



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

**Brian P. Kemp**  
Governor

**Amy M. Jacobs**  
Commissioner

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **DECAL Seeking Applications for Georgia's Pre-K Teachers of the Year**

### ***Winner from Public School and Private Child Care Center Will Be Chosen***

**ATLANTA, Ga., (February 24, 2021)** – The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is seeking applications for Georgia's Pre-K Program Teachers of the Year for 2021-2022. DECAL will select a winner from a local public school system and a winner from a private child care center.

“All Georgians can be proud of Georgia's Pre-K Program that helps lay a solid foundation on which the academic careers of the state's four year olds can be built,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “Since its beginning in 1992, more than 1.6 million children have entered kindergarten better prepared to succeed. That preparation, however, would not have been possible without the dedicated Pre-K teachers and assistants who implement this program every day. Recognizing these committed professionals by choosing Pre-K Teachers of the Year is one way to thank them for their efforts.”

The application for Pre-K Teacher of the Year is available on the DECAL website home page at [www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov). Completed applications must be postmarked or hand delivered before 5:00 PM on **March 17, 2021**. Finalists will be announced in May 2021 with the two winners announced in the early fall.

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To be considered for Georgia's Pre-K Program Teacher of the Year, the teacher must meet the following qualifications:

- Employed as a full-time Georgia's Pre-K lead teacher during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Taught as a full-time lead teacher in a Georgia's Pre-K classroom for a minimum of three years.
- Meets Georgia's Pre-K lead teacher credential/certification requirements and is enrolled in the Georgia Professional Development System (GaPDS).
- Planning to continue as a lead teacher in a Georgia's Pre-K classroom during the 2021-2022 school year.
- Employed by a Georgia's Pre-K Program provider in good standing with all programs administered by DECAL (Pre-K, Child Care Services, Childcare and Parent Services [CAPS] and Nutrition Services).
- Willing to serve as an ambassador for Georgia's Pre-K Program. Duties may include but are not limited to: public speaking, representing Georgia's Pre-K at meetings, and modeling effective classroom practices.
- Willing and able to travel as needed – including some overnight stays.
- Willing to have a classroom evaluation and interview conducted if chosen as a finalist.

For more information, contact Meghan McNail, Summer Transition Program and Outreach Coordinator, at [meghan.mcnail@decals.ga.gov](mailto:meghan.mcnail@decals.ga.gov) or 770-357-4911.

This school year approximately 81,000 four year olds attend Georgia's Pre-K Program. The voluntary, lottery-funded Pre-K program has been recognized as one of the top programs in the nation, based on quality standards, teacher qualifications, and enrollment. Georgia's Pre-K Program is universal – meaning that any age-eligible child residing in Georgia may attend the program regardless of family income. Georgia's model for providing the Pre-K program is unique in that it is offered through a public-private partnership in local school systems, in private child care centers, and in other facilities.

### **About Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning**

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 Quality Rated, Georgia's community powered child care rating system.

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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.dec.state.ga.us](http://www.dec.state.ga.us).