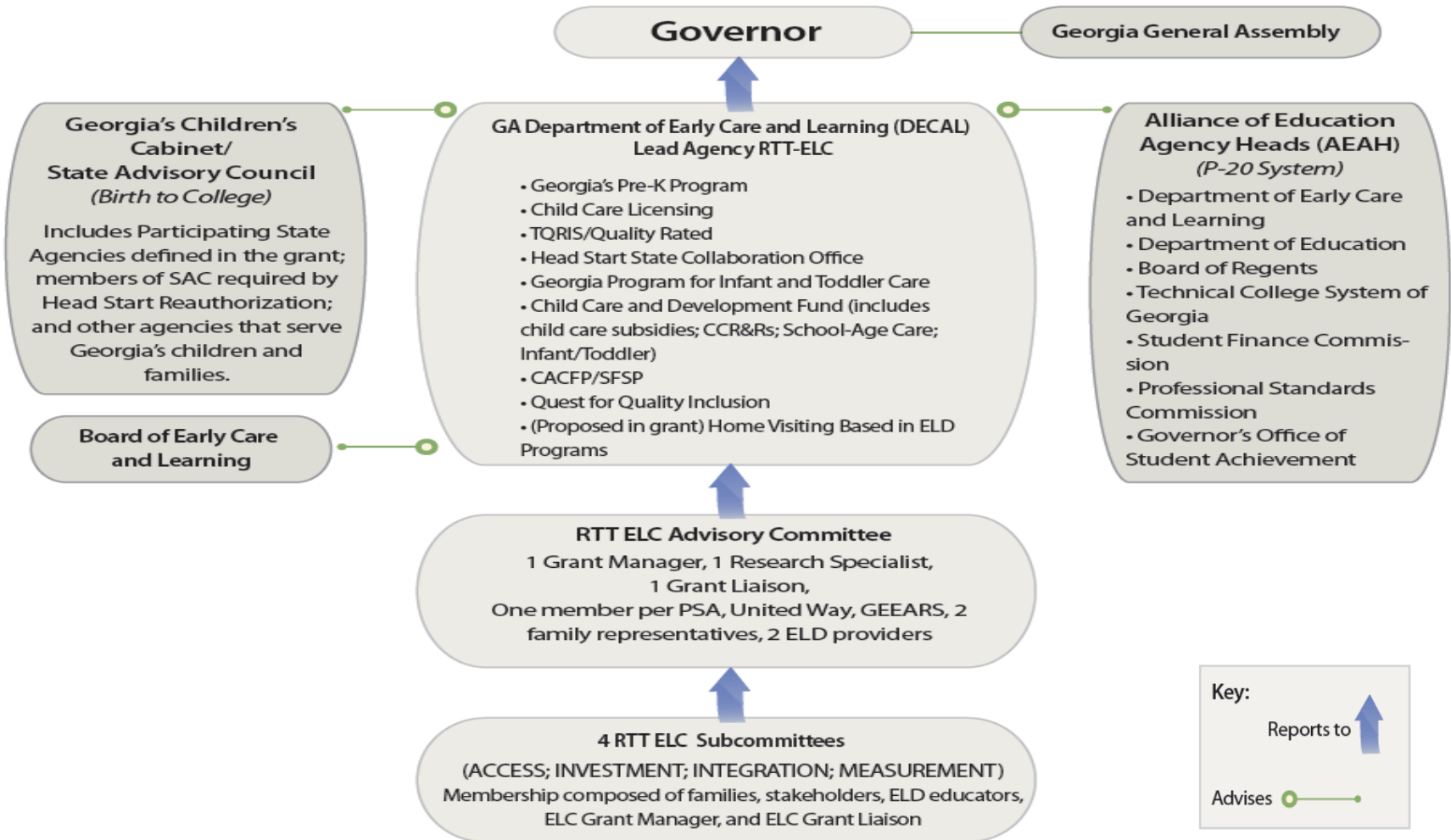
Grant Governance

- The governance of Georgia's early learning and development system is anchored in the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.
- Georgia is one of three states with a department of state government dedicated solely to the early learning needs of children ages birth to five, their families, and the professionals who serve them.

Key Partners in Governance

Lead Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• DECAL<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deputy Commissioner for System Reform
Leadership Advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Georgia Children’s Cabinet (Georgia State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care)• Alliance of Education Agency Heads
Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ELC Advisory Committee<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Includes representatives from each participating state agency, philanthropic partners, the workforce, and families
Advisory Subcommittees <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access• Investment• Integration• Measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ELC Advisory Subcommittees<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Four advisory committees, composed of families, stakeholders, ELD educators, and others

ELD System Governance Framework



Detailed Project Overview



Successful State Systems

Grant Management

- Purpose: Oversee implementation of Georgia's Early Learning Challenge Agenda
- Activities:
 - Oversee day-to-day activities and contracts related to the grant
 - Ensure that projects and activities are interconnected and align with other key initiatives across agencies and state priorities
 - Manage stakeholder engagement and communication across projects
- Requested ELC Funding: \$1.6M

Successful State Systems

Early Education Empowerment Zones (E³Zs)

- **Purpose:** Align supports, activities, and services in geographical areas with large numbers or high percentages of children with high needs and improve infrastructure for high-quality early learning programs
- **Activities:**
 - Offer increased incentives for offering and selecting high-quality early learning environments
 - Work with community leaders to improve early childhood infrastructure and increase economic opportunities
 - Utilize Georgia's existing tax incentives based on job creation to encourage high quality providers to open in E³Zs
- **Requested ELC Funding: \$2.5M**

High Quality, Accountable Programs

Quality Rated Validation

- Purpose: Expand research and data activities that will evaluate current and future efforts
- Activities:
 - Implement additional Quality Rated validation activities
 - Includes research studies that measure statewide quality and the impact of Quality Rated on children's development and growth
- ELC Funding Requested: \$2.2M

High Quality, Accountable Programs

Quality Rated Access & Availability

- Purpose: Expand access to high-quality early education programs by creating new incentives for providers to raise quality and for parents to choose quality
- Activities:
 - Revise Quality Rated standards based on results of validation project
 - Drastically increase the number of programs participating in Quality Rated
 - Increase the number of families choosing higher quality programs by decreasing family co-pays
 - Create a grant program that pays higher rates to programs offering the highest level of care
 - Expand access to a high-quality Summer Transition Program for rising Pre-K students and rising Kindergartners
- Requested ELC Funding: \$24.9M

Promoting Early Learning Outcomes

Early Learning and Development Standards

- Purpose: Ensure that Georgia's research-based early learning and development standards are appropriately used statewide in early learning programs
- Activities:
 - Expand the comprehensive roll-out of the newly launched Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS)
 - Develop training and resources for all stakeholders
 - Create professional development tools for early childhood educators for working with English Language Learners
- ELC Funding Requested: \$2.1M

Promoting Early Learning Outcomes

Family Engagement

- Purpose: Increase and improve early education family engagement opportunities across the state
- Activities:
 - Revise Quality Rated Family Engagement Standards
 - Expand GELDS awareness campaign to families through partnerships with local Family Connection Partnership and Parent to Parent organizations
- ELC Funding Requested: \$408,677

Promoting Early Learning Outcomes

Home Visitation

- Purpose: Implement an early childhood systems of care framework in child care centers with home visitation as a major service strategy
- Activities:
 - Expand Georgia's home visiting program, Great Start Georgia, by creating home visiting and family engagement hubs in 3-star child care centers in each E³Z
 - Provide targeted professional development to Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers through Head Start and Early Head Start
- ELC Funding Requested: \$211,904

Great Workforce

Workforce Knowledge and Competencies

- Purpose: Improve and expand Georgia's Workforce Knowledge and Competency (WKC) Framework
- Activities:
 - Revise Georgia's WKC Framework
 - Review post-secondary early learning and development coursework to ensure alignment to the WKC Framework and the GELDS
 - Increase articulation among institutions of higher learning to increase student success and persistence in achieving advanced credentials in early childhood education
- Requested ELC Funding: \$112,000

Great Workforce

Supporting Early Educators

- Purpose: Create and align projects and initiatives that will continue to strengthen and further professionalize Georgia's early childhood education workforce
- Activities:
 - Expand SCHOLARSHIPS and INCENTIVES programs to increase the number of early childhood educators moving along a knowledge and career pathway
 - Implement the Georgia Professional Development Hierarchy to provide professional development on using standards, improving teacher-child interactions, and aligning instruction with formative assessments
- Requested ELC Funding: \$3.8M

Measuring Outcomes & Progress

Comprehensive Assessment

- Purpose: Identify a set of common child assessments with professional development and policy guidelines for use
- Activities:
 - Create a Task Force for Comprehensive Assessment to recommend ways to build on the assessment systems in Georgia's Pre-K Program and Quality Rated
 - Contract with experts to review and align various assessment methods with the GELDS
 - Incorporate assessments in other early learning and development programs
- ELC Funding Requested: \$51,450

Measuring Outcomes & Progress

Kindergarten Entry Assessment

- Purpose: Implement a formative assessment that will be conducted during the first six weeks of children's Kindergarten experience so each student receives a measurement of Kindergarten readiness that teachers can use to individualize instruction
- Activities
 - Augment Georgia's current formative assessment to implement a Kindergarten entry profile
- ELC Funding Requested: \$5M

Measuring Outcomes & Progress

Unified Data Systems

- Purpose: Expand the quality of data collected on children, programs, and educators
- Activities:
 - Pool additional, existing data feeds from participating state agencies to expand the Cross Agency Child Data System
 - Create a web portal for providers to enter and use data to streamline program processes and reduce processing time
 - Develop tools and resources to make data more readily available at the child and program level
- Requested ELC Funding: \$3M

What's Next?



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

www.decal.ga.gov

Next Steps

- Submit an overall Scope of Work that includes an aggressive timeline and specific deliverables and milestones to accomplish the projects and tasks identified in our application to U.S. DOE and HHS by March 31st
 - U.S. DOE and HHS have three months to approve Georgia's Scope of Work after it is submitted
- Can begin implementing projects and expending funds (up to 10%) before the Scope of Work is approved
- Currently working with each Participating State Agency to finalize agency scopes of work, interagency agreements, and budgets
- Scopes of Work from partner agencies due to DECAL by March 1st

And then...full implementation!



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

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Lunch

(Served in Entry Area)

Committee Meetings

Programs – Hickory

Budget/Finance – Willow

Ethics – Cypress

(The public is welcome to attend/observe committee meetings but may not participate in the committee's discussion.)

Welcome to the Board of Early Care and Learning

PUBLIC HEARING

February 20, 2014

Board Action on:

***Rules and Regulations for
Child Care Learning Centers,
Rule Chapter 591-1-1***

Proposed Amendment of Rule 591-1-1-.36

Board Action on:

***Rules and Regulations for
Group Day Care Homes,
Rule Chapter 290-2-1***

**Proposed Amendment of Rule 290-2-1-11
Proposed Adoption of Rule 290-2-1-.21**

Board Action on:

***Rules and Regulations for
Family Day Care Homes,
Rule Chapter 290-2-3***

Proposed Amendment of Rule 290-2-3-.11

Remaining Board Meeting Dates 2014

May 22, 2014

August 21, 2014

November 13, 2014

Remember the legislative reception
hosted by *Voices for Georgia's Children*

Thursday, February 27, 2014

Georgia Freight Depot