

State of Georgia Customer Satisfaction Research Report

**Prepared for
Georgia Department of Early
Care and Learning**

**June 2013
Final Report**

Contents

Customers’ General Impressions of DECAL	4
Customer Perceptions of DECAL’s Customer Service	5
Customer Perceptions of DECAL’s Communications	7
Customer Satisfaction with DECAL’s Direction	8
Year over Year Comparison.....	9
Overall Customer Satisfaction	10
Self Identification	13
Open-ended Questions	14
Mean Scores for Customer Subgroups	14
Major Conclusions.....	19
2013 DECAL Customer Survey	22
Public Performance and Management Group Project Staff	27
The Public Performance and Management Group	28

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning Customer Satisfaction Survey

For the past eight years, the Public Performance and Management Group at Georgia State University has conducted customer and employee surveys designed to help state agencies, programs, and institutions track and improve customer and employee satisfaction by better managing service quality for customers and the quality of the workplace for employees. Customer satisfaction is largely determined by customers' perception of service quality. Employee satisfaction is largely determined by employees' perception of the quality of the workplace. Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) can influence both customer and employee satisfaction by improving the quality of their experiences with the agency. Employee satisfaction is often correlated with customer satisfaction. Thus, improving employee satisfaction can contribute to improvements in customer satisfaction.

Working with the Public Performance and Management Group at Georgia State University, DECAL conducted both an employee and customer survey. This is the second year DECAL surveyed both customers and employees. This report provides findings from the customer satisfaction survey conducted in May 2013.

DECAL provided a list of customer email addresses and other related variables. These other variables helped to further refine the customer list and were used to provide the basis for grouping customers for subgroups analyses.

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Program	N	Percent	Pre-K	N	Percent
Center	348	52%	Yes	281	42%
Family	200	30%			
Group	20	3%	Quality Rated		
Other ¹	103	15%	Yes	234	35%
Unknown ²	1	<1%			

¹Other means something other than a center, family or group and therefore a location not licensed by the department. These are mostly non-licensed locations (primarily public schools) that participate in the Pre-K program.

²Unknown means a contact we were not able to match to a subgroup of customers.

A total of 6651 customers were invited to complete an online survey; reminder emails were sent periodically during the data collection period and did improve response rate. A total of 672 or 10% completed the survey. The response rate was much lower than in 2012 (10% versus 27%) but still adequate to support the analysis plan. Anecdotal evidence from customers suggests that some were confusing this survey with another that apparently was administered at about the same time. A profile of the respondents is shown in Table 1.

Except for minor changes, the survey was largely unchanged from 2012. The survey was comprised of 12 questions, including four open ended questions to enable customers to comment more fully on their general impressions of DECAL, customer service, communications and any final comments at the end of

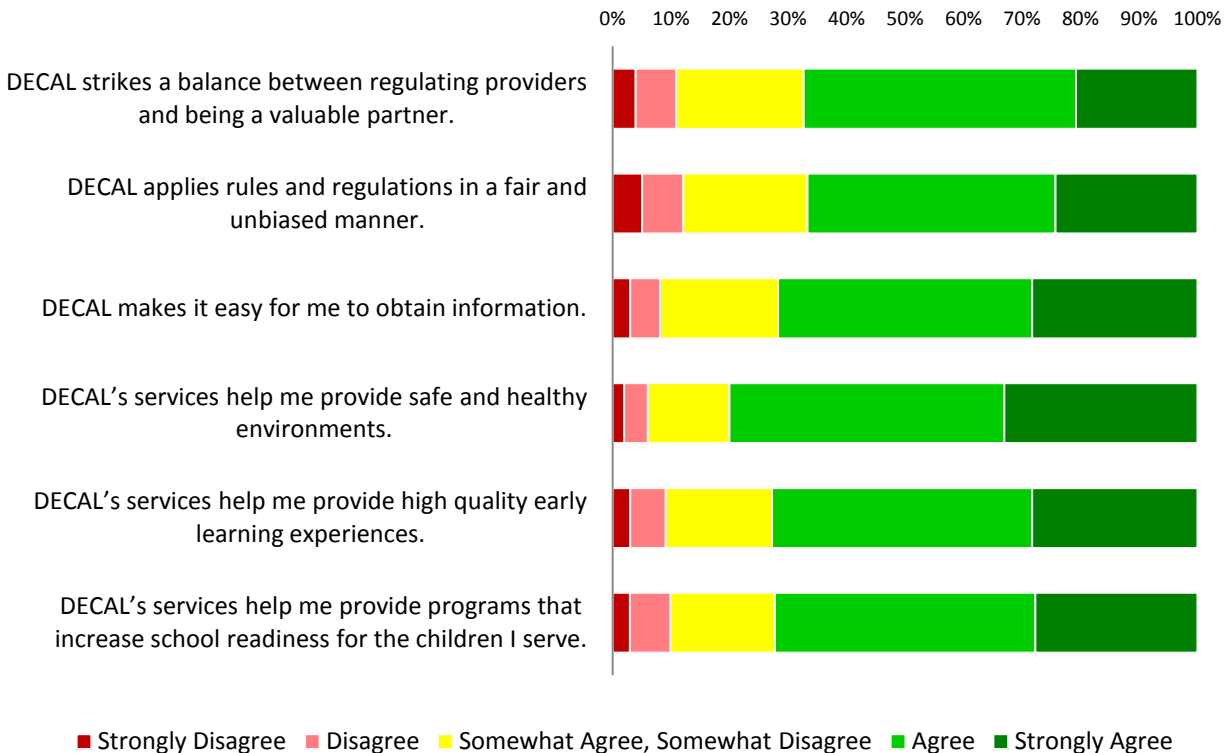
the survey . Most of the scaled questions were multi-part questions measured on a 5 point scale anchored by agree/disagree or satisfaction/dissatisfaction scales. The survey measured customers’ general impressions of DECAL, customer service, communications, and satisfaction with the agency’s direction.

The results of the survey were quite favorable. Through years of experience conducting these types of surveys with a wide variety of organizations, the Public Performance and Management Group has clearly identified customer service as a core element of any customer satisfaction program. DECAL earned extremely high marks for customer service across the board and compares very favorably to other state agencies. Of particular note is DECAL's exceptional ability to address customers' concerns in a reasonable amount of time. Problem resolution is arguably the foundation of a good customer service program. **Timely** problem resolution is essential to a good customer service program, and DECAL's results exceed the most recent statewide results by 8 points (76% vs. 68%).

Customers’ General Impressions of DECAL

Customers were asked to use a 5 point scale to respond to 6 statements about DECAL. The scale was anchored with the phrases Strongly Disagree (1) or Strongly Agree (5) and the mid-point (3) of the scale was anchored with the phrase Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree. Figure 1 shows the distribution of responses across the 5 point scale. Table 2 displays this same data plus the combined percentage of respondents who agree or strongly agree with each statement, the number of respondents who answered “Don't Know / Not Applicable”, and the mean scores for each item.

Figure 1: Customers’ General Impressions of DECAL (%)



The combined percentage of respondents who answered Agree or Strongly Agree ranged from 66% on two items to 80%. These are excellent results as DECAL received its highest marks for helping customers provide a safe and healthy environment, helping customers provide programs that increase school readiness for the children they serve and for helping to provide a high quality learning environment. The lowest scores relate to DECAL’s role as a regulator. Mean scores ranged from 3.8 to 4.0.

Table 2: Customers General Impressions of DECAL

	Don't Know / Not Applicable (N)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree & Strongly Agree	Mean
DECAL strikes a balance between regulating providers and being a valuable partner.	6	4	7	22	47	21	68	3.8
DECAL applies rules and regulations in a fair and unbiased manner.	10	5	7	21	42	24	66	3.8
DECAL makes it easy for me to obtain information.	7	3	5	20	43	28	71	3.9
DECAL’s services help me provide safe and healthy environments.	2	2	4	14	47	33	80	4.0
DECAL’s services help me provide high quality early learning experiences.	12	3	6	18	44	28	73	3.9
DECAL’s services help me provide programs that increase school readiness for the children I serve.	23	3	7	18	45	28	73	3.9

Customer Perceptions of DECAL’s Customer Service

Customers used a 5 point agree/disagree scale to evaluate DECAL’s customer service on five items. The results are shown in Figure 2 and Table 3. The combined percentage of respondents who answered Agree or Strongly Disagree ranged from 69% to 83%. DECAL earned its highest marks for courtesy, timely problem resolution, helpfulness and for being well informed on topics of concern to customers. Timely problem resolution is an especially significant determinant of customer satisfaction and DECAL earned high marks in this area. Fully 76% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that DECAL staff

members with whom they dealt addressed their concerns in a reasonable amount of time. Mean scores ranged from 3.8 to 4.1.

Figure 2: Customer Evaluation of DECAL's Customer Service Based on Experiences in the Past Year (%)

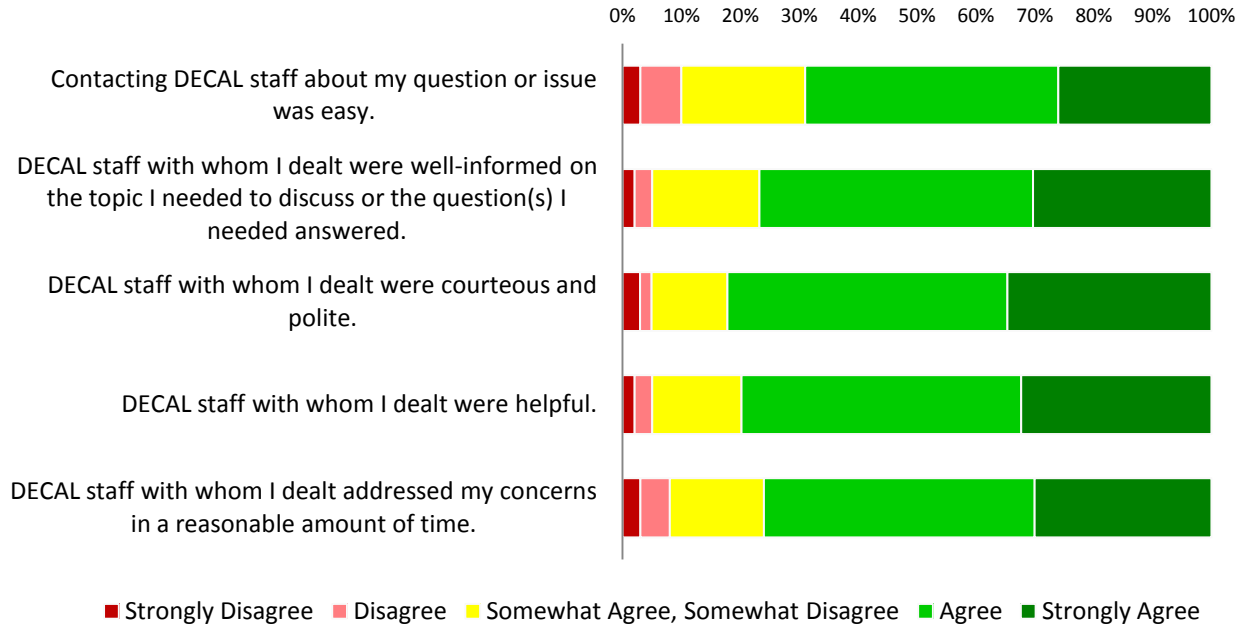


Table 3: Customer Evaluation of DECAL's Customer Service Based on Experiences in the Past Year

	Don't Know / Not Applicable (N)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree & Strongly Agree	Mean
Contacting DECAL staff about my question or issue was easy.	41	3	7	21	43	26	69	3.8
DECAL staff with whom I dealt were well-informed on the topic I needed to discuss or the question(s) I needed answered.	30	2	3	18	46	30	76	4.0
DECAL staff with whom I dealt were courteous and polite.	30	3	2	13	48	35	83	4.1
DECAL staff with whom I dealt were helpful.	27	2	3	15	47	32	80	4.1
DECAL staff with whom I dealt addressed my concerns in a reasonable amount of time.	34	3	5	16	46	30	76	3.9

Customer Perceptions of DECAL’s Communications

Respondents also used a 5 point agree/disagree scale to evaluate DECAL’s communications on five items. The results are shown in Figure 3 and Table 4. DECAL earned extremely high marks across the board. The combined percentage of respondents who answered Agree or Strongly Agree ranged from 71% to 81%. DECAL earned its highest marks for timely, up to date communication, for being thorough and for being responsive to customers’ follow up questions. Mean scores ranged from 3.8 to 4.0.

Figure 3: Customer Evaluation of DECAL's Communications Based on Experiences in the Past Year (%)

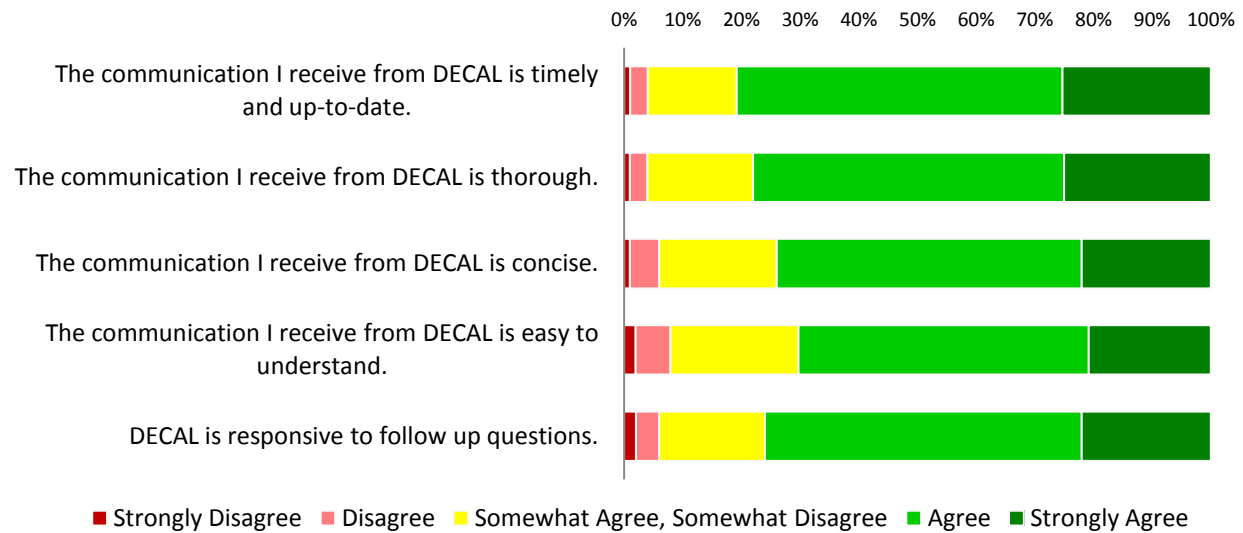


Table 4: Customer Evaluation of DECAL's Communications Based on Experiences in the Past Year

	Don't Know / Not Applicable (N)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree & Strongly Agree	Mean
The communication I receive from DECAL is timely and up-to-date.	9	1	3	15	55	25	81	4.0
The communication I receive from DECAL is thorough.	8	1	3	18	53	25	78	4.0
The communication I receive from DECAL is concise.	9	1	5	20	52	22	74	3.9
The communication I receive from DECAL is easy to understand.	8	2	6	22	50	21	71	3.8
DECAL is responsive to follow up questions.	46	2	4	18	54	22	76	3.9

Customer Satisfaction with DECAL’s Direction

Respondents also rated their level of satisfaction with DECAL’s direction using a 5 point scale where 1 means Very Dissatisfied, 3 means Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Dissatisfied and, 5 means Very Satisfied. Not Applicable was also a response choice. Respondents were asked about four agency initiatives. The findings are shown in Figure 4 and Table 5.

Respondents appear to be satisfied with the agency’s direction. The range for the combined percentage of satisfied or very satisfied responses was 64 to 78. Seventy eight percent of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the initiative to improve children’s health, 69% with the infant toddler network and stakeholder engagement. Sixty four percent were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality rated improvement system. The mean scores ranged from 3.7 to 4.0 where 5 equals very satisfied.

Figure 4: Customer Satisfaction with DECAL’s Direction as Indicated through the Following Initiatives (%)

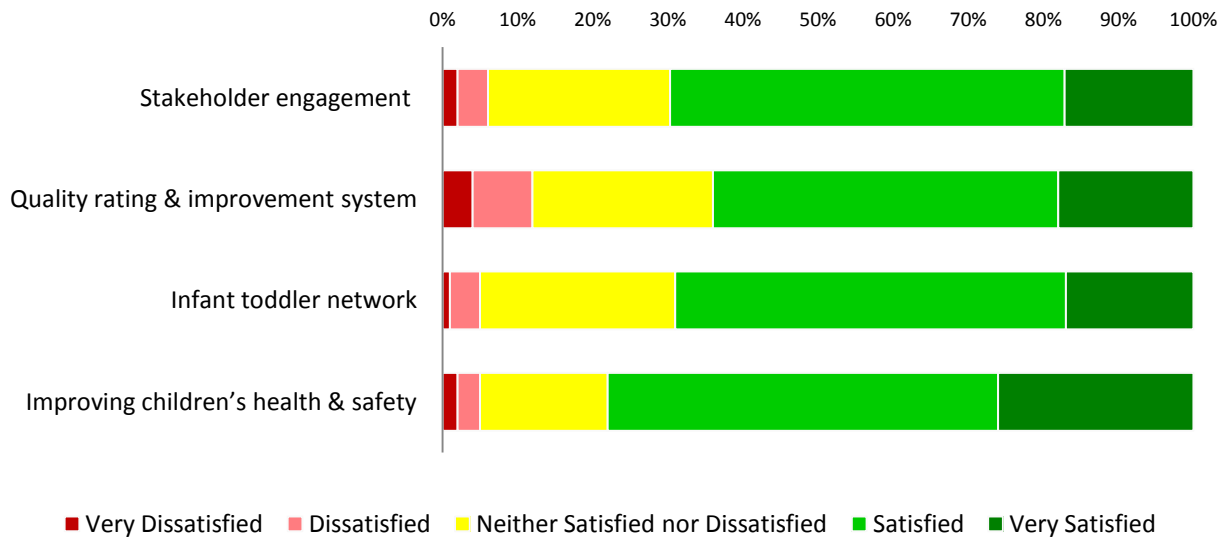


Table 5: Customer Satisfaction with DECAL’s Direction as Indicated through the Following Initiatives

	Don't Know / Not Applicable (N)	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Satisfied & Very Satisfied	Mean
Stakeholder engagement	111	2	4	24	52	17	69	3.8
Quality rating & improvement system	113	4	8	24	46	18	64	3.7
Infant toddler network	193	1	4	26	52	17	69	3.8
Improving children’s health & safety	38	2	3	17	52	26	78	4.0

Year over Year Comparison

Year over year comparisons were made for questions that appeared on the survey in both 2012 and 2013. The results were mixed and are shown in table 6. Question one asked respondents to evaluate DECAL as a regulator, a service provider and an information provider. It included six items. The percent of respondents who rated an item agree or strongly agree improved on 2 items, was unchanged on 3, and fell slightly on 1. Question 3 addressed five attributes of customer service. The percent of respondents who rated an item agree or strongly agree improved on 1 item, was unchanged on 1 and fell on 3 items. Question 5 included five items regarding communications. The percent of respondents who rated an item agree or strongly agree improved on 3 items and fell on 2 items. Question 7 asked respondents to rate their satisfaction with DECAL's direction as indicated through the four initiatives. The percent of respondents who rated an item agree or strongly agree improved on 1 item and fell on 3.

Table 6: Year over Year Comparison of Survey Results

	Agree & Strongly Agree		Mean	
	2012	2013	2012	2013
NOTE: Only questions that were asked in both 2012 and 2013 are shown in this table				
1) Respond to the following statements by selecting the option that best reflects your opinion.				
DECAL strikes a balance between regulating providers and being a valuable partner.	66	68	3.7	3.8
DECAL applies rules and regulations in a fair and unbiased manner.	66	66	3.7	3.8
It is easy for me to obtain information from DECAL.	73	71	3.9	3.9
DECAL's services help me provide safe and healthy environments.	80	80	4.0	4.0
DECAL's services help me provide high quality early learning experiences.	73	73	3.8	3.9
DECAL's services help me provide programs that increase school readiness for the children I serve.	71	73	3.8	3.9
3) Respond to the following statements by selecting the option that best reflects your opinion.				
Contacting DECAL staff about my question or issue was easy.	73	69	3.8	3.8
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were well-informed on the topic I needed to discuss or the question(s) I needed answered.	78	76	4.0	4.0
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were courteous and polite.	82	83	4.1	4.1
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were helpful.	80	80	4.1	4.1
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt addressed my concerns in a reasonable amount of time.	80	76	4.0	3.9
5) Respond to the following statements by selecting the option that best reflects your opinion.				
The communication I receive from DECAL is timely and up-to-date.	78	81	3.9	4.0
The communication I receive from DECAL is thorough.	76	78	3.9	4.0
The communication I receive from DECAL is concise.	75	74	3.8	3.9
The communication I receive from DECAL is easy to understand.	74	71	3.9	3.8
DECAL is responsive to follow up questions.	77	76	3.9	3.9

Table 6: Year over Year Comparison of Survey Results continued

	Satisfied & Very Satisfied		Mean	
	2012	2013	2012	2013
7) Rate your level of satisfaction with DECAL’s direction as indicated through the following initiatives.				
Stakeholder engagement (DECAL’s efforts to solicit input/feedback from early care and education providers/stakeholders)	68	69	3.7	3.8
Quality rating and improvement system (Quality Rated)	69	64	3.7	3.7
Infant toddler network	73	69	3.9	3.8
Improving children’s health and safety	81	78	4.0	4.0

Overall Customer Satisfaction

Overall customer satisfaction with the agency was measured using a 3 item measure that captures:

1. Customers’ satisfaction with services
2. The extent to which DECAL exceeded or fell short of your expectations
3. How they rate DECAL compared to an ideal agency

Although the anchors varied, each item was scored on a 5 point scale where 1 is a very unfavorable score and 5 is a very favorable score. Sixty one percent of respondents rated DECAL a 4 or a 5 on the “ideal agency” question. Sixty percent rated DECAL a 4 or a 5 on the satisfaction with services question. Fifty one percent rated DECAL a 4 or a 5 on the “expectations” question. The mean scores ranged from 3.5 to 3.7.

Table 7: Customer Satisfaction (%) and Mean Scores

	Very Dissatisfied	2	3	4	Very Satisfied	4 & 5s	Mean
How satisfied are you with the service you received from DECAL? (%)	4	8	29	36	24	60	3.7
	Fell Short of Expectations	2	3	4	Exceeded Expectation	4 & 5s	Mean
To what extent has the service you received from DECAL exceeded or fallen short of your expectations? (%)	4	7	39	38	13	51	3.5
	Poor	2	3	4	Excellent	4 & 5s	Mean
Thinking about how an ideal agency would serve you, how would you rate the service you received from DECAL? (%)	2	6	31	42	19	61	3.7

While these results are good, they indicate that many respondents are not especially satisfied with the agency. So, it is helpful to try to determine which customers are more satisfied and which are dissatisfied. To answer this question, the five point scale was collapsed into two groups which we called

“satisfied” (rated satisfaction a 4 or 5) and “dissatisfied” (rated satisfaction a 1, 2, or 3). Differences in the mean scores for each group were compared and are shown below in table 8. The survey items are rank ordered by the largest difference to smallest.

Table 8: Comparison of Mean Scores for Dissatisfied and Satisfied Customers^{1,2}

Survey Items Rank Ordered By The Largest Differences To Smallest	Dissatisfied (rated 1-3) N=260	Satisfied (4-5) N=394	Difference
Thinking about how an ideal agency would serve you, how would you rate the service you received from DECAL?	3.0	4.2	1.2
To what extent has the service you received from DECAL exceeded or fallen short of your expectations?	2.8	4.0	1.2
DECAL applies rules and regulations in a fair and unbiased manner.	3.2	4.1	0.9
DECAL strikes a balance between regulating providers and being a valuable partner.	3.2	4.1	0.9
Quality rating and improvement system (Quality Rated)	3.1	4.0	0.9
DECAL’s services help me provide high quality early learning experiences.	3.3	4.2	0.9
DECAL’s services help me provide programs that increase school readiness for the children I serve.	3.4	4.2	0.9
Contacting DECAL staff about my question or issue was easy.	3.3	4.1	0.8
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were well-informed on the topic I needed to discuss or the question(s) I needed answered.	3.5	4.3	0.8
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt addressed my concerns in a reasonable amount of time.	3.5	4.3	0.8
Improving children’s health and safety	3.5	4.3	0.8
DECAL is responsive to follow up questions.	3.4	4.2	0.8
It is easy for me to obtain information from DECAL.	3.4	4.2	0.8
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were helpful.	3.6	4.4	0.8
Infant toddler network	3.4	4.1	0.7
Stakeholder engagement (DECAL’s efforts to solicit input/feedback from early care and education providers/stakeholders)	3.3	4.1	0.7
DECAL’s services help me provide safe and healthy environments.	3.6	4.3	0.7
The communication I receive from DECAL is concise.	3.5	4.2	0.7
The communication I receive from DECAL is easy to understand.	3.4	4.1	0.7
The communication I receive from DECAL is thorough.	3.6	4.2	0.7
The communication I receive from DECAL is timely and up-to-date.	3.6	4.3	0.6
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were courteous and polite.	3.7	4.4	0.6

¹The differences between the mean scores for the two groups are statistically significant at p<.05.
²Dissatisfied group rated “How satisfied are you with the service you received from DECAL?” a 1-3 on a 5 point scale where 1 = Very Dissatisfied and 5 = Very Satisfied. Satisfied group rated their satisfaction a 4 or 5.

The two largest differences between the Dissatisfied and Satisfied groups relate to how they rate DECAL as an ideal agency and how they rate DECAL in relation to their expectations. One finding reinforces or cross validates the other. Customers have a certain “frame of reference” they use to judge if the agency is an “ideal” agency. That frame of reference is also the filter or prism customers use to judge if the agency has exceeded or fallen short of their expectations.

Further examination of the mean scores for the two groups offers some clues as to how the frame of reference may differ. There was a .9 difference between the Satisfied and Dissatisfied groups on five items. Two items dealt with DECAL as a regulator. One addresses the Quality rated program and two focus on services to improve early learning experiences and school readiness.

Next, satisfaction was examined by program type and by program in order to determine which customers are more satisfied and which are dissatisfied. The results are shown in Tables 9 and 10. Dissatisfaction is most widespread among Center customers (47%) followed by Family (38%). These two groups comprise over 82% of all the respondents to the survey.

Table 10 shows that Dissatisfaction among the respondents to the six programs varies from 32% to 41%. It is highest among participants in the Children and Parent Services (CAPS) Program and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Table 9: Percent of Satisfied and Dissatisfied Customers by Program Type

Program Type	Number of Responses	Dissatisfied	Satisfied
Center	345	47%	53%
Family	194	38%	62%
Group	20	25%	75%
Other	103	23%	77%

Table 10: Percent of Satisfied and Dissatisfied Customers by Program

Program	Number of Responses	Dissatisfied	Satisfied
Georgia’s Pre-K Program	312	38%	62%
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	353	40%	60%
Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	28	39%	61%
Quality Rated	198	35%	65%
Children and Parent Services (CAPS) Program	411	41%	59%
Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GAPITC)	62	32%	68%

Finally, a multiple regression analysis was performed using customers’ overall satisfaction with services as the dependent variable (the mean of the three item customer satisfaction measure) and all other

survey items evaluated by respondents as independent variables. This analysis helps identify specific “drivers” of customer satisfaction. The results are shown in table 11.

Five items were found to be statistically related to customer satisfaction. It is important to note that four of the five items rank at the bottom of all items evaluated on the survey. Improving on these items may help boost customer satisfaction in the future.

The model explains 54% of the variation in the dependent variable, customer satisfaction. This is a useful result but suggests that other factors not measured here help explain the variation in customer satisfaction.

Table 11: Multiple Regression Results

Statistically Significant Drivers of Customer Satisfaction	Agree & Strongly Agree	Mean
DECAL is responsive to follow up questions.	76%	3.9
Quality rating and improvement system (Quality Rated)	64%	3.7
DECAL strikes a balance between regulating providers and being a valuable partner.	68%	3.8
Infant toddler network	69%	3.8
Contacting DECAL staff about my question or issue was easy.	69%	3.8
Percent of Variance Explained by the Model	54%	

Self Identification

Customers were asked to indicate the programs administered by DECAL in which they participate. The results are shown in table 12. The findings show some minor discrepancies between the data provided by DECAL and customers’ responses which is normal. DECAL deemed the agency data more accurate and the Georgia State University research team agrees.

Table 12: Please indicate the programs administered by DECAL in which you participate.

Program	% Yes
Georgia’s Pre-K Program	54 ¹
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	59
Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	6
Quality Rated	36 ²
Children and Parent Services (CAPS) Program	70
Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GAPITC)	12
¹ Data provided by DECAL shows 42%	
² Data provided by DECAL shows 35%	

Open-ended Questions

Answers to the open ended questions have been provided to DECAL in a .csv file with minimal editing per the instructions of the DECAL project manager. Following is a list of those questions.

Question 2 provided an opportunity for respondents to include additional comments relating to their general impressions of DECAL.

Question 4 asked respondents for additional comments relating to DECAL's customer service.

Question 6 asked respondents for additional comments relating to DECAL's communication.

Question 11 asked respondents for additional comments relating to DECAL in general.

Mean Scores for Customer Subgroups

Several subgroups analyses based on programs and service locations were also completed. Programs were divided into four variables:

1. Program Type, which included six categories: Center, Family, Group, Multiple, Other, and Unknown
2. Pre-K
3. Quality Rated

Program Type was analyzed using comparative means testing with a Games-Howell post hoc test to determine whether differences between subgroups were statistically significant. The Games-Howell post hoc was used due to the variance in the number of respondents in each group (see Table 1). Results of these tests are shown in Tables 13-1, 14-1, 15-1, 16-1, and 17-1, representing questions one, three, five, seven, and eight, respectively.

For the remaining three programs, Pre-K, Nutrition, and Quality Rated, a simple means test was employed, with the F-test determining significance. The results of these tests are shown in Tables 13-2, 14-2, 15-2, 16-2, and 17-2, representing questions one, three, five, seven, and eight, respectively.

Question 1: First we ask for your general impressions of DECAL. Respond to the following statements by selecting the option that best reflects your opinion.

For question one, , there were several statistically significant differences among the means of the listed subgroups at the 0.05 level (see Table 13-1, below).

Table 13-1: Mean scores for Program Type

	Center	Family	Group	Other
DECAL strikes a balance between regulating providers and being a valuable partner.	3.6a	3.8	4.2	4.0a
DECAL applies rules and regulations in a fair and unbiased manner.	3.6a	3.7b	4.2	4.1a,b
It is easy for me to obtain information from DECAL.	3.8	3.9	4.3	4.1
DECAL’s services help me provide safe and healthy environments.	4.0a	4.0	4.5a,b	4.0b
DECAL’s services help me provide high quality early learning experiences.	3.8a,b	3.9	4.4a	4.1b
DECAL’s services help me provide programs that increase school readiness for the children I serve.	3.8a,b	3.8c	4.4a	4.2b,c

On a five point scale, where 5 was a favorable response while 1 was an unfavorable response. Superscripts indicate a significant difference between matching groups at the 0.05 level.

The Pre-K showed one statistically significant difference in means, while Quality Rated groups yielded no statistically significant differences, as shown in Table 13-2 below.

Table 13-2: Mean scores for Pre-K, Nutrition, and Quality Rated Programs

	Pre-K	Non-Pre-K	Quality Rated	Non - Quality Rated
DECAL strikes a balance between regulating providers and being a valuable partner.	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.7
DECAL applies rules and regulations in a fair and unbiased manner.	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.7
It is easy for me to obtain information from DECAL.	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.9
DECAL’s services help me provide safe and healthy environments.	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.0
DECAL’s services help me provide high quality early learning experiences.	4.0	3.8	4.0	3.8
DECAL’s services help me provide programs that increase school readiness for the children I serve.	4.0*	3.8	4.0	3.8

On a five point scale, where 5 was a favorable response while 1 was an unfavorable response.

* Indicates a significant difference between members and non-members of this group at the 0.05 level.

Question 3 asked customers to evaluate DECAL's customer service based on their experiences in the previous year in rating the statements by selecting the option that best reflects their opinion.

For question 3, there were several statistically significant differences among the means of the listed subgroups, as shown in Table 14-1 (below).

Table 14-1: Mean scores for Program Type

	Center	Family	Group	Other
Contacting DECAL staff about my question or issue was easy.	3.7a,b,c	4.2a	4.3b	4.5c
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were well-informed on the topic I needed to discuss or the question(s) I needed answered.	3.9a,b	4.2a,c	4.3	4.6b,c
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were courteous and polite.	4.1a	4.2b	4.4	4.7a,b
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were helpful.	4.0a	4.2b	4.3	4.7a,b
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt addressed my concerns in a reasonable amount of time.	3.9a,b	4.2a	4.2	4.6b

On a five point scale, where 5 was a favorable response while 1 was an unfavorable response.
Superscripts indicate a significant difference between matching groups at the 0.05 level.

For question three, the mean scores for members of the Pre-K group were significantly different in three of the five items. There were no statistically significant differences with the Quality Rated subgroup on the items. The results are shown in Table 14-2 (below).

Table 14-2: Mean scores for Pre-K, Nutrition, and Quality Rated Programs

	Pre-K	Non-Pre-K	Quality Rated	Non - Quality Rated
Contacting DECAL staff about my question or issue was easy.	4.1	3.9	3.9	4.0
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were well-informed on the topic I needed to discuss or the question(s) I needed answered.	4.3*	4.0	4.0	4.1
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were courteous and polite.	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were helpful.	4.3*	4.1	4.1	4.2
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt addressed my concerns in a reasonable amount of time.	4.2*	4.0	4.0	4.1

On a five point scale, where 5 was a favorable response while 1 was an unfavorable response.

* Indicates a significant difference between members and non-members of this group at the 0.05 level.

Question 5: Respond to the following statements [about Communication] by selecting the option that best reflects your opinion.

For question 5, there were several statistically significant differences among the means of the listed subgroups, as shown in Table 15-1 (below).

Table 15-1: Mean scores for Program Type

	Center	Family	Group	Other
The communication I receive from DECAL is timely and up-to-date.	3.9a,b	4.2a	4.3	4.2b
The communication I receive from DECAL is thorough.	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.2
The communication I receive from DECAL is concise.	3.8a	4.1a	4.2	4.0
The communication I receive from DECAL is easy to understand.	3.7a,b	4.0a	4.1	4.0b
DECAL is responsive to follow up questions.	3.9a,b	4.3	4.2a	4.5b

On a five point scale, where 5 was a favorable response while 1 was an unfavorable response. Superscripts indicate a significant difference between matching groups at the 0.05 level.

For question five, no statistically significant differences were found.

Table 15-2: Mean scores for Pre-K and Quality Rated Programs

	Pre-K	Non-Pre-K	Quality Rated	Non - Quality Rated
The communication I receive from DECAL is timely and up-to-date.	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.1
The communication I receive from DECAL is thorough.	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
The communication I receive from DECAL is concise.	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.9
The communication I receive from DECAL is easy to understand.	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.9
DECAL is responsive to follow up questions.	4.2	4.1	4.0	4.1

On a five point scale, where 5 was a favorable response while 1 was an unfavorable response. * Indicates a significant difference between members and non-members of this group at the 0.05 level.

Question 7: Rate your level of satisfaction with DECAL’s direction as indicated through the following initiatives.

For question 7, there were several statistically significant differences among the means of the listed subgroups, as shown in Table 16-1 (below).

Table 16-1: Mean scores for Program Type

	Center	Family	Group	Other
Stakeholder engagement (DECAL’s efforts to solicit input/feedback from early care and education providers/stakeholders)	3.6a,b	3.9a	4.0	4.0b
Quality rating and improvement system (Quality Rated)	3.5a,b	3.8a	4.0	3.9b
Infant toddler network	3.6a,b	4.0a	4.2b	4.0
Improving children’s health and safety	3.8a,b	4.1a	4.3b	4.0

On a five point scale, where 5 was a favorable response while 1 was an unfavorable response. Superscripts indicate a significant difference between matching groups at the 0.05 level.

For question seven, Pre-K showed significantly differences for one item. The Quality Rated group showed no statistically significant differences as shown below.

Table 16-2: Mean scores for Pre-K, Nutrition, and Quality Rated Programs

	Pre-K	Non-Pre-K	Quality Rated	Non - Quality Rated
Stakeholder engagement (DECAL's efforts to solicit input/feedback from early care and education providers/stakeholders)	3.8	3.7	3.8	3.8
Quality rating and improvement system (Quality Rated)	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.7
Infant toddler network	3.7*	3.9	3.8	3.8
Improving children's health and safety	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.0

On a five point scale, where 5 was a favorable response while 1 was an unfavorable response.

* Indicates a significant difference between members and non-members of this group at the 0.05 level.

Major Conclusions

The survey findings show that DECAL is relatively highly rated by its customers across all areas addressed by the survey. At least two thirds of all respondents rated all items a 4 or a 5 on a five point scale where 5 is a very favorable score and 1 is a very unfavorable score. The average rating (percent of respondents who rated an item a 4 or a 5) was 74. These results compare favorably when evaluated against any other agencies we have conducted similar surveys for over the previous eight years. Table 11 shows the percent of respondents who rated an item a 4 or a 5 for survey items rank ordered from the largest to smallest rating.

Table 17: Percent of respondents who rated an item a 4 or a 5 for survey items rank ordered from the largest to smallest rating

Survey Item	% of 4s & 5s
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were courteous and polite.	83
The communication I receive from DECAL is timely and up-to-date.	81
DECAL's services help me provide safe and healthy environments.	80
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were helpful.	80
Improving children's health and safety	78
The communication I receive from DECAL is thorough.	78
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were well-informed on the topic I needed to discuss or the question(s) I needed answered.	76
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt addressed my concerns in a reasonable amount of time.	76
DECAL is responsive to follow up questions.	76
The communication I receive from DECAL is concise.	74
DECAL's services help me provide high quality early learning experiences.	73
DECAL's services help me provide programs that increase school readiness for the children I serve.	73
It is easy for me to obtain information from DECAL.	71
The communication I receive from DECAL is easy to understand.	71
Stakeholder engagement (DECAL's efforts to solicit input/feedback from early care and education providers/stakeholders)	69
Infant toddler network	69
Contacting DECAL staff about my question or issue was easy.	69
DECAL strikes a balance between regulating providers and being a valuable partner.	68
DECAL applies rules and regulations in a fair and unbiased manner.	66
Quality rating and improvement system (Quality Rated)	64
Overall Average Rating	74

Given these results it is somewhat puzzling that respondents rated their overall satisfaction with the agency lower. The percent of respondents who rated the three satisfaction items a 4 or a 5 was 60, 51 and 61 respectively (see table 7). As noted in the section on customer satisfaction, the dissatisfied respondents appear to have a different frame of reference for judging the agency. Given this, it makes

sense to try to learn more about that frame of reference. One possibility is that dissatisfied customers have been cited for a violation of regulations. Or, these customers may have had an unsatisfactory customer service experience or some unsatisfactory result that is used as a filter for evaluating the agency across all survey items. It may be helpful to include some of these possibilities as variables on next year's survey. This would enable us to examine these relationships.

It also may be important to communicate more specifically the role of the agency and the boundaries or limitations on that role. Satisfaction is always judged relative to expectations and the agency can and does influence customer expectations.

Additionally, the results of the regression analysis showed that four of the five statistically significant drivers of customer satisfaction are among the lowest rated of all items respondents evaluated.

The agency may want to assign responsibility for using the findings to make improvements to an existing group or create a new customer action team. The team will need to further analyze the survey findings and may conduct follow up interviews with a sample of customers. They may use several methods including focus groups and individual interviews.

The questioning should be focused on the items you selected as your improvement targets. For each item, ask customers what the survey items meant to them, what they would rate it now and why. Ask for specific examples that help you understand issues and problems from their perspective. Ask for possible solutions and help in crafting an improvement plan and timeline. Finally, ask customers how to measure progress.

APPENDIX

2013 DECAL Customer Survey

General Impressions

1) First we ask for your general impressions of DECAL. Respond to the following statements by selecting the option that best reflects your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know / Not Applicable
DECAL strikes a balance between regulating providers and being a valuable partner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DECAL applies rules and regulations in a fair and unbiased manner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is easy for me to obtain information from DECAL.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DECAL's services help me provide safe and healthy environments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DECAL's services help me provide high quality early learning experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DECAL's services help me provide programs that increase school readiness for the children I serve.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2) Please enter any additional comments about your general impressions of DECAL.

Customer Service

3) Now we ask that you evaluate DECAL's customer service based on your experiences in the past year. Respond to the following statements by selecting the option that best reflects your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
Contacting DECAL staff about my question or issue was easy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were well-informed on the topic I needed to discuss or the question(s) I needed answered.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were courteous and polite.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt were helpful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DECAL staff members with whom I dealt addressed my concerns in a reasonable amount of time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4) Please enter any additional comments about DECAL's customer service.

Communication

5) Now we ask that you evaluate communication with DECAL based on your experiences in the past year. Respond to the following statements by selecting the option that best reflects your opinion.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree, Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable
The communication I receive from DECAL is timely and up-to-date.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The communication I receive from DECAL is thorough.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The communication I receive from DECAL is concise.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The communication I receive from DECAL is easy to understand.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
DECAL is responsive to follow up questions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6) Please enter any additional comments about DECAL's communication.

Agency Initiatives

7) Using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 means Very Dissatisfied and 5 means Very Satisfied, rate your level of satisfaction with DECAL’s direction as indicated through the following initiatives.

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know / Not Applicable
Stakeholder engagement (DECAL’s efforts to solicit input/feedback from early care and education providers/stakeholders)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality rating and improvement system (Quality Rated)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Infant toddler network	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving children’s health and safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8) How satisfied are you with the service you received from DECAL?

- 1 (Very Dissatisfied)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Very Satisfied)

9) To what extent has the service you received from DECAL exceeded or fallen short of your expectations?

- 1 (Fell Short of Expectations)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Exceeded Expectations)

10) Thinking about how an ideal agency would serve you, how would you rate the service you received from DECAL?

- 1 (Poor)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Excellent)

11) Please enter any additional comments you'd like to make concerning DECAL.

Informational Questions

12) Please indicate the programs administered by DECAL in which you participate.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
Georgia's Pre-K Program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quality Rated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Children and Parent Services (CAPS) Program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Georgia Program for Infant and Toddler Care (GAPITC)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Greg Streib
Director
Voice: 404.939.1235
Email: gstreib@gsu.edu

Public Performance and Management Group Project Staff

M. Christine Lewis is a Research Consultant with the Public Performance and Management Group. Dr. Lewis is the lead researcher on several major projects at Georgia State University. Her research focuses on customer centered organizational change. Dr. Lewis helps organizations create value for customers, get fully recognized for the value they create, and get fully funded based on the value they create and the potential to enhance that value. She helps organizations adopt a customer focused approach to service improvement, service design and recovery from service failures. Dr. Lewis conducts research to determine the key drivers of customer and employee satisfaction for organizations so they can “move the meter” on satisfaction by targeting high impact improvement projects. She also conducts research with customers and employees to facilitate product and service design decisions and to help organizations understand how customers choose a specific brand. Dr. Lewis assists organizations with the development and execution of effective communication strategies, including the development of a brand identity, brand awareness and all aspects of brand management. She was previously employed by AT&T in strategic planning, market, sales and product management. She has served as a consultant to a variety of corporations, nonprofits and government organizations. She is also a former professor of Marketing at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan. Dr. Lewis holds a B.S. in Business Administration from the University of Nebraska and an MBA and Ph.D. in Business Administration from Michigan State University.

Jack Strickland is a Research Associate with the Public Performance and Management Group at Georgia State University. His design and presentation expertise has evolved from years in business consulting and public education. Jack currently holds a Master of Public Administration degree from Georgia State University and Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and History from Mercer University, and was a nominee for a Presidential Management Fellowship in 2009.



Greg Streib
Director
Voice: 404.939.1235
Email: gstreib@gsu.edu

The Public Performance and Management Group

The Public Performance and Management Group (PPM) is an outreach unit of the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University. We offer an array of services to assist public sector organizations in strengthening strategic and operational performance. Our core activities include executive level training and development; applied research, policy analysis and program evaluation; short or long term assistance with planning and performance improvement; and dissemination of effective public sector practices. *We emphasize real-world, evidence-based solutions that support public leaders' commitment to effective governance.*

PPM faculty and staff work in a wide range of local government, state agency, and non-profit organization settings. Activities are highly customized to reflect the philosophy and core values of public sector customers. Each member of PPM's faculty and staff possesses multiple years of experience in public management as well as university-based support to government agencies and programs. Examples of past customers include city and county governments; state and local advisory councils; community non-profit organizations; and grassroots advocacy organizations.

The Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University is the organizational home to PPM. The School creates and disseminates knowledge and methods that are highly valued by policy makers and leaders in the public and nonprofit worlds. Faculty members represent diverse professional backgrounds, and offer valuable specialties in public management, nonprofit administration, urban studies and economics. Faculty and research associates work in tandem with seven centers to provide technical assistance to more than 35 countries, as well as further our knowledge of domestic issues in health, transportation, and public finance, for example.