



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

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Student Parents Added as Priority Group for Financial Support for
Child Care through Georgia’s Child Care Subsidy Program**

*Student Parents are 13th “Priority Group” for Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS)
Program Eligibility*

ATLANTA, Ga., (May 3, 2022) – The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has announced that beginning this week student parents will be considered a “priority group” for receiving financial assistance through the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) Program. CAPS is a program administered by DECAL that helps pay for child care for families with no to low incomes so they can work or attend school. CAPS also helps families find high-quality early learning programs; maintain stability in their child care arrangements; and connect families with resources to help them become self-sufficient by supporting the whole family.

“According to research, one in five college students in the U.S. is a parent, so we are excited to add student parents as a priority group for Georgia’s most vulnerable families to receive CAPS scholarships for child care,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “A 2021 study by Ascend at the Aspen Institute and The Jed Foundation found that financial stress is a major burden for student-parents. Ensuring that student-parents have access to the high-quality child care they need is critical to helping them continue their educations, complete their degrees, and support their children so they can thrive.”

Jacobs said the new initiative will help student parents achieve their economic mobility goals and support children’s learning and development.

“Across the 22 colleges of TCSG, affordable child care is a challenge for many of our student parents who are striving to improve their lives through education,” said TCSG Commissioner Greg Dozier. “By adding student parents as a priority group for financial support through the CAPS program, these students can focus on their education without the stress of finding affordable, high-quality child care.”

Administered through DECAL, the CAPS Program is funded by the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) as well as state funds. Typically, CAPS serves 50,000 children weekly, but in November 2021, Governor Brian P. Kemp and Commissioner Jacobs designated funds from the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) to expand the program by 10,000 children. The expansion is planned to continue through October 2024.

CAPS helps families pay for child care with most families paying a family fee based on the size and income of the family. Currently, however, using federal stimulus dollars, DECAL implemented the ACCESS initiative which pays the provider’s full published rate and the family fee.

Since March 2020, DECAL has waived certain CAPS policies to support families and child care providers impacted by COVID-19. For more information, call 1-833-4GA-CAPS (1-833-442-2277) or visit <https://caps.dec.al.ga.gov/en/>.

About DECAL

The 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 and federal nutrition programs; and manages Quality Rated, Georgia’s community-powered child care rating system.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and collaborates 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.dec.al.ga.gov.