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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sponsors Needed to Serve Meals to Children in Summer 2017

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) served over 5.6 million meals during Summer 2016

Atlanta, Ga., (February 2, 2017) – Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is looking for eligible organizations to sponsor the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) in their communities in 2017. The SFSP, funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), provides access to healthy meals to children during the summer months when school is not in session. DECAL administers the SFSP in Georgia.

The SFSP reimburses non-profit and government organizations for providing free meals to eligible children in low-income areas during the summer months. The following entities can qualify as sponsors: public or private nonprofit schools; universities, colleges or camps; units of local government; private nonprofit organizations, including faith-based organizations considered tax exempt by the IRS. Sponsors can operate the program and feed children at various sites such as schools, churches, recreation centers, community and migrant centers, and other areas where children congregate. Mobile meal sites are also an option for sponsors – particularly in rural areas of the state.

“Access to healthy meals and snacks during the summer when school is out is critical to the continued well-being and growth of Georgia’s children,” said DECAL’s Nutrition Services Director, Falita Flowers. “Without the institutions that serve as sponsoring organizations for the SFSP, children may not receive nutritious meals during the summer. The SFSP and those organizations that partner with us are integral to abating childhood hunger when school is not in session.”

Sponsors receive training and support relating to the application process; setting up and operating a successful SFSP; and nutrition education. They also receive technical assistance while the program is operating.

For more information on becoming an SFSP sponsor, visit DECAL's website at <http://dec.al.ga.gov/SFSP/BecomingASponsor.aspx> or contact the SFSP team toll free at 1-855-550-SFSP (7377) or via e-mail at SFSP@dec.al.ga.gov. In accordance with federal law and USDA policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages the voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.decal.ga.gov.