

Board of Early Care and Learning
Meeting Summary
November 15, 2018

Attendees

Board Members: Susan Harper (Chair), Melissa Boekhaus, Phil Davis, Kathy Howell, Victor Morgan, Carlene Talton

Guests: *Maryum Gibson, Erica Sitkolf, Joe Perrault, Katie Landes, Erica Sitkoff, Kayla Washington, Cali Jahn, Maryum Gibson, Vett Vandiver, Elizabeth Madrigal-Walker, Paul Walker*

Bright from the Start Staff: Commissioner Amy Jacobs, Rian Ringsrud, Elisabetta Kasfir, Kristin Bernhard, Susan Adams, Pam Stevens, Bentley Ponder, Allison Setterlind, Craig Detweiler, Christi Moore, Reg Griffin, Ira Sudman, Carrie Ashbee, Carol Hartman, Denise Jenson, Faith Duncan, Jill O'Meara, Darra Jackson, Brandy Locchetta, Taijha Harden, Laura Reid, Jackie Shivers, William Cox, Tamika Boone, Sonja Adams, Liz Young, Nilia Lalin, Brigitte Walker, Pamela Hall, Clayton Adams, Vanessa Brown, Mary Stoklas, Audrienne Smith, Robin Stevens, Melissa Hall, Kati Cosby, Patty Malone, Katherine Vernet, Woody Dover, Connie Fisher, Lari Lyn Beyer, Mike Rodgers, Nia King, Renee' Lind, Demetria Joyce, Shayla Lewis, Rhonda Parker, Marsha Luiz-Crosby, Laura Wagner, Rukiya Thomas, April Rogers, Jennifer Taylor, Lisa Rambhajan, Barbara Sanders, Edward Rowell, Keturah Washington, Bridgette Washington, Emmanuel Asumadu, Glenda Davis-Canteen, Ebony Kern, Kimberly Davis, Gary Bass, Paul Ominde, Saritha Gummadi, Sarswathi Seelam, Sunil Gavini, Teja Nedunuri, Anne Wearing, Marcy Maioli, Ben Appling, Zara Handsford, Jennifer Waters, Jennifer Delorme, William Cox, Quandra Collins, Sonja Steptoe

The November 15, 2018, meeting of the Board of Early Care and Learning was called to order at 9 a.m. by Board Chair Susan Harper.

Ms. Harper asked for a motion to accept the day's agenda. Phil Davis moved to approve, and Kathy Howell seconded. The Board approved it unanimously.

Ms. Harper asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 16, 2018 meeting of the Board. Carlene Talton moved to approve, and Melissa Boekhaus seconded. The Board approved the minutes unanimously.

Ms. Harper provided the Inspiration.

Board members provided updates on their recent activities:

- Ms. Howell attended a reception for one of the Georgia Pre-K Teachers of the Year; Ms. Harper was interviewed on Channel 10 in Albany, Ga., about Pre-K Week; and Mr. Davis attended an Alzheimer's research event and learned that Georgia is a national leader in the field. Ms. Harper asked everyone to keep the victims of Hurricane Michael in their thoughts as they recover from the traumatic experience.

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Learning (DECAL) staff provided updates on their program areas:

- Commissioner Amy Jacobs presented DECAL's plan for spending the additional discretionary funds the agency received from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). She explained that the agency will use the funds to support its strategic priorities and its commitment to bolstering families, supporting the early care and education workforce, and facilitating access to high-quality early education for all regardless of income. Commissioner Jacobs reported that Becky Thomas-Haden and Stephanie Westhafer were named Georgia's Pre-K Teachers of the Year and recognized DECAL employees who recently received Spirit of DECAL Awards, along with Child Care Services Consultant Patty Malone, who is retiring. Also, she praised DECAL's IT Department for receiving a technology innovation award.

- Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration Rian Ringsrud’s presentation included a budget update for the first quarter of the state’s 2019 fiscal year. He also summarized the 2018 Summer Food Service Program and reported that 9.3 million meals were served, including nearly 5 million meals and snacks at DECAL-funded sites. Additionally, DECAL provided 231 meals to children impacted by Hurricane Michael.
- Deputy Commissioner of Pre-K and Instructional Supports Susan Adams outlined the Expansion of DECAL’s Inclusion Services to offer a new multi-tiered system of supports for early learners and their families to address the children’s social-emotional needs, reduce expulsions and suspensions, and promote success.
- Director of Professional Learning Christi Moore updated the Board on the upcoming rollout of the Georgia Professional Development System (GaPDS) upgrade that will include all aspects of Georgia Training Approval.
- Ms. Adams introduced Erica Sitkoff, Executive Director of Voices for Georgia’s Children, who recapped the numerous activities held during Georgia Pre-K Week, October 1-5, 2018, and throughout the month.
- Deputy Commissioner for Federal Programs Elisabetta Kasfir presented an overview of the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) Program, its structure, activities, and rising numbers of children and families served.
- Georgia Foundation for Early Care and Learning Executive Director Carrie Ashbee recapped the Foundation’s Moonlight Through the Pines fundraiser. She also reported that the Foundation has received a \$25,000 grant from Save the Children to help centers damaged by Hurricane Michael.
- Head Start State Collaboration Director Allison Setterlind reported on DECAL’s efforts to support children from families experiencing homelessness.
- Director of Policy and System Reform Carol Hartman updated the Board on the progress of the DECAL Early Head Start–Child Care Partnership (DEHSP). Ms. Hartman introduced Maryum Gibson of Scottsdale Early Learning, Inc., who discussed the positive impacts of the child care learning center’s participation in DEHSP.
- Deputy Commissioner of System Reform Kristin Bernhard updated the Board on the growth of the Quality Rated program. She also outlined the criteria for Two-Generation Innovation Grants (TGIG) DECAL will distribute in 2019. She also shared that DECAL is creating Early Education Empowerment Zones.
- Senior Director of Research and Policy Bentley Ponder reported that the findings from the third Quality Rated Validation Study showed that providers’ overall perceptions and experiences with the Quality Rated program were overwhelmingly positive.
- Deputy Commissioner of Child Care Services Pam Stevens described what she has learned about the Child Care Services (CCS) division during her first three months in the new role, including its structure, high standards, and reputation as a national leader in child care licensing and regulation.

Ms. Harper adjourned the meeting for lunch and committee meetings at noon. She called the meeting back to order at 1:00 p.m. When the meeting reconvened, Ms. Harper invited speakers to speak during Public Comment Period. No one came forward and the Comment Period ended.

The Board meeting continued with committee chairs delivering their reports:

- Ms. Boekhaus reported that the Program and Rules Committee heard about Nutrition Services activities; Head Start grants, efforts to reduce the Pre-K waiting list, and internal CAPS partnerships.
- Ms. Talton reported that the Budget and Finance Committee heard about the completion dates for the Finance Department’s field work and audit work.
- Mr. Davis reported that the System Reform Committee heard about dinners hosted by System Reform and the Sandra Dunagan Deal Center to discuss literacy; listening sessions Quality Rated and CAPS are holding across the state on Two-Gen strategies; new Quality Rated Subsidy Grant slots; and grant opportunities that would expand DEHSP.

Following the committee reports, Ms. Harper asked for a motion to approve the 2019 Board Meeting dates of February 21, May 16, August 15, and November 21. Mr. Davis made a motion and Ms. Talton seconded it. The Board unanimously approved the proposed 2019 meeting dates.

Ms. Harper adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m.