

## Meeting Summary

August 17, 2017

### Attendees

#### **Board Members:**

Susan Harper, Jerri Kropp, Victor Morgan, Melissa Boekhaus, Phil Davis, Kay Ford, Tangel Johnson, Luann Purcell, Carlene Talton, Kathy Howell, Sheri Hooper

#### **Guests:**

*Lynn Manfredi-Petitt, Joe Perrault, Bibi Omar, John Watson, Melissa Johnson, Ann Rosenthal, Jaze Verlenden*

#### **Bright from the Start Staff:**

Commissioner Amy Jacobs, Elisabetta Kasfir, Craig Detweiler, Reg Griffin, Ray Higgins, Kristie Lewis, Ira Sudman, Woody Dover, Falita Flowers, Carol Hartman, Sharon McPherson, Rian Ringsrud, Robin Stevens, Mark Waits, Jessie Bruno, Faith Duncan, William Cox, Carrie Ashbee, Amy Page, Pam Stevens, Denise Jenson, Meghan Dean, Randy Hudgins, Shannon Williams

The August 17, 2017 meeting of the Board of Early Care and Learning opened with the approval of the day's agenda and the May 11, 2017 board meeting minutes. Inspiration honoring the late Dr. Elizabeth Ragsdale was given by board chair Susan Harper.

Members of the board provided updates on their activities:

- Susan Harper read to the Pre-K class at Jackson Elementary, the school at which she used to teach. She encouraged board members to read to classes during the upcoming Pre-K week.

DECAL staff provided updates on their program areas:

- Commissioner Amy Jacobs, reminded the board that Georgia's Pre-K Week will be here again soon. This year Georgia's Pre-K is also celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. DECAL is hosting a variety of activities to celebrate. There will be a big event in February also hosted by GEEARS. The communications team is collecting photos and testimonials from people who attended Georgia's Pre-K that first year. Six finalists for Pre-K Teachers of the Year 2017-2018 have been identified. Two winners will be chosen and provided with cash awards thanks to the generosity of Stephanie Blank and her foundation. Carrie Ashbee has submitted the necessary paperwork to the IRS for a 501(c)(3) designation and to the Secretary of State for establishing the Georgia Foundation for Early Care and Learning. The Georgia Center for Early Language and Literacy was named in honor of First Lady Sandra Deal. This will be a resource for the state and for birth to eight teachers. The new literary resource Words2Reading website was launched by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement. DECAL's annual All Staff meeting will be held October 24<sup>th</sup> at the Georgia International Convention Center. Board members are invited and encouraged to attend.
- Ray Higgins, Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration, presented the budget report for the last quarter as of June 30. The year finished strong; all general funds were spent. The board will be asked to approve the budget proposal for the Amended FY18 budget and the FY19 budget later this afternoon. Mr. Higgins reminded board members that HB 494 which addresses federal changes made regarding criminal records checks (CRC) will appear before the legislature in the next session.
- Elisabetta Kasfir, Assistant Commissioner for Federal Programs, provided updates on the CAPS transition project. CAPS will continue to serve the same number of children as served last year. New applicants must meet CAPS eligibility requirements and be in a priority group. Providers serving CAPS families must be Quality Rated by 2020. Georgia Gateway has launched statewide. This will be a centralized service platform for clients. 80 new CAPS staff members started on August 16<sup>th</sup>. They are currently trying different metrics to measure performance.
- Kristie Lewis, Assistant Commissioner for Child Care Services, presented statistics on annual licensing and monitoring visits from last fiscal year. Last year consultants made 15,069 visits. A new enforcement system, was launched a year ago, and the roll out is showing signs of successful implementation. About 98% of all programs are in good standing. Amy Page and Randy Hudgins updated the board on the Exemption Visit Project. Consulting group, Child Trends, has completed data collection from the project. A full report of the project is expected in late fall 2017.
- Shannon Williams, Communications Coordinator, highlighted important DECAL stories in the news lately. The Governor and First Lady hosted a news conference for the Look Again Campaign. Commissioner Jacobs filmed a PSA for Look Again, distributed via TV and social media platforms. The communications division is working on projects celebrating Georgia's Pre-K's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday. DECAL has close to 9,500 Facebook likes, and CALi has her own Facebook page.

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- Susan Adams, Assistant Commissioner of Pre-K and Instructional Supports Services, and Dr. Meghan Dean, Senior Research and Policy Analyst, presented findings from the 2015-2016 Georgia's Pre-K longitudinal study. This most recent report details findings on results through 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Ms. Adams also announced about Early Language and Literacy Grants to provide resources for classrooms and opportunities for professional development for infant and toddler teachers. DECAL has awarded grants to 16 programs and 50 classes across Georgia.
- Allison Setterlind, Head Start Collaboration Director, has submitted the Head Start Collaboration Office grant proposal for the next five years. She is working with partners at DFCS to study the foster care program at the local level, and to assess what processes could be improved to better serve children in foster care. Through a partnership with the University of South Florida, Head Start has studied absenteeism in Head Start programs. Absenteeism has decreased 10% between 2016 and 2017. Allison credits this success to the Head Start programs and to the Family Engagement and Support team at DECAL.
- Kristin Bernhard, Deputy Commissioner of System Reform, announced that Georgia was one of five states selected for the Parents and Children Thriving Together (PACTT) Grant. 60% of all child care programs are participating in Quality Rated but may not be rated yet. This means that one out of three programs has a rating of a 1, 2, or 3 star. Georgia's Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS) began in 2008, and it now has a live website at [www.gacacds.com](http://www.gacacds.com). This data system is housed and managed at DECAL but has been a collaborative effort across state agencies including Georgia Department of Education, the Department of Public Health, the Division of Family and Child Services, and Head Start grantees.

During lunch board committees met together and heard more from DECAL staff:

- Ray Higgins went over the budget request for the Amended FY18 and the FY19 budgets. Sharon McPherson provided additional details on the content of the budget proposal.
- Falita Flowers updated the board on the conclusion of the Summer Food Service Program. The USDA is in the process of monitoring some of the Nutrition division's projects. Kristie Lewis discussed the protocol for handling comments sent to board members.
- Carol Hartman announced that the Early Head Start Partnership completed a federal monitoring review and received no comments or recommendations. Pam Stevens announced subsidy grants for infant toddler programs project. The first findings from the study were positive. The full report can be found on the [DECAL Research webpage](#). Denise Jenson updated the board on managing a new IT system for Quality Rated. The implementation is going well.

At 1 p.m. the board provided time to hear public comments. No one signed up to speak, so Susan recessed the public hearing to continue board business.

The budget for FY 2019 passed the board vote. New budget is officially approved.

The following proposed board meeting dates for 2018 were approved by the board:

February 15, 2018

May 10, 2018

August 16, 2018

November 15, 2018

The public comment portion of the board meeting reconvened. No one had signed up to comment so Board Chair Susan Harper adjourned the public comment period.

She announced that the next meeting of the board will take place November 16, 2017.

Board Chair Susan Harper adjourned the board meeting at 1:08 p.m.