

**Board of Early Care and Learning
Meeting Summary
May 16, 2019**

Attendees

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

Guests: Uzma Azhar, Charlotte Collins, Emily Dore, Charlotte Pelz, Kayla Washington, Jessica Woltjen

Bright from the Start Staff: Commissioner Amy Jacobs, Rian Ringsrud, Elisabetta Kasfir, Susan Adams, Pam Stevens, Bentley Ponder, Dennis Brice, Allison Setterlind, Christi Moore, Randy Hudgins, Reg Griffin, Robin Stevens, Denise Jenson, Ben Appling, Faith Duncan, Jackie Shivers, Donna Johnson, Catherine Broussard, Jennie Couture, William Cox, Kori Woodward-Dickens, Farouk Baksh, Bridgette Washington, Sonja Adams, Anita Hasan, Jill O'Meara, Quandra Collins, Demetrius Wilburn, Sonja Steptoe

The May 16, 2019, 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 accept, and Victor Morgan seconded. The Board accepted the minutes unanimously.

Ms. Harper asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 21, 2019, Board meeting. Dr. Melissa Boekhaus moved to approve, and Carlene Talton seconded. The Board approved the minutes unanimously.

For the Inspiration, Ms. Howell read a poem about cherishing the important things in life.

Board members provided updates on their recent activities.

- Ms. Harper read to a Pre-K class in Lee County. She also read to a Pre-K class in Dougherty County as part of the Dr. Seuss Read Across America Program.
- Dr. Boekhaus attended the Early Care and Learning Safety Summit in Macon co-sponsored by DECAL and the American Academy of Pediatrics Georgia Chapter in March.

DECAL leaders and staff provided updates on their work:

- Commissioner Amy Jacobs announced that DECAL is directing the implementation of Governor Brian Kemp's Language & Literacy Endorsement initiative. She also introduced the new Chief Information officer, Dennis Brice. She announced that Kaela Tustin, Beth Adcock, and Jonathan Hines are the public school Pre-K Teacher of the Year finalists and Teresa Dixon, Kaysha Smith, and Heather Williams are the finalists in the private center category, with the winners to be announced in September.
- Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration Rian Ringsrud's presentation included an update on the agency's state fiscal year (SFY) 2019 budget and expenditures, which are on target. He announced that the SFY 2020 budget approved by the legislature and signed into law by Governor Kemp is about \$847.5 million, including a \$11.7 million increase, mostly for Pre-K teacher raises and a small portion for the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) Program. He also provided details on the acquisition of additional office, cubicle and conference space in the West Tower of the Floyd Building for the Legal Services and Audits & Compliance divisions. Finally, he mentioned that DECAL is partnering with Georgia Organics to sponsor a Farm to School and Early Care and Education Summit at Helms College in Macon on June 7-8.
- Deputy Commissioner Bentley Ponder announced that the division formerly known as System Reform has been renamed as Quality Innovations & Partnerships to reflect its adjusted focus on community outreach, Early Head Start and community partnerships, the Quality Rated Program, and research and policy analysis. He also summarized the current work in each of those areas before providing updates on the number of Quality Rated

participating and star rated programs. Ponder introduced Denise Jenson and Randy Hudgins, who shared the results of the fourth and final phase of the Quality Rated Validation Study.

Ms. Harper recessed the meeting at 10:23 a.m. and resumed it at 10:33 a.m..

- Deputy Commissioner for Child Care Services (CCS) Pam Stevens provided an update on school-age projects that serve children in kindergarten through grade 5 after school and all day during the summer. The projects are small in scope and involve collecting survey, interview, and assessment data to help DECAL decide what supports and resources the school-age programs and teachers need to improve quality.
- Head Start State Collaboration Director Allison Setterlind updated the Board on her work conducting a statewide needs assessment and organizing the recent Georgia Head Start Association statewide conference. She also discussed several child health-related projects in which Head Start is involved.
- Deputy Commissioner for Federal Programs Elisabetta Kasfir provided a snapshot of CAPS data and activities related to children served, providers delivering those services, applications processed, and new initiatives to serve and communicate with families.
- Deputy Commissioner for Pre-K and Instructional Supports Susan Adams reported on results of the division's recent waitlist study involving Pre-K director focus groups and family surveys that examined enrollment practices as well as perceptions, concerns, and preferences regarding the waitlist process.

Ms. Harper adjourned the meeting for lunch and committee meetings at 11:30 a.m. She called the meeting back to order at 1:00 p.m. When the meeting reconvened, Ms. Harper opened the Public Comment Period and closed it when no one came forward.

The Board meeting continued with committee chairs delivering their reports.

- Ms. Howell reported that the Programs Committee heard about the creation of online resources for CAPS families, the status of preparations for this year's Summer Food Service Program beginning May 25, the Farm to School and Early Care Summit, the summer transition programs for rising Pre-K and kindergarten students, new resources and staff for the Inclusion Support and Behavioral Services team, and the collaboration between CCS and Quality Rated on provider visits.
- Ms. Talton reported that the Finance Committee received a budget update.
- Mr. Davis said the System Reform Committee's new name Quality Innovations and Partnerships Committee, reflecting the division's restructuring and name change, which it heard about in detail. It also received updates on activities of the units within the division.

Following the committee reports, the Board elected new officers to serve 2-year terms. Ms. Harper announced that Ms. Kropp, the Vice Chair, plans to step down from the Board after this meeting and a new Vice Chair must be elected. Mr. Davis moved to proceed with the elections, with Mr. Morgan seconding, and the motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Morgan nominated Ms. Harper as Chair, seconded by Mr. Davis. She was unanimously re-elected as Chair. Mr. Morgan nominated Mr. Davis as the new Vice Chair, seconded by Ms. Talton. He was unanimously elected as the new Vice Chair. Mr. Morgan nominated Ms. Howell as Secretary, seconded by Mr. Davis. She was unanimously re-elected as Secretary. The officers will begin service at the August Board meeting.

In her farewell speech, Ms. Kropp, who has served two 3-year terms on the Board, commented on the agency's growth and expressed her joy in working with Board colleagues and DECAL staff over the years.

Commissioner Jacobs thanked Ms. Kropp for her service and wished her luck in her retirement. She also congratulated the elected Board officers and thanked all the members for their service.

Ms. Harper announced that the next Board meeting will be held on August 15, 2019.

She adjourned the meeting at 1:21 p.m.