

# Welcome to the Board of Early Care and Learning

*February 15, 2024*



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**

**BRIGHT FROM THE START**

# Board Meeting Welcome

*Phil Davis, Board Chair*



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**

BRIGHT FROM THE START

# Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- Approve 02/15/2024 agenda
- Approve 11/16/2023 minutes



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**

BRIGHT FROM THE START

# Inspiration

Kristin Morrissey



Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

# Board Member Updates

# Honoring Dr. Luann L. Purcell

---



# Commissioner's Updates

*Amy M. Jacobs, Commissioner*



# House Working Group On Early Childhood Education

---

In March 2023, Speaker Jon Burns established the House Working Group on Early Childhood Education to address issues in Georgia's Pre-K program. Speaker Pro Tempore Jan Jones was selected to lead the group, which studied the assigned topic during the interim between the 2023 and 2024 sessions; with valuable input from DECAL.

In January 2024, this study committee reported back on its findings and made the following **key recommendations**.



*House Speaker Pro Tempore Jan Jones speaks at a press conference announcing plans to bolster pre-K on Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2024, at the Georgia Capitol in Atlanta. Also behind the plan is House Speaker Jon Burns (right). (Olivia Bowdoin for The Atlanta Journal-Constitution)*





# Key Recommendations for Georgia's Pre-K Program

---

## 1. Restore Pre-Kindergarten Class Size to 20 Students

- **Issue:** Class size increased to 22 students in FY 2012, deviating from the NIEER benchmark of 20 students. Testimonies cite challenges with larger class sizes.
- **Recommendation:** Restore class size to 20 students, adding 382 new classrooms phased over four years.

## 2. Increase Salaries for Assistant Teachers

- **Issue:** Current assistant teacher salary of \$20,190 is challenging for recruitment. Discrepancy with K-12 paraprofessional salaries.
- **Recommendation:** Increase assistant teacher salary to \$25,741, benchmarked to the average K-12 paraprofessional salary.

## 3. Provide Pay Parity Between Pre-K and K-12 Teachers

- **Issue:** Changes in Pre-K lead teacher salary structure created a gap compared to K-12 teachers. Discrepancies worsen with local school system supplements.
- **Recommendation:** Align Pre-K lead teacher salaries with K-12 schedule. Hold harmless provision until affected teachers reach higher years of experience.



# Key Recommendations for Georgia's Pre-K Program

---

## 4. Increase Operating Funds for Pre-K Programs

- **Issue:** Outdated start-up grant amount (\$8,000 per classroom since FY 2004). Lack of material refresh funds. Transportation costs are barriers for low-income students.
- **Recommendation:** Increase start-up grants to \$30,000 per classroom, provide \$15,000 for material refresh on a five-year cycle, and allocate \$80.78 per student for transportation.

## 5. Capital Construction (Public Providers)

- **Issue:** Current rules exclude Pre-K classrooms from capital funds, causing challenges in accommodating growing enrollment within existing K-12 facilities.
- **Recommendation:** Allow Pre-K enrollment to be factored into entitlement earnings and explore funding options within the state's bond package for additional construction costs related to Pre-K classrooms.

## 6. Equivalent Lease Payments (Private Providers)

- **Issue:** Lack of state funding for private Pre-K classroom construction. Disparity between metro and non-metro programs.
- **Recommendation:** Provide ongoing annual lease payments of \$14,473 for metro and \$10,879 for non-metro private providers. Differentiate rates based on operating childcare centers' square footage costs.



# Pre-K Teacher of the Year



**Merodie Brown**

New Odyssey for Children  
Gwinnett County





# MERODIE BROWN

GA Pre-K Teacher  
New Odyssey for Children  
Teacher of the Year  
2023-2024  
M. Ed. Early Childhood  
Gifted Certified



# WHY DO I TEACH PRE-K?

- Love of Learning & Curiosity
- Social & Emotional Growth
- Independence & Confidence
  - Foundation for Success

TEACHER OF THE YEAR

+



o



.





# MY FAMILY

- My husband, Robert
- Aaliyah, 14
- Eli & Isaiah, 13
- Madeline, 9
- Leia, Han Solo, & Ahsoka





+

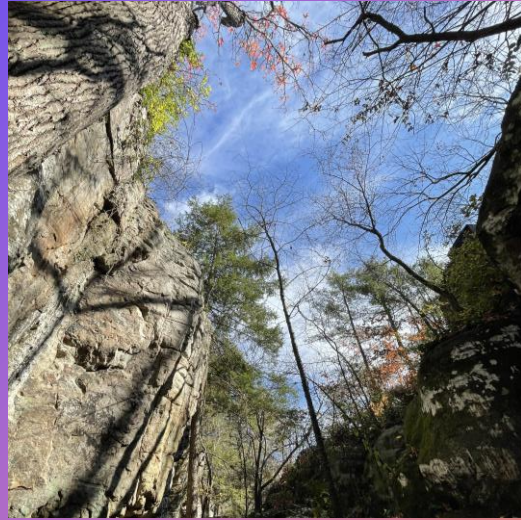


o



# GARDENING

I love everything green! I have a large garden and greenhouse where I grow a variety of vegetables, flowers, and herbs. My home is also filled with many types of tropical plants, my own little jungle!



# HIKING & NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

I enjoy being outside in nature and exploring new places anytime I can! I love hiking in the mountains to waterfalls, lakes, and scenic overlooks. Going on adventures with my family and friends is one of my favorite things to do. I find nature so beautiful and am always finding new angles to capture it in photographs.





## SERVING AS TEACHER OF THE YEAR MEANS MORE THAN I CAN SAY...

Being chosen as TOTY along with Charlotte has been the most incredible honor. I believe that GA Pre-K is essential and enriches the lives of every student in our program. I am grateful to have the opportunity to share my passion for teaching and speak about what our students need to thrive.

Thank you for choosing me to represent GA Pre-K and our amazing, dedicated teachers!

# Board Resolution



Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning  
BRIGHT FROM THE START


# Pre-K Teacher of the Year



**Charlotte Richards**

Chattahoochee Pre-K  
Chattahoochee County





# GETTING TO KNOW YOUR GEORGIA'S PRE-K TOTY

CHARLOTTE RICHARDS

🐾 CCEC 🐾  
PANTHERS



**PRE-K  
TEACHER OF  
THE YEAR!**

This is my seventh-year  
teaching Pre-K

I have been in education for  
15 years


I have been with the same  
school district for my entire  
teaching career- ChattCo

# WHY TEACH PRE-K?

I want to give to students what my teachers gave me... a chance



I want to set the tone for a great educational journey



Being a child's first teacher gives me the chance to create a life-time love of learning



## MY FAMILY

My Husband, Joe

My daughter, Alissya, 17

My son, Josiah, 9

Coming September 2024, Baby Richards

My Daddy, Charlie

My Brothers, Sidney and Kevin

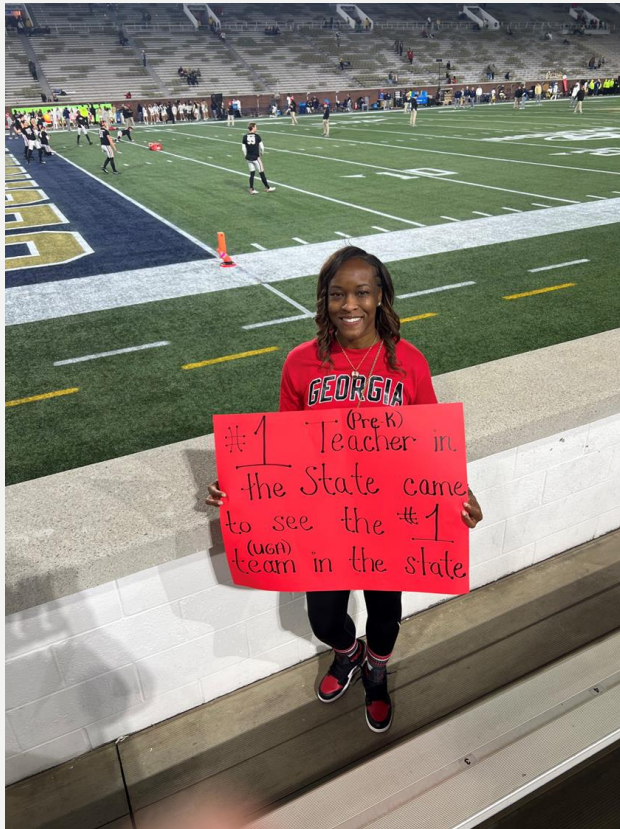
My Sister, Amanda

My heart, My Mama, Judith

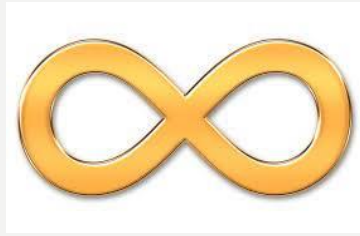


# IN MY SPARE TIME

- Attending Georgia Football Games- GO Dawgs
  - Vacationing with family
  - Supporting community events







BEING CHOSEN AS TOTY ALLOWS ME TO SHOW OTHERS THAT NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE!



Coming from a small rural town, with no grocery store, not even a traffic light, and yet I made history. TAKE A CHANCE ON YOURSELF WHILE GIVING OTHERS A CHANCE TO DREAM BIG!



It shines the spotlight on how vital PRE-K is to a child's education

**IF I CAN DO IT,  
SO CAN YOU!**



# Board Resolution



Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

# Finance, Legislative, & Administrative Updates

*Rian Ringsrud, Deputy Commissioner for Finance & Administration*



Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

## FY 2024 Budget Comparison

Data as of Dec 31st      Budget      Expenditures\*      Remaining Balance      % Remaining

### BY PROGRAMS

Child Care Services	\$946,597,941	\$615,083,890	\$331,514,051	35%
Nutrition	\$170,000,000	\$84,777,382	\$85,222,618	50%
Pre-K + (HS)	\$443,965,064	\$213,308,478	\$230,656,586	52%
Quality Initiatives	\$57,693,238	\$20,398,050	\$37,295,188	65%
Totals	\$1,618,256,243	\$933,567,800	\$684,688,443	42%

### BY FUNDING SOURCES

State General	\$62,534,475	\$31,665,064	\$30,869,411	49%
State Lottery	\$443,790,064	\$213,225,241	\$230,564,823	52%
Federal	\$1,111,432,204	\$688,451,270	\$422,980,934	38%
Other	\$499,500	\$226,226	\$273,274	55%
Totals	\$1,618,256,243	\$933,567,800	\$684,688,443	42%

\* Includes encumbrances.

# Finance Update FY 2024 Budget Summary – Q2



## Governor's AFY 2024 Recommendation

	Original FY 2024 Appropriation	AFY 2024 Recommendation	Change
<b>BY PROGRAMS</b>			
Child Care Services	\$330,040,159	\$330,511,666	\$471,507
Nutrition	\$170,000,000	\$170,155,978	\$155,978
Pre-K + (HS)	\$443,965,064	\$459,898,462	\$15,933,398
Quality Initiatives	\$57,693,238	\$57,817,036	\$123,798
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,001,698,461</b>	<b>\$1,018,383,142</b>	<b>\$16,684,681</b>

<b>BY FUNDING SOURCES</b>			
State General	\$62,534,475	\$62,534,365	\$751,283
State Lottery	\$443,790,064	\$435,610,158	\$15,933,398
Federal	\$494,874,422	\$475,649,841	\$0
Other	\$499,500	\$499,500	\$0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$1,001,698,461</b>	<b>\$1,018,383,142</b>	<b>\$16,684,681</b>

# Governor's Recommendation AFY 2024



# Child Care Services

State General Funds Change			
FY 2024	AFY 2024	Increase	% Change
\$62,534,475	\$63,005,982	\$471,507	1.43%

## Increase

- Increase funds to provide a one-time \$1,000 salary supplement for full-time, benefit-eligible employees for recruitment and retention= \$471,507

Governor's  
Recommendation  
AFY 2024



# Nutrition Services

State General Funds Change			
FY 2024	AFY 2024	Increase	% Change
\$0	\$ 155,978	\$ 155,978	100%

## Increase

- Increase funds to provide a one-time \$1,000 salary supplement for full-time, benefit-eligible employees for recruitment and retention= \$55,978
- Provide startup grants of up to \$10,000 per provider to establish additional Summer Food Service Program meal sites in areas with high rates of child food insecurity= \$100,000

Governor's  
Recommendation  
AFY 2024



# Pre-K Program

State Lottery Funds Change			
FY 2024	AFY 2024	Increase	% Change
\$ 443,790,064	\$ 459,723,462	\$ 15,933,398	3.59%

## Increase

- Increase funds to provide a one-time \$1,000 salary supplement for Pre-K lead and assistant teachers as well as full-time, benefit-eligible state employees = \$8,300,892
- Provide funds for computer refresh= \$99,574
- Increase funds to reflect the correct employer contribution rate for State Health Benefit Plan= \$1,389,766
- Increase funds to expand the Summer Transition Program with income eligibility requirements= \$6,143,166

# Governor's Recommendation AFY 2024





# Quality Initiatives

State General Funds Change			
FY 2024	AFY 2024	Increase	% Change
\$0	\$123,798	\$123,798	100%

## Increase

- Increase funds to provide a one-time \$1,000 salary supplement for full-time, benefit-eligible employees for recruitment and retention= \$123,798

Governor's  
Recommendation  
AFY 2024



## Governor's FY 2025 Recommendation

	Original FY 2024 Appropriation	AFY 2025 Recommendation	Change
--	-----------------------------------	----------------------------	--------

### BY PROGRAMS

Child Care Services	\$330,040,159	\$334,753,870	\$4,713,711
Nutrition	\$170,000,000	\$170,000,000	\$0
Pre-K + (HS)	\$443,965,064	\$489,997,949	\$46,032,885
Quality Initiatives	\$57,693,238	\$57,817,036	\$0
Totals	\$1,001,698,461	\$1,052,445,057	\$50,746,596

### BY FUNDING SOURCES

State General	\$62,534,475	\$67,248,186	\$4,713,711
State Lottery	\$443,790,064	\$489,822,949	\$46,032,885
Federal	\$494,874,422	\$494,874,422	\$0
Other	\$499,500	\$499,500	\$0
Totals	\$1,001,698,461	\$1,052,445,057	\$50,746,596

# Governor's Recommendation FY 2025



# Child Care Services

State General Funds Change			
FY 2024	FY 2025	Increase	% Change
\$62,534,475	\$67,248,186	\$4,713,711	7.54%

## Increase

- Increase funds to provide for a 4% cost-of-living-adjustment for state employees not to exceed \$3,000= \$35,010
- Increase funds to raise Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) reimbursement to the 50th percentile of market rates for childcare providers in accordance with federal regulation= \$4,634,508

# Governor's Recommendation FY 2025



# Pre-K Program

State Lottery Funds Change			
FY 2024	FY 2025	Increase	% Change
\$443,790,064	\$489,822,949	\$46,032,885	10.37%

## Increase

- Increase funds to provide for a 4% cost-of-living-adjustment for state employees not to exceed \$3,000= \$242,607
- Provide funds for computer refresh= \$49,787
- Increase funds to expand the Summer Transition Program with income eligibility requirements= \$6,143,166
- Increase funds to adjust the state base salary schedule to increase salaries for certified Pre-K teachers and assistant teachers by \$2,500= \$23,560,469

# Governor's Recommendation FY 2025



# Pre-K Program

State Lottery Funds Change			
FY 2024	FY 2025	Increase	% Change
\$443,790,064	\$489,822,949	\$46,032,885	10.37%

## Increase – Continued

- Increase formula funds for teacher training and experience= \$1,261,869
- Increase funds for year one of a four year phase in to reduce classroom size from 22 to 20 students to improve instructional quality= \$10,970,826
- Increase funds to upgrade provider management system= \$612,290
- Increase formula funds to reflect an increase in health insurance employer contribution per-member per- month (PMPM) rate for certified teachers at public Pre-K providers to \$1,760 effective July 1, 2024= \$2,413,793

# Governor's Recommendation FY 2025



# Georgia's Pre-K and Instructional Supports Updates

*Susan Adams, Deputy Commissioner for Georgia's Pre-K and Instructional Supports*



Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

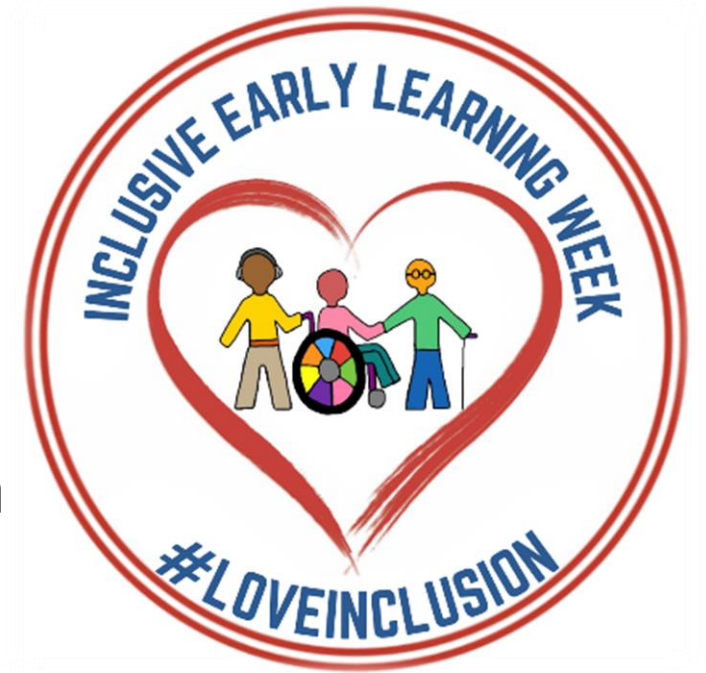
# Inclusive Early Learning Week 2024

---

**February 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>**

## Goals:

- Increase awareness and advocacy around inclusion and supporting children with disabilities and their families.
- Promote application of inclusive practices in early childhood programs.
- Increase access for children and families to inclusive environments.

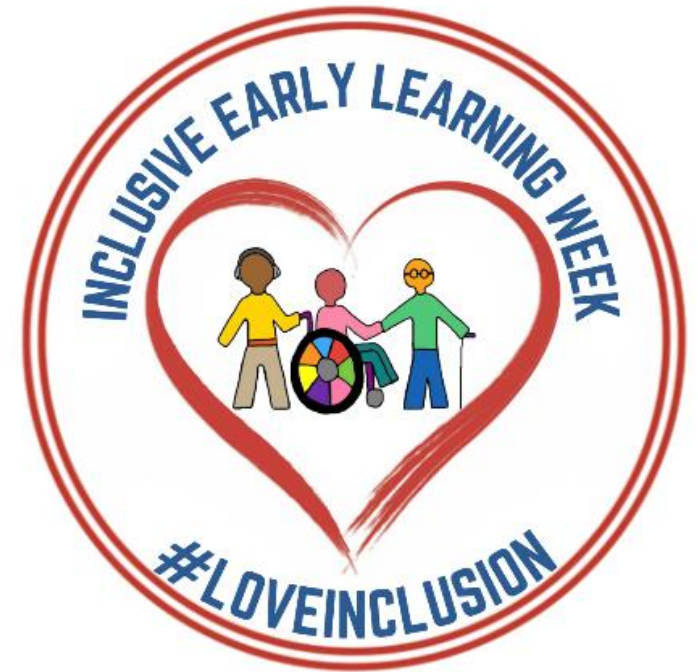


# Inclusive Early Learning Week 2024

---

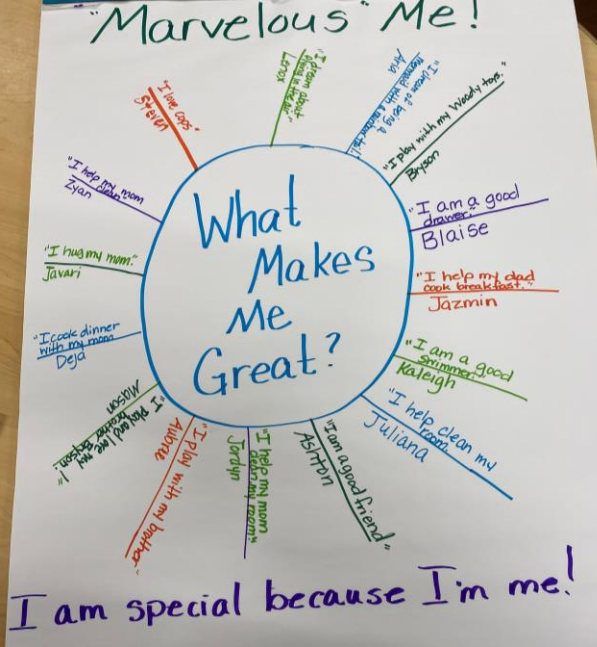
## Special Events:

- Proclamation by Governor Kemp
- Celebration toolkit for providers and families
- #LoveInclusion social media contest
- DECAL Download interview with families and inclusive child care providers
- Special program visits with Commissioner Jacobs and CALi
- Book readings at child care programs





# Inclusive Early Learning Week



# Social Media Engagement Analytics- 2023



184

Mentions



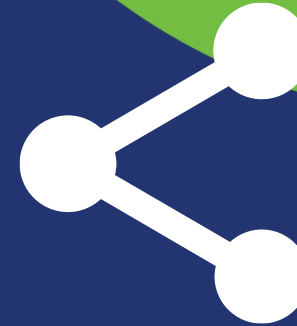
559

Interactions



1.3M

Reach



75

Shares

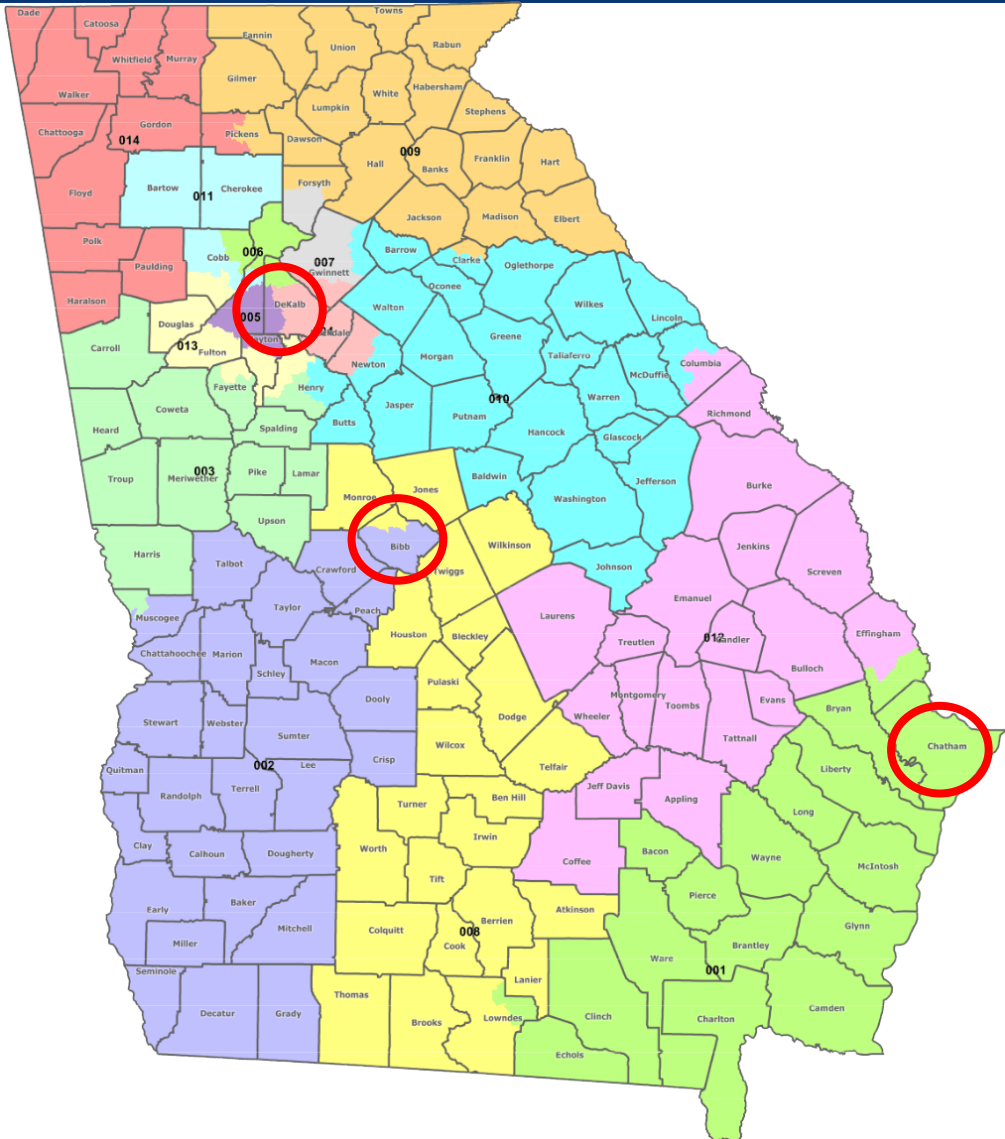


1.4k

Likes



# Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Pilot



Pairs a DECAL Inclusion and Behavior Support Specialist with a contracted master’s level mental health professional to promote social emotional wellbeing for young children birth – age 5 by supporting adult caregivers.



# REMINDER

2024

May

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
CHILDREN'S 6 	CHILDREN'S 7 	CHILDREN'S 8 	CHILDREN'S 9 	CHILDREN'S 10 	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2



**CHILDREN'S**  
MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

is

*May*  
*6th-10th*



Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning

# Georgia's Pre-K Applications

## Summer Transition Program (STP) Application:

- Open to all current Georgia's Pre-K providers
  - Application release date TBD

## Teacher of the Year (TOTY) Application:

- Open to Georgia's Pre-K lead teachers with 3 or more years of experience
  - March 4 – March 22, 2024

## Pre-K Application:

- Open to all eligible providers
  - March 5 – March 28, 2024
- Funding to occur in late spring/early summer



# Federal Programs Updates

*Elisabetta Kasfir, Deputy Commissioner for Federal Programs*



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

# Access and Family Fee Updates



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

# ACCESS

Awarding Child Care Education Scholarship Supplements

# September 2024

ACCESS has been extended through service period ending September 29, 2024.

CAPS will continue to pay the full cost of tuition, minus the family fee.

Families resumed paying their family fee in October 2023.



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**





# Rate Increase - Providers



A 4.3% increase was applied to active CAPS scholarships as of January 29, 2024

DECAL continues to pay the provider's published rates, minus the family fee

Providers can view updated scholarships in GACAPS Provider Portal



# Rate Increase - Families



Families' active CAPS scholarship(s) were updated automatically to reflect the 4.3% rate increase



Updated scholarship(s) were forwarded to families' selected notification preference with CAPS



Families were informed of the rate change



# Provider Relations and GACAPS Updates



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

# CAPS Provider Management and Administration

## Provider Relations Section



Enrollment Services



Provider Support

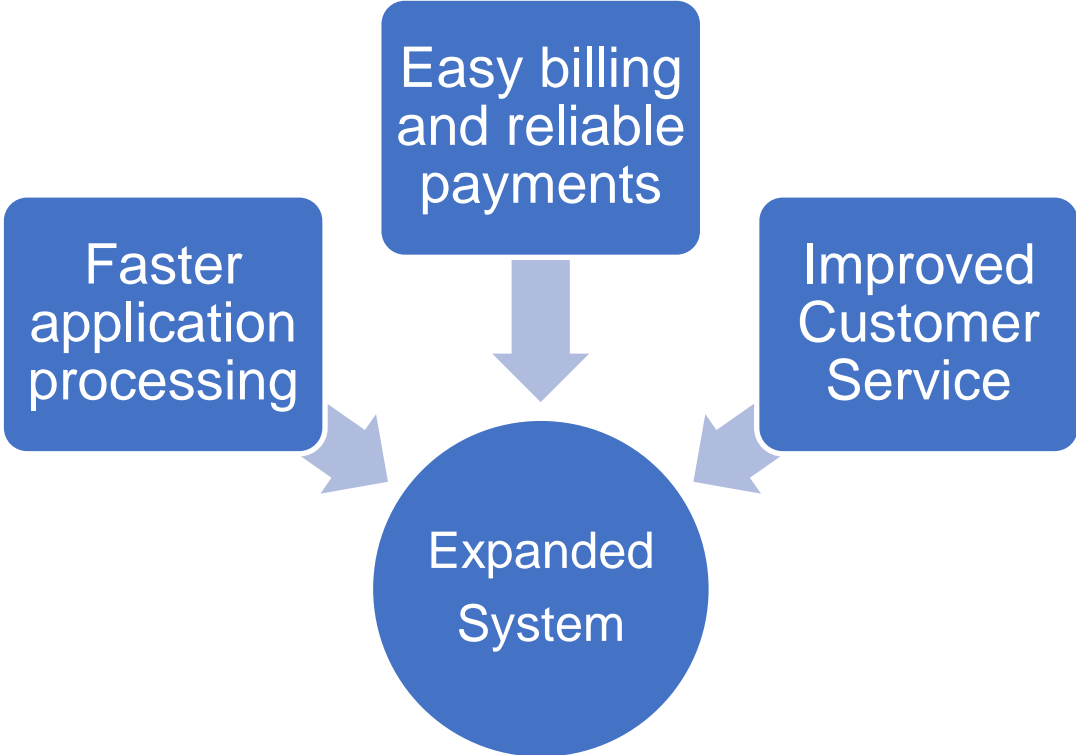


Quality Assurance and Payments



Education and Outreach

## GACAPS System

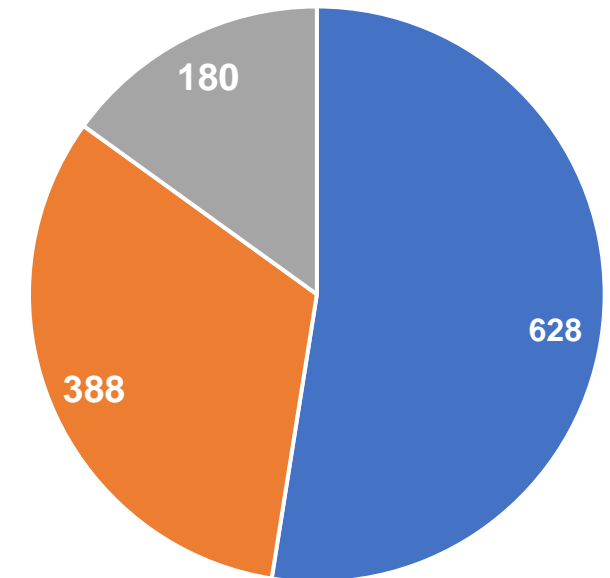


# Provider Relations Education & Outreach

## Pre-implementation Outreach

- Child Care Engagement Network (CCEN) Meetings were held in five regions
- CAPS Provider Informational Webinar
- Provider Town Hall Sessions – *More than 600 providers participated*

## Pre-Go Live Training Provider Participation



■ Provider Townhall Session ■ CAPS Provider Webinar  
■ CCEN Webinar



# Provider Relations Education & Outreach

## Post-implementation Outreach

- Provider information webinar  
December 2023
  - **Live Participants – 872**
  - **Web Page Views - 275**
- Provider updates letters
- Provider quarterly newsletter
- Other support

**Provider Relations Connection**

We are kicking off 2024 by introducing CAPS Provider Relations Connection, a quarterly newsletter to communicate important updates and information about the CAPS program.

**Introducing CAPS' New Division: Provider Relations**

As of November 15, 2023, DECAL is overseeing the provider management function of CAPS to increase services for child care providers who are supporting CAPS parents and children.

Our vision is to optimize the provider experience by coordinating the services of DECAL programs, innovating systems, and providing unparalleled customer support.

Our mission is to support child care providers so that families can access high quality child care and are able to reach their educational and career goals.

If you need any help working with families or administering the CAPS program, contact Provider Relations at [CAPSProviderSupport@decals.ga.gov](mailto:CAPSProviderSupport@decals.ga.gov). Our Provider Support team monitors and tracks this email address to ensure that all emails are responded to within two business days.

We also maintain a Provider Relations webpage at <https://caps.decals.ga.gov/en/ProviderRelations/> to provide the most up-to-date information for our child care community. On the webpage are videos and user guides to help you navigate the Georgia Childcare Administrative Payment System (GACAPS), letters that have been sent to CAPS child care providers, and informational resources.

Another valuable resource is our new *Provider Handbook* that will be available on our webpage under "User Guides."

**In this issue:**

- *Introducing CAPS' New Division: Provider Relations*
- *COVID Billing*
- *CAPS Orientation Information*
- *1099 Information*
- *Transition Support Survey*

Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

Page | 1



# GACAPS Payment Data

---



---

DECAL made over 29,000 payments to 2,860 child care providers since implementing the new GACAPS system.

\*as of January 22, 2024

---

Child care providers logged into the GACAPS system 135,869 times.

\*as of February 4, 2024



# Student Parent Pilot



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START



# Student Parent Pilot

---



Metro: Chattahoochee  
Tech/Cobb County

Central: Central Georgia  
Tech/Bibb County

South: Wiregrass  
Tech/Lowndes County



# Student Parent Pilot Advantages

## Help

Staff will assist to remove barriers for student parents.

## Process

CAPS staff will process applications and interview for CAPS in person in real time.

## Coach

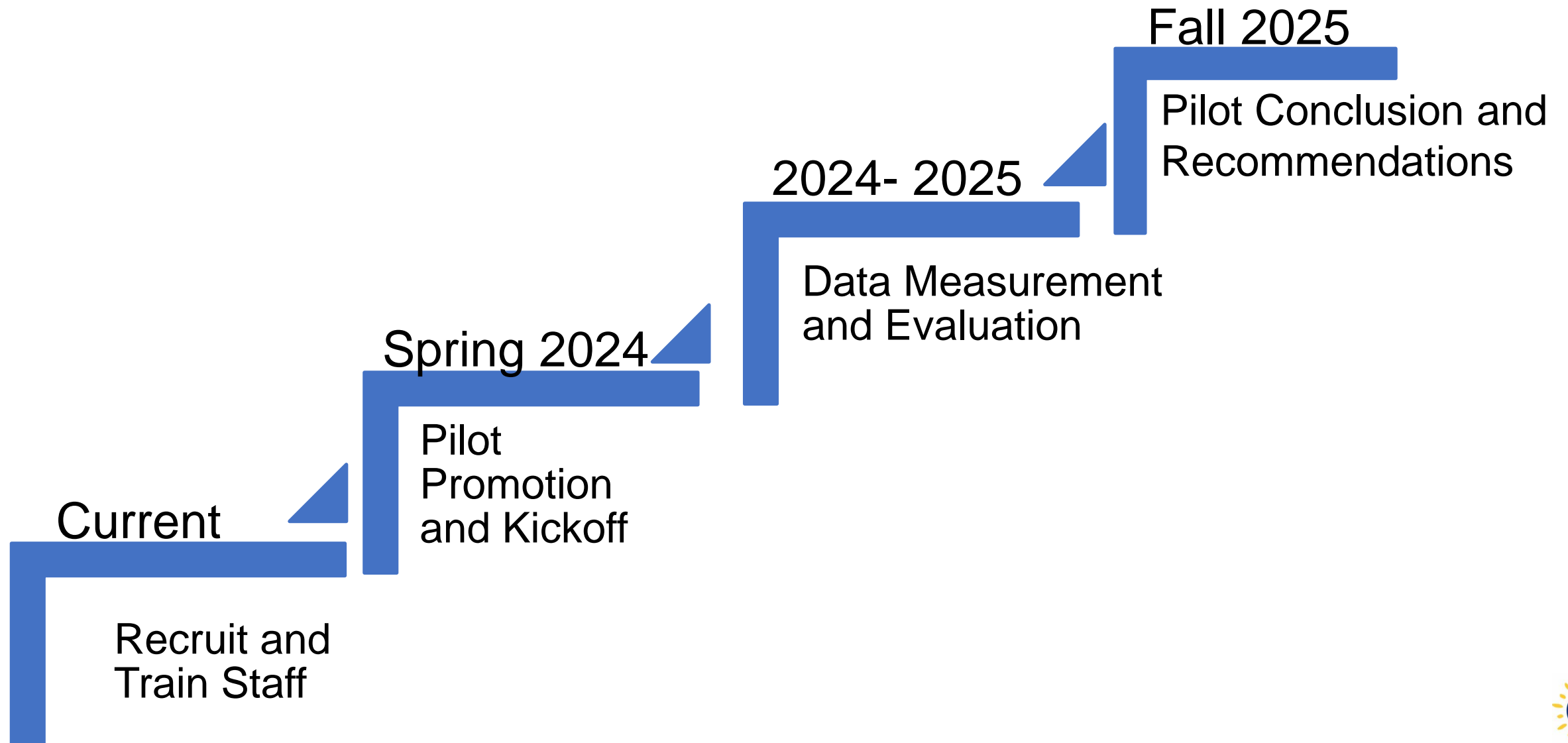
Onsite staff will offer Family Centered Coaching.

## Provide

Student parents will have access to resources such as Find Help Georgia.



# Student Parent Pilot Timeline



# Break

*Ten Minutes*



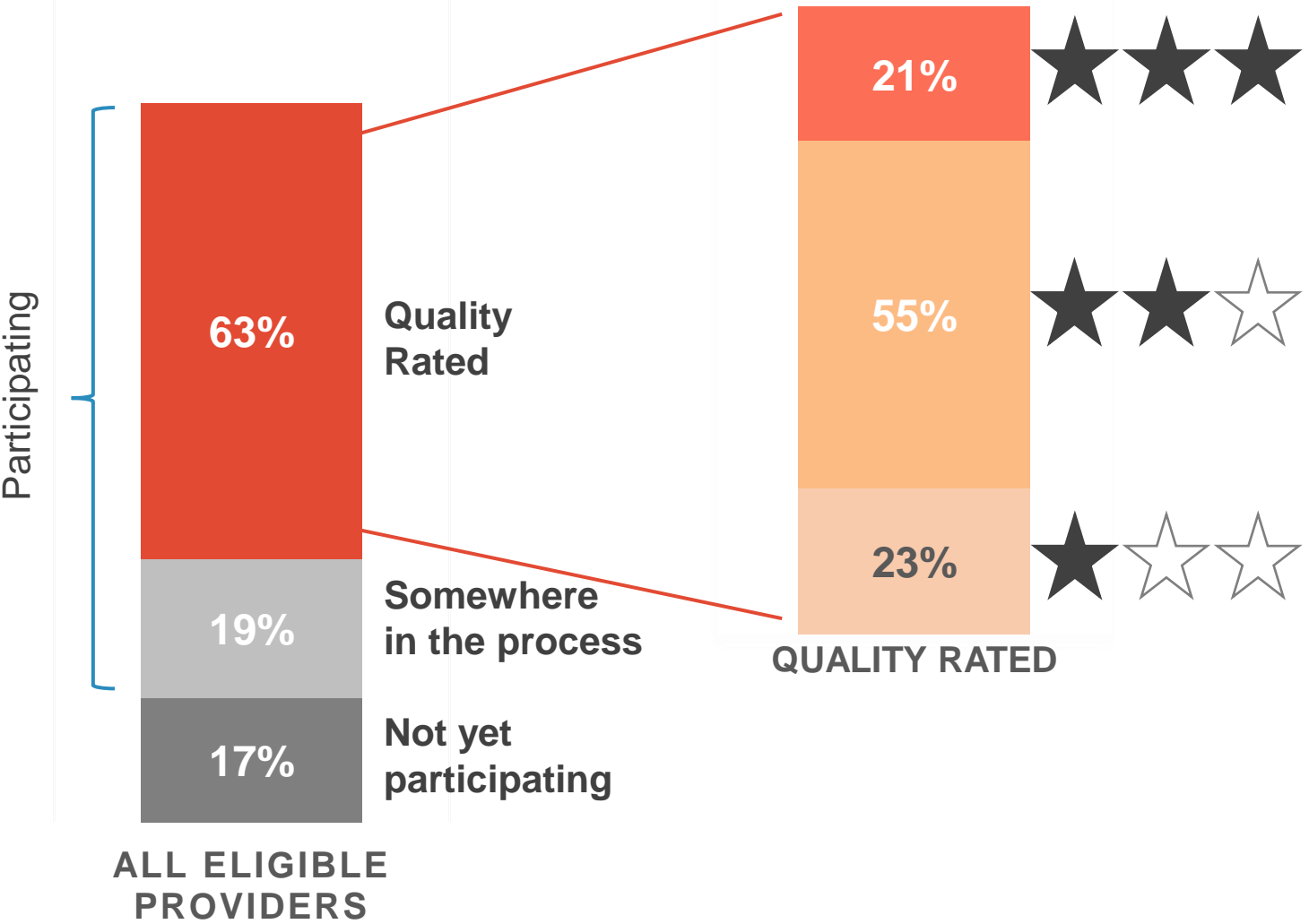
**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

# Quality Innovations and Partnerships Updates

*Bentley Ponder, Deputy Commissioner for Quality Innovations and Partnerships*



# Of Georgia's 4,488 eligible providers, **2,844** are Quality Rated.



# 2023 Ratings Summary

---

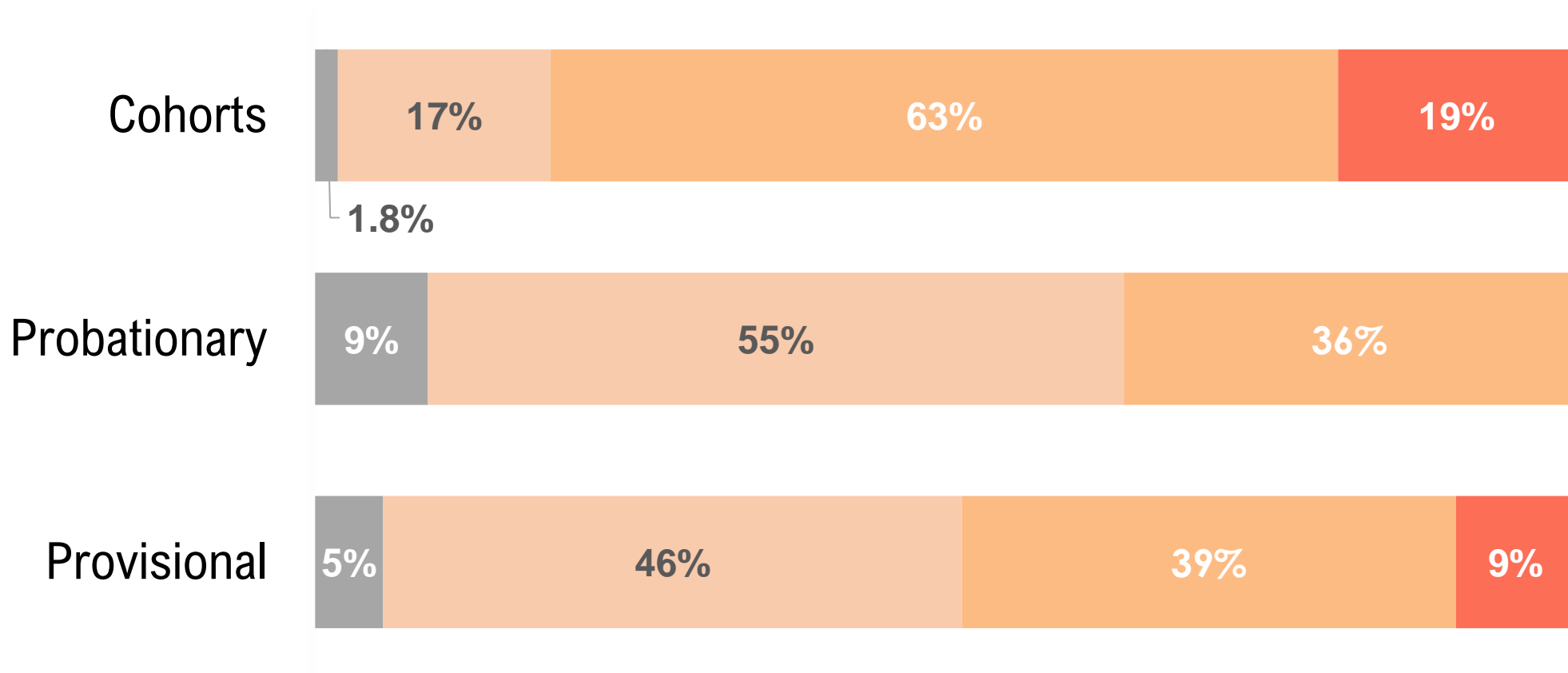
**1,689** ratings issued

Group	Number Rated
Cohort 1	397
Cohort 2	385
Cohort 3	356
Cohort 4	410
Probationary	67
Provisional	74



# 2023 Rating Outcomes

■ Did not rate    ■ 1 Star    ■ 2 Stars    ■ 3 Stars





# Quality Rated Revisions

---

## Completed in 2023:

- Provider surveys
- Family focus groups
- QR staff focus groups
- CCR&R staff focus groups
- ECE national expert focus groups
- DECAL internal leadership workgroups
- Stakeholder data walks

## Coming up:

- Stakeholder convenings in late March
  - Overview of comprehensive review results
  - Proposed revisions to Quality Rated
  - Opportunity to provide feedback
- Posted webinar for those not at the convenings
  - Also includes feedback opportunity



# Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grant

---

- DECAL is not applying for the next 5-year grant cycle
- The current EHS grant will end June 30, 2024
- DECAL is supporting Quality Care for Children's application for the grant
- We are working with all our EHS staff, partners, and families to ensure a smooth transition



# Research Unit Updates

---

- Upcoming release of the Economic Impact Study
- CAPS Research Study
- CAPS TCSG Student Parent Pilot evaluation
- CACDS Demonstration Project
- Quality Rated
- Brief released by the Urban Institute: “Understanding the Need for Nontraditional-Hour Child Care in Georgia”



# EXPAND Grantee

Stephanie Scarce, Director of Workforce Development  
Georgia Association of Manufacturers



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**

BRIGHT FROM THE START



**GAM**

**GEORGIA**  
ASSOCIATION *of*  
**MANUFACTURERS**



# Who We Are

Georgia's only trade association for manufacturers.

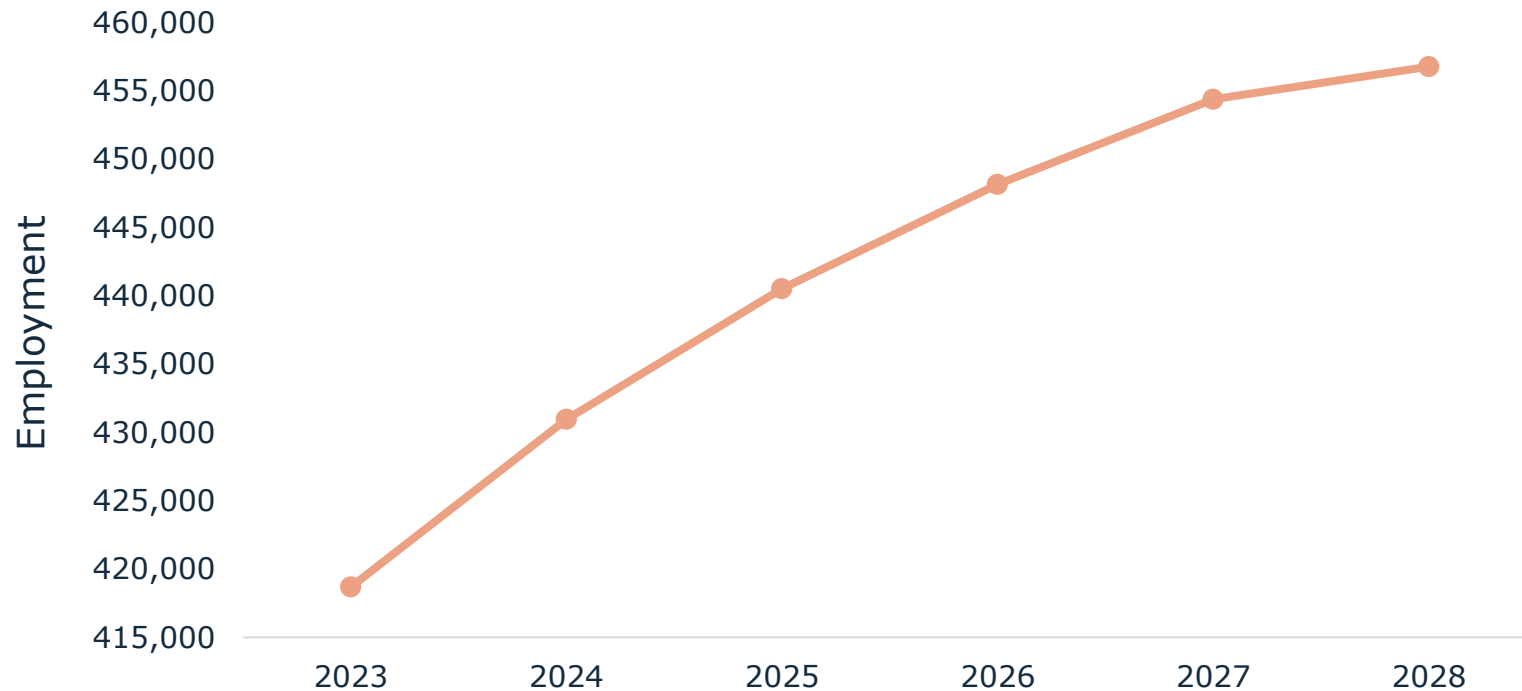
Representing 150 manufacturers, suppliers, and professional service firms.

Visible, vocal, and vital on matters concerning legislation, energy, and workforce.

The logo for the Georgia Association of Manufacturers (GAM) is located in the bottom right corner. It consists of the letters "GAM" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, set against a dark blue triangular background that points towards the top right.

# A Growing Demand

Georgia Manufacturing is expected to **grow another 9%** from 2023 through 2028.

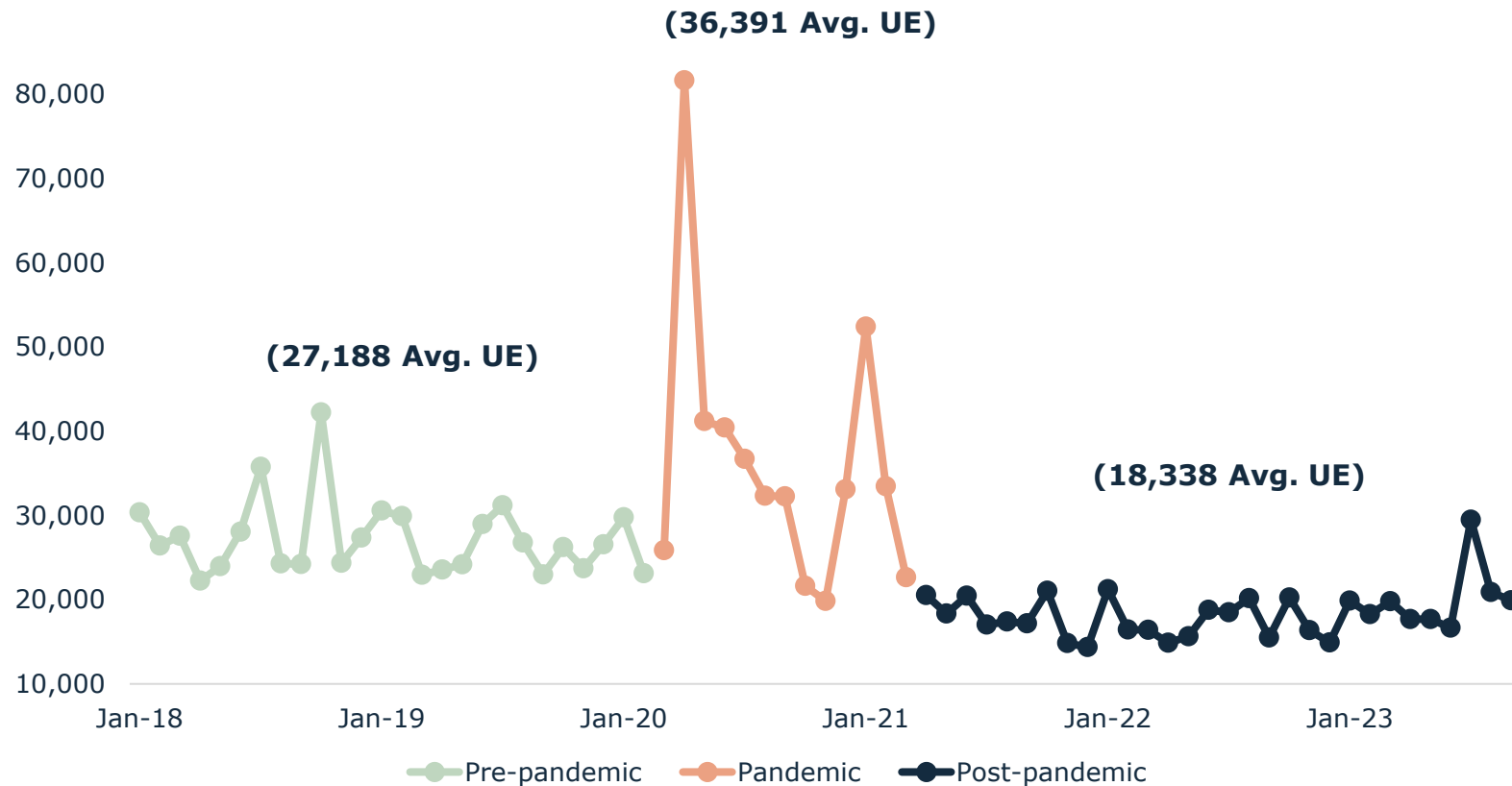


Source: Lightcast™. (2023) Industry Snapshot Report: Manufacturing in Georgia.



# A Growing Deficit

However, the **availability** of unemployed **manufacturing workers** has **decreased by 34%** since January 2018.



Source: Lightcast™. (2023) Industry Snapshot Report: Manufacturing in Georgia.





# Rolling Up Our Sleeves

Implemented a **workforce strategy** with **two approaches**.

1. Develop initiatives addressing **immediate needs**.
2. Develop initiatives addressing **long-term needs**.

**Goal:** Foster a **net increase** in the **availability of workers** with manufacturing skills, both immediate and long-term.



# Inaugural Workforce Needs Assessment

Identify manufacturers' **immediate and collective needs**, the **skills and credentials required**, the **timeframe** in which these **needs must be met**, and the **untapped populations** they're willing to consider **for hire**.



Scan me!



The logo for the Georgia Association of Manufacturers (GAM), consisting of the letters 'GAM' in a bold, white, sans-serif font on a dark blue background.

# Workforce Barriers

**Manufacturers were asked to rank challenges they consider impediments to filling positions.**

**71%** of respondents ranked **Transportation** as an impediment.

**61%** of respondents ranked **Childcare** as an impediment.

**49%** of respondents ranked Available, Affordable **Housing** as an impediment.

**20%** of respondents ranked **Government Subsidies** as an impediment.

**17%** of respondents ranked **Immigration** as an impediment.

# GAM EXPAND Project

Awarded **\$750,000** to assist with implementing pilot solutions addressing manufacturing associates' specific childcare needs.

GAM is evenly dividing funding amongst **14 manufacturing partners** (\$50,000 each).

**GAM is contributing \$22,000** as discretionary funding as a match for a total project cost of **\$772,000.00**.



# EXPAND Locations

## Manufacturing Partners:

Goldens' Foundry & Machine Co. (Muscogee)

Hoshizaki America (Fayette)

Janssen Pharmaceuticals (Clarke)

Kautex (Franklin)

KIA Georgia (Troup)

Mannington Mills (Gordon)

Milliken & Company (Hall)

Miura America Co. (Polk)

Mount Vernon Mills (Chattooga)

Parkdale America (Rabun)

RYAM (Wayne)

Sage Automotive Interiors (Stephens)

Shaw Industries Group (Bartow)

Toyo Tires North America (Bartow)



# Potential Solutions

1. Use funding to provide access to childcare earlier.

**Example:** Utilizing EXPAND to help providers staff the hours between 4-6 AM, allowing associates access to childcare earlier.

2. Use funding to help local providers offer “as-needed weekend hours” for the remainder of the year.

**Example:** Utilizing EXPAND to fund “banked weekend hours” at a local provider for associates to use “on-demand” when work is required on the weekends.

# Need & Challenge

**Need:** Can childcare anytime during the summer be considered nontraditional?

**Challenge:** Unfortunately, not.

*The definition for nontraditional hours is "6:00 PM to 7:00 AM on weekdays and any time on weekends."*



**Stephanie Searce**  
**Director, Workforce Development**  
Sscearce@GaMFG.org  
706-633-7619

**GAM**



# Child Care Services Updates

*Pam Stevens, Deputy Commissioner for Child Care Services*



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START



# Health & Safety Grants



# Health & Safety Grants

---

- Federal ARPA funds awarded to all open, operating, and licensed CCLC and FCCLH programs
- Award amounts ranging from \$5,000 - \$40,000 based on licensed capacity to fund equipment and materials to support health and safety compliance
- Awarded in 3 phases:
  - Phase 1 – March 30, 2023 – September 30, 2023 – FCCLHs and CCLCs with licensed capacity up to 100
  - Phase 2 – October 2, 2023 – March 31, 2024 – CCLCs with a licensed capacity of 101+, after school programs in public school buildings, and programs opened February 2023 – September 2023
  - Phase 3 – January 17, 2023 – March 31, 2024 – programs opened October 2023 – December 31, 2023



# Technical Assistance Support

## 213 Programs identified as:

- Multi-year non-compliant (repeat issues in support or deficient status between FY 2019 – FY 2023 and/or
- Adverse actions issued FY 2020 – FY 2023 in playground violations

## Programs had to agree to:

- Program evaluation
- Monthly TA visits (minimum 6 months)
- Core rule training for all staff

Programs would receive an additional \$5,000 - \$12,000

Phase 1 – April - September; Phase 2 – October - March



# As of January 25, 2024

- Almost \$33 million in funds spent
  - Over \$15 million spent on playgrounds
- Funds spent on:
  - Playgrounds: rubber mulch, poured-in-place surfacing, playground equipment, storage, shade structures, fencing
  - Physical Plant: refrigerators, stoves, toilets, sinks, flooring, storage, cameras
  - Diapering: storage, changing tables
  - Sleeping & Resting: cribs, cots, sheets
- Phase 1 – 89 accepted TA
- Phase 2 – 69 accepted TA



The grants allowed me to make my entire yard safe and allergy friendly. I also got cameras, storage, and a secured entry. This grant truly made my family day care more safe and secure!

The extra funds were much appreciated. The additional funds helped us purchase cameras for the playgrounds and exits to help in monitoring the health and safety of the children we serve.

These funds assisted us with a long-desired goal of purchasing a safe and attractive playground for our students. We are extremely grateful for the help in improving the safety of our facility, and for making our dreams become a reality.



# Before



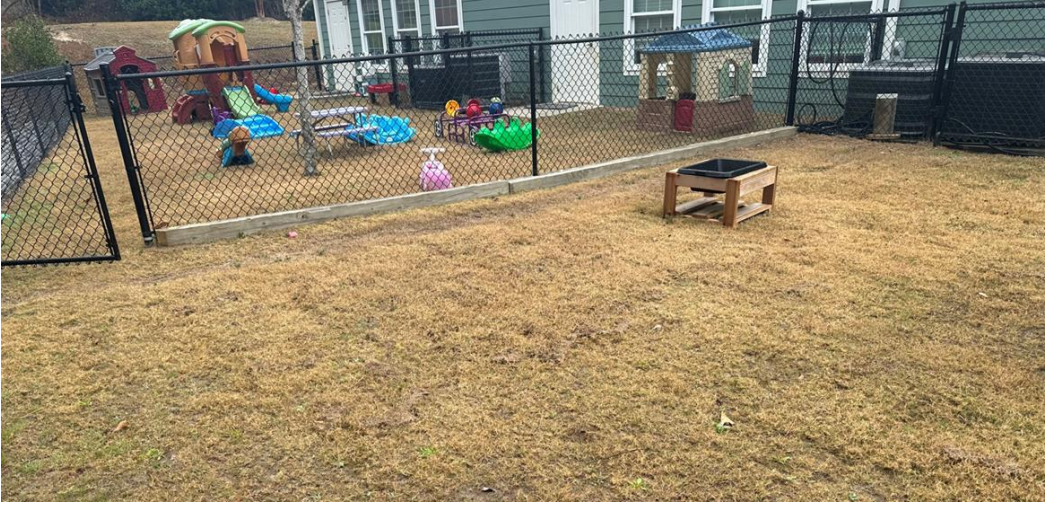
# After



# Before



# After





Before



After



Before



After



# Exemption Changes



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

# Child Care Licensing rule 591-1-1-.46 Exemptions

---

- (a)1 Exemption Requirements will change by removing language regarding notarized application requirements. Language will be added referring to completing an exemption self-assessment or submitting an application through the program's DECAL KOALA account.
  - Programs in the categories below will self register
    - Category 1: Government owned and operated, not participating in CAPS
    - Category 2: National membership school aged
    - Category 3: Private schools
    - Category 4: Short term care
    - Category 6: No pay
    - Category 7: Day camp programs not participating in CAPS



# Child Care Licensing rule 591-1-1-.46 Exemptions

---

- (b) Exemption Categories will be changed to reflect the new seven (7) categories and their updated descriptions:
  - Category 1: Government Owned and operated. Process remains the same if receiving CAPS. If not receiving CAPS, self-assess
  - Category 2: National membership School Aged-Self Assess
  - Category 3: Private Schools-Self Assess
  - Category 4: Short term care-Self Assess
  - Category 5: Faith-based Accredited or Religious Schools-Process remains the same and application must be applied.
  - Category 6: No Pay-Self Assess
  - Category 7: Day Camp programs- Process remains the same if receiving CAPS, if not receiving CAPS- Self-Assess



The following Committee meetings are in session:

**Programs and Rules** – Hickory Conference Room

**Budget and Finance** – Cypress Conference Room

**Quality Innovations and Partnerships** – Oak Conference Room

*The Public Comment Period will commence at 1:00 pm.*



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

Welcome to the Board of Early Care  
and Learning

# Public Comment

February 15, 2024



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**

BRIGHT FROM THE START

# Committee Reports





Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

# Board Meeting Dates 2024

- 
- ~~February 15, 2024~~
  - May 16, 2024
  - August 22, 2024
  - November 21, 2024

