



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**

BRIGHT FROM THE START



**Georgia's
Pre-K Program**

Pre-K Director Updates

2026-2027 School year

July 31, 2026

Webinar Housekeeping

- All attendees will be in listen-only mode.
- The webinar will be recorded, and a link to the recording will be provided.
- Questions during the webinar should be typed into the Q&A box.
- Questions may also be sent to prek@dec.al.ga.gov

Closing out the
2025 – 2026 school
year:
Fiscal Year 2026
Reconciliation

- Summer Transition Program Grant:
 - o Open: August 3, 2026
 - o Due:
 - o Private providers:
 - September 11, 2026
 - o Public providers:
 - September 30, 2026
- Pre-K Grant:
 - o Open: August 10, 2026
 - o Due:
 - o Private providers:
 - September 11, 2026
 - o Public providers:
 - September 30, 2026

FY26 Reconciliation Resources

Located on Pre-K Webpage
under Project
Directors>Reconciliation

RECONCILIATION

All Pre-K providers must submit a reconciliation report detailing the expenditure of Pre-K funds for the dates of the Pre-K contract. This report shall include supporting documentation, if requested by Bright from the Start, to verify that funds were spent in appropriate categories for their intended uses. Any unexpended funds must be returned to Bright from the Start when the report is submitted.

To be in compliance and eligible for funding for the next school year, reconciliation report and documentation must be submitted **on time** during the current school year.

Submitting reports is the responsibility of the Project Director and a lack of compliance shall affect future funding. RC funds are awarded at the company or Board of Education level and turning in reports late for one site shall impact overall funding.

It is required to retain records for a minimum of three years as specified in your contract, including documentation needed for the annual reconciliation.

Detailed information on submitting the Pre-K reconciliation report, a sample reconciliation form, and due dates are available in the Reconciliation Section in the current [Pre-K Providers' Operating Guidelines](#).

Documents List

[2025-2026 Georgia's Pre-K Year End Reconciliation Webinar](#)

[DECAL Remittance Coupon](#)

[GAPREK Pre-K Reconciliation Training Document](#)

[Pre-K Repayment Agreement](#)

2026 - 2027 Legislative, Guideline, and Budget Updates

Legislative Update: New State Laws

HB 1193: Requires schools to allow parents to decide if they enroll their child in PreK at 4 or 5 or kindergarten at 5 or 6

- Can only participate in PreK for one year without Department retention approval

HB 1123: Requires school systems that offer after-school programs to serve Pre-K students

HB 1193/ SB 459 Early Literacy Act: Aims to improve literacy across the state by establishing literacy coaches in all public K-3 schools. Requires a first-grade readiness assessment

Guideline Updates Summary

- Section 2.1 Age Requirement: HB 1193 requires schools to allow parents to decide if they enroll their child in Pre-K at 4 or 5 or kindergarten at 5 or 6.
- Section 11.4 Paid Time Off: Pre-K programs are required to offer a minimum of five (5) days of paid time off (PTO) for the lead and assistant teacher positions.
- Section 5.10 Extended Day: HB123 requires school systems that offer afterschool programs to serve Pre-K students.
- Section 18.7 Reporting Teacher and Student Data: Providers will not be able to enter teacher changes during the last two business days of the month and the first day of the following month.

Paid Time Off (PTO)

- New Requirement for the 2026-2027 School Year
- Five days of paid leave is required for lead and assistant teachers.
 - There is not a requirement to increase leave provided if the minimum is met.
 - Leave is “paid time off” (PTO) for sick and personal leave.
- Leave must be for working days during the Pre-K school year.
 - Instructional days or Planning/Professional days
- Leave is not for holiday pay as those are not working days.
- Pre-K providers must have written policy for leave.
- Increase in Operating Funds to support leave.

Fiscal Year 2027 Pre-K Budget Changes

Funded 100 new classrooms
(Year 3 of 4-Year Rollout of
Class Size Reduction)

Provided Pre-K Priority Group
in CAPS

Increase in operating funds
to support Paid Leave for
Leads and Assistant Teachers

Increase in Teacher
Retirement System from
21.91% to 22.32% for
teachers employed by local
school systems

Increase to \$1,935 per-
member, per-month (PMPM)
rate for **certified lead
teachers** employed by local
school systems & participate
in the State Health Benefit
Program.

FY27 Rate Charts and Budget Information

Located on Pre-K Webpage
under Project Directors

PROJECT DIRECTORS

Project directors are responsible for appropriately implementating Georgia's Pre-K Program. Many resources are available on this website to assist directors in effectively managing their program and in making quality improvements to the Pre-K classroom.

The following is a list of items and/or documents to support you in implementing Georgia's Pre-K Program.

Project Director Resource List:

+ Pre-K Providers Operating Guidelines

— Georgia's Pre-K Budget Information and Rate Chart

Private Provider Budget Information and Rate Chart

Public School Budget Information and Rate Chart

+ Resources

Teacher Requirements, Credentials, and Salary

Classroom Staffing Requirements

- Each classroom must be staffed with a qualified lead and assistant teacher.
- If a teacher is absent, a substitute must be provided.
- Pre-K teachers can not be used for duties outside of Pre-K during the Pre-K working hours.

State Salary Schedule for Georgia's Pre-K Lead Teachers

The Lead Teacher salary will be based on the *State Salary Schedule for Georgia's Pre-K Lead Teachers*. For additional information on the State Salary Schedule, see the Pre-K Providers' Operating Guidelines.

Fiscal Year 2027 July 2026 – June 2027		Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning Salary Schedule											
CYE	Step	Insufficient	Associate in ECE, T-1*	ECE Bachelor or Higher, T-1	Non-ECE Bachelor or Higher + ECE credential, T-1	Provisional GaPSC Teaching Certificate, BT-4**	GaPSC Teaching Certificate, T-4**	Provisional GaPSC Teaching Certificate, BT-5**	GaPSC Teaching Certificate, T-5**	Provisional GaPSC Teaching Certificate, BT-6**	GaPSC Teaching Certificate, T-6**	Provisional GaPSC Teaching Certificate, BT-7**	GaPSC Teaching Certificate, T-7**
0,1,2	E	\$25,741.35	\$30,949.86	\$41,717.00	\$41,717.00	\$41,717.00	\$43,592.00	\$45,808.00	\$48,706.00	\$51,254.00	\$53,803.00	\$56,683.00	\$58,676.00
3	1	\$25,741.35	\$31,916.86	\$42,684.00	\$42,684.00	\$41,717.00	\$44,615.00	\$46,897.00	\$49,882.00	\$52,507.00	\$55,132.00	\$58,098.00	\$60,151.00
4	2	\$25,741.35	\$32,912.86	\$43,680.00	\$43,680.00	\$41,717.00	\$45,668.00	\$48,019.00	\$51,093.00	\$53,797.00	\$56,501.00	\$59,556.00	\$61,671.00
5	3	\$25,741.35	\$33,937.86	\$44,705.00	\$44,705.00	\$41,717.00	\$46,753.00	\$49,175.00	\$52,341.00	\$55,126.00	\$57,911.00	\$61,058.00	\$63,236.00
6	4	\$25,741.35	\$34,993.86	\$45,761.00	\$45,761.00	\$41,717.00	\$48,243.00	\$50,762.00	\$54,055.00	\$56,951.00	\$59,847.00	\$63,120.00	\$65,385.00
7	5	\$25,741.35	\$36,081.86	\$46,849.00	\$46,849.00	\$41,717.00	\$49,405.00	\$52,000.00	\$55,392.00	\$58,375.00	\$61,357.00	\$64,729.00	\$67,062.00
8	6	\$25,741.35	\$37,201.86	\$47,969.00	\$47,969.00	\$41,717.00	\$51,201.00	\$53,913.00	\$57,457.00	\$60,574.00	\$63,691.00	\$67,214.00	\$69,652.00
9,10	7	\$25,741.35	\$38,355.86	\$49,123.00	\$49,123.00	\$41,717.00	\$52,452.00	\$55,245.00	\$58,896.00	\$62,106.00	\$65,317.00	\$68,945.00	\$71,457.00
11,12	L1	\$25,741.35	\$39,544.86	\$50,312.00	\$50,312.00	\$41,717.00	\$53,741.00	\$56,617.00	\$60,378.00	\$63,684.00	\$66,992.00	\$70,728.00	\$73,316.00
13,14	L2	\$25,741.35	\$40,768.86	\$51,536.00	\$51,536.00	\$41,717.00	\$55,068.00	\$58,031.00	\$61,904.00	\$65,310.00	\$68,717.00	\$72,565.00	\$75,230.00
15,16	L3	\$25,741.35	\$42,029.86	\$52,797.00	\$52,797.00	\$41,717.00	\$56,435.00	\$59,487.00	\$63,476.00	\$66,984.00	\$70,494.00	\$74,457.00	\$77,202.00
17,18	L4	\$25,741.35	\$43,328.86	\$54,096.00	\$54,096.00	\$41,717.00	\$57,843.00	\$60,987.00	\$65,095.00	\$68,709.00	\$72,324.00	\$76,406.00	\$79,233.00
19,20	L5	\$25,741.35	\$44,666.86	\$55,434.00	\$55,434.00	\$41,717.00	\$59,293.00	\$62,532.00	\$66,763.00	\$70,485.00	\$74,209.00	\$78,413.00	\$81,325.00
21+	L6	\$25,741.35	\$46,044.86	\$56,812.00	\$56,812.00	\$41,717.00	\$60,787.00	\$64,123.00	\$68,481.00	\$72,315.00	\$76,150.00	\$80,480.00	\$83,480.00

*Associate's Degree credential is only approved for lead teachers with a grandfathered credential. See Pre-K Operating Guidelines for additional information.

**Certification must be in an approved field. See Appendix U of the Operating Guidelines for a full list of approved fields.

To determine salary:

1. Identify the approved credential for the Lead Teacher.
2. Identify the Creditable Years of Experience (CYE) earned.
3. The salary listed for the Salary Step is the total annual salary for a Lead Teacher.

Additional Information:

- Salary Levels are based on the approved credential of the Lead Teacher.
- Salary listed is the annual total salary. The annual total salary includes the base salary for the credential and Step supplement for Creditable Years of Experience earned.
- Step E is the base salary for each Salary Level.
- Insufficient credentials only receive the base or "E" salary step.
- Any teachers on a salary waiver only receive the base or "E" salary step for the approved waiver credential level.

Fiscal Year 2027

Teacher Credential Waivers

- Teacher Credential
Waivers are available for lead and assistant teachers in GAPREK in the Waivers section.
- Enter the teacher into the CRM before requesting the waiver.
- Teacher must be enrolled in a qualifying credential program to qualify for a waiver.
- For support email:
prekbusiness.support@decal.ga.gov



Creditable Years of Experience (CYE)



One year of CYE has been added for returning Pre-K teachers who taught at least 60% of the 2025-2026 school year.



If CYE needs to be updated, submit a Creditable Years of Experience (CYE) Change Request located in the Requests section of GAPREK. For support: prekteacher@dec.al.ga.gov



For new teachers being entered, program should review and verify CYE before entering it into the system.

Payment Calculations and Processing

Payments and Proration Reminder

The first two monthly payments, August and September, will be based on full enrollment.

August and September

Beginning with the October payment, payments may be prorated based on a designated class enrollment number.

October

September

Roster enrollment data will be reviewed after September validation and the decision to prorate will be determined.

NEW: Payment Calculation will be based on current data in the Class Reporting Manager.

Teacher data in the Class Reporting Manager will be used for all monthly payments. For student data, the Class Reporting Manager data will be used beginning with October's payment.

Pre-K payments will be calculated using the most current data available in the Class Reporting Manager.

Adjustments made after the data entry period will be reflected in the next monthly payment.

Why the Change?

- Creates a clearer, more consistent payment process.
 - Monthly payment based on current Class Reporting Manager data.
 - Decrease retroactive student payments.
- This approach supports payment accuracy by using current data available at the time payments are calculated.
- Aligns with calculating monthly payments using the approved Pre-K calendar.

Payment Processing

- Payments will be processed on the 8th business day of the month.
- GAPREK system will be closed for teacher and student data entry on the following:
 - o Last two business days of the month
 - o First business day of the following month
- Appendix V includes Critical Reporting Dates and the GAPREK System Calendar.

2026-2027 GAPREK System Calendar

This calendar provides important dates for data entry and payments. Refer to the Critical Reporting dates and the Operating Guidelines for additional deadlines.

Yellow: State Holidays
(not business days):

September 7: Labor Day
October 14: Columbus Day
November 11: Veterans Day
November 26: Thanksgiving
November 27: State Holiday
December 24: State Holiday
December 25: Christmas Holiday
January 1: New Years Day
January 18: MLK Jr Day
March 26: State Holiday
May 31: Memorial Day
June 18: Juneteenth

*2027 State Holidays are subject to change

Blue: GAPREK System closed for data entry.

No student or teacher data entry edits during the last two (2) business days of the month and first business day of the following month.

August 28, 31, September 1
September 29, 30, October 1
October 29, 30, November 2
November 25, 30, December 1
December 30, 31, January 4
January 28, 29, February 1
February 25, 26, March 1
March 30, 31, April 1
April 29, 30, May 2

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Green: Payment Processing Date.

Pre-K Payments will run on the 8th business day of the month. Business days are Monday-Friday, except for state holidays.

August 12
September 11
October 13
November 12
December 10
January 13
February 10
March 10
April 12
May 12
June 10 (for programs that operate in June)

How Data Entry will Impact Monthly Payments?

- Payment will be based on the student and teacher data in the Class Reporting Manager (CRM) during payment processing window.
- Any data changes must be made prior to the CRM closure for payment processing.
- Any data changes after the payment processing window will not be reflected on the monthly payment.
- Keep your teacher and student data current.

Changes in Teacher Data



Data changes made after the monthly system closure may result in positive or negative payment adjustments.



Adjustments will be calculated back to the effective date of the update.
Examples: begin/end dates, credential changes



Retroactive adjustments will be applied to the next monthly payment after the correction is made.

Changes in Student Data



Student data updates made after the data entry closure period may also result in payment adjustments.



Positive retroactive adjustments will be applied back up to 30 calendar days.

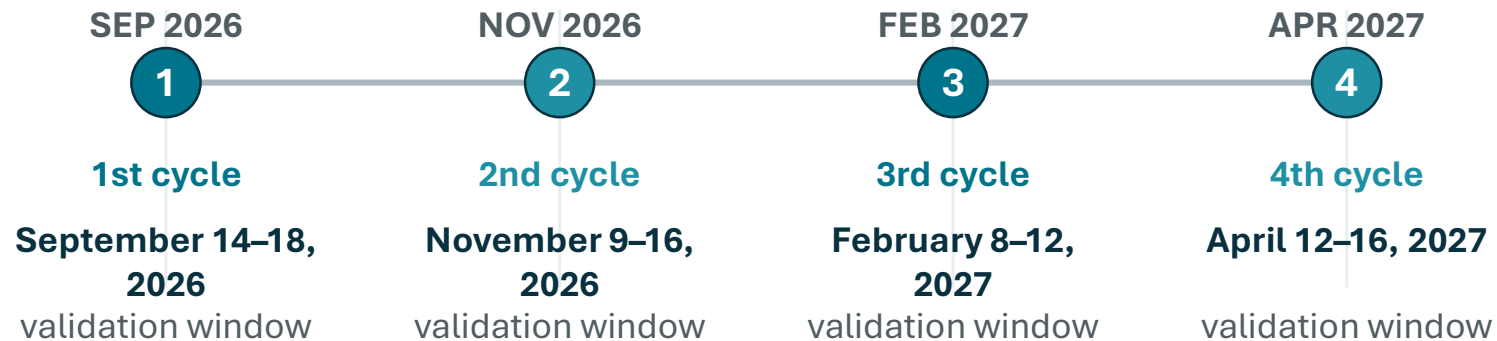


Negative retroactive adjustments will be applied back to the effective date of the change.

Roster Verification

Roster Process

- Continue using point-in-time roster data for accountability.
- Data will be collected four times per year as data snapshots.
- Roster Validation Cycles:



Validation Manager

-  Home
-  Calendars
-  Class Reporting Manager
-  Document Library
-  Manage Sites and Classes
-  Manage Users
-  My Applications
-  Finance
-  Requests
-  Validation Manager
-  View Bulk Upload History
-  Visit Reports
-  Waiting Lists
-  Waivers

Need Support?

Contact Pre-K

Validation Manager

Pre-K

Late Start Request

Note: This page may contain sensitive or confidential information that should be protected and only shared if necessary. By navigating to this page, you assume responsibility for ensuring this information is safeguarded in accordance with the Grant Agreement.

Roster Validation Student Enrollment Changes

Academic Year2026-2027

Roster CycleFY27 Roster Cycle 2

SiteAll Sites

Class IDAll Classes

Clear

Search

FY27 Roster Cycle 2

Validation Begin Date: Jul 27, 2026

Validation Due Date: Jul 30, 2026



Channing Mathis

Bianca Berger, Hashim Salazar, Audra Rhodes, AL, 87977

Pending Validation

Classes at this site: 1

Students in the Current Roster: 3

Class Roster Validation Count: 0/1



123481896

Revalidation Required

Print

Lead Teacher:Category 1: 1

Assistant Teacher:Category 2: 2

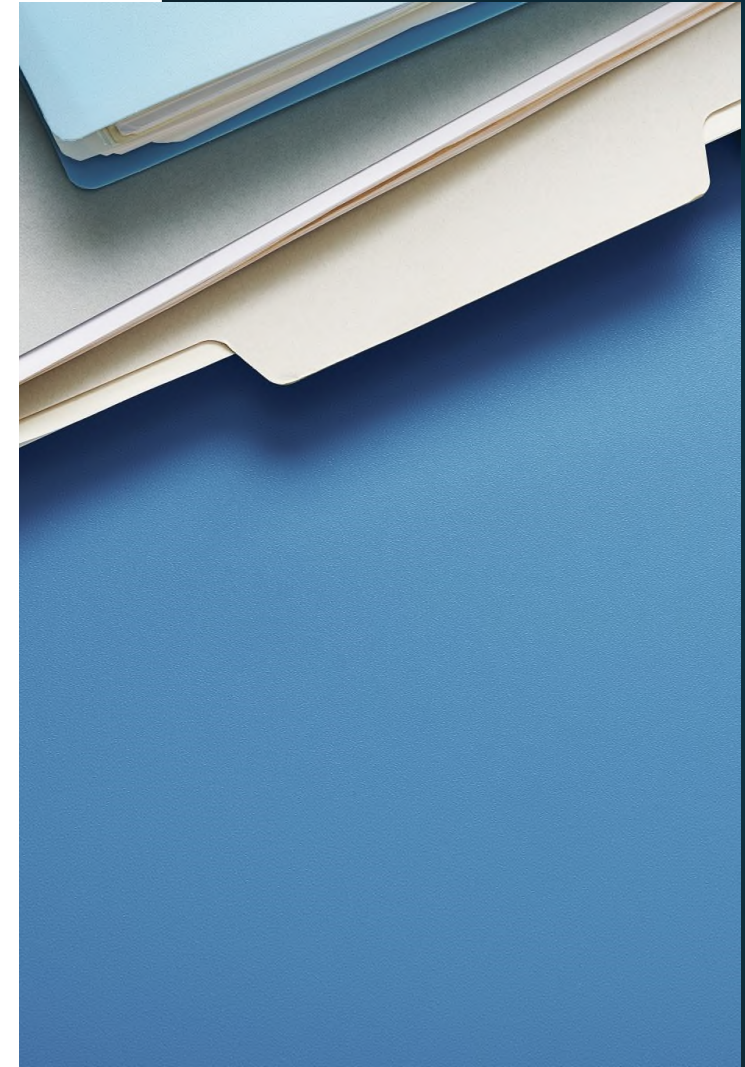
Total Students: 3Special Education Services: 1

Transportation: 2

Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Student ID	Gender	Begin Date	End Date
Becker	Ivy	Myra Mckenzie	0012961	Male	Aug 02, 2026	
Mouse	Minnie	Melanie	0012999	Male	Jun 30, 2026	

GAPREK Enhancements

- Improved Bulk Upload Process
- Improved Student Duplicate Process
- Option to download Payment Advice as an Excel spreadsheet
- Ability to Print from Class Reporting Manager



GAPREK Resource Guides

GAPREK PORTAL SECTION

On July 1, 2024, Georgia's Pre-K Program transitioned from using the Pre-K Application and Database Access (PANDA) system to the Georgia's Pre-K System (GAPREK).

This webpage contains learning videos, user guides, and other resources to support providers with GAPREK. Refer to this page for updates and resources.

GAPREK enhances user experience with a refreshed and efficient platform. GAPREK provides a one-stop destination, simplifying provider interactions and processes.

If you have any questions about GAPREK, email GAPREK.support@dec.al.ga.gov.

[Learning Videos](#) [GAPREK Resources](#) [GAPREK User Guides](#) [Communication and Webinars](#)

[Portal User Access](#)

[Viewing Dashboard](#)

[Managing Users](#)

[Managing Teachers](#)

[Managing My Profile](#)

[Managing Calendars](#)

[Data Management User Guide](#)

[Financial User Guide](#)

[Primary Authorized and Project Director User Guide](#)

[Site Director User Guide](#)

[Summer Transition Program \(STP\) User Guide](#)

[Non-Profit Reporting Form User Manual](#)

GAPREK User Guides have been updated and separated into smaller, topic-focused documents to improve usability and navigation.

Be Ready for the August Payment!

All data entry should be completed by 5:00 pm today! Office hours are open until 3 pm.

To be included in the August payment run, these tasks must be completed:

Grant Agreement Execution

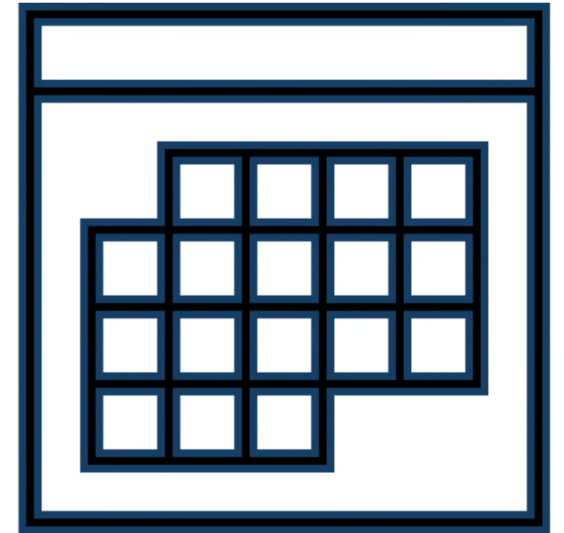
An executed grant agreement is required for eligibility to receive payment.

Class Calendars

Each class must have a calendar submitted and approved.

Teacher Information in CRM

Lead and Assistant Teachers must be entered into the Class Reporting Manager for each class.





Instructional and Training Updates

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards



- Revisions to the GELDS was finalized in spring 2026.
- Changes were made to alignment to the following:
 - Updated research on child development, science of reading, and mathematical thinking.
 - Revisions to the Georgia K-12 Standards.
 - Update to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Developmental Milestones.
- Pre-K will provide training on the standards.

Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards



Updates at a Glance

A cleaner roadmap for the GELDS changes and rollout timing.



Available now

Updated GELDS

Find the refreshed standards at gelds.dec.state.ga.us.



FY27

CLL rolls out for Pre-K

Communication, Language & Literacy changes begin in FY27.



Training first

Implementation expectation

Teachers implement revised standards after attending training.



FY28

Math rolls out for Pre-K

Teachers implement revised standards after attending training.

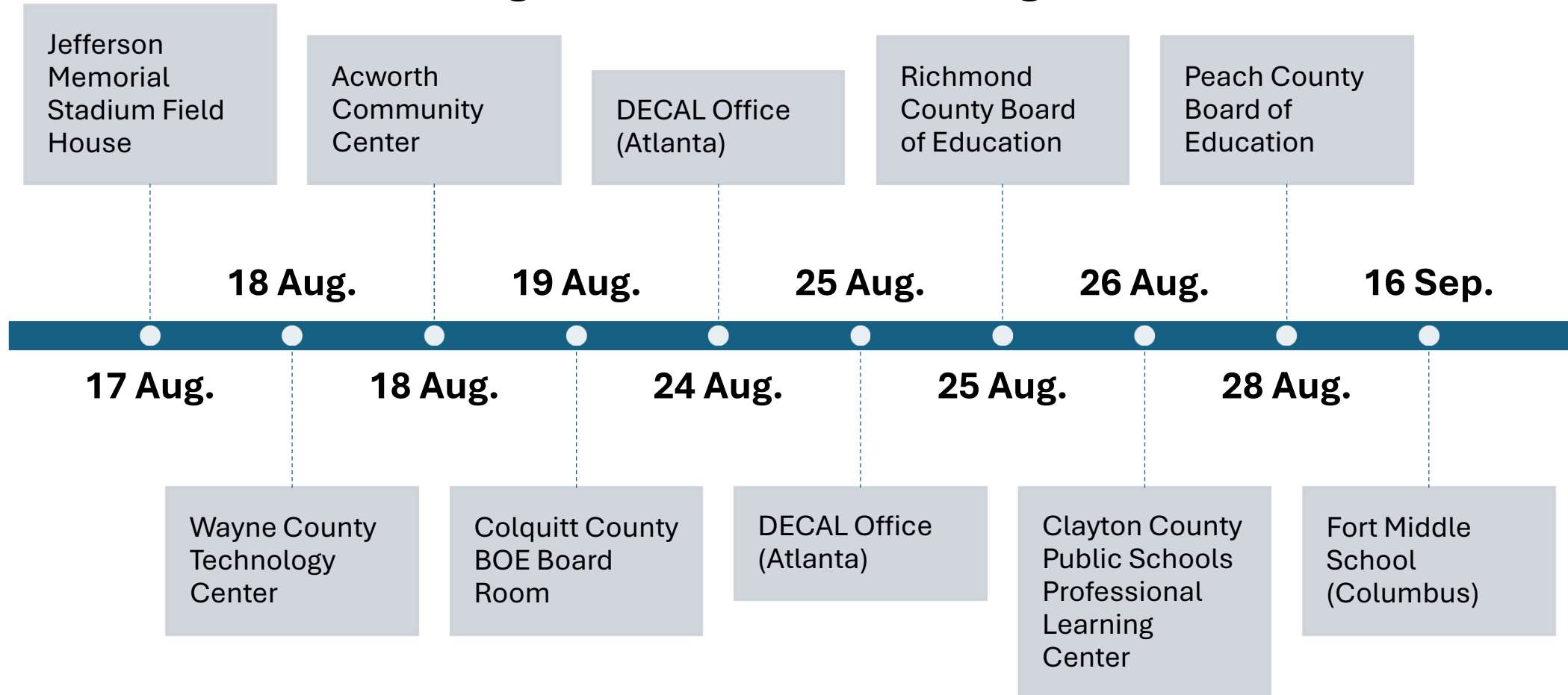


FY29

Roll-out of remaining domains

Director Training

Registration details coming soon!



Teacher Training - Opens August 3rd

New LT/AT: New
Teacher Institute

Second Year LT/AT:
Understanding
Challenging
Behavior

3rd Year and
Above LT/AT: Wild
About Literacy

Questions?
Prek.training@dec.al.ga.gov

Updates to Teacher Resources



Off to a Good Start lesson plans have been updated with new standards.



WSO Correlations have been updated with new standards.



Can be located on the dec.al.ga.gov website under Pre-K.

Pre-K Specialist Support

- Pre-K regional meetings
- Technical assistance visits
- Site visits
- Program visits



Hot Topics

- Potty Training
- Challenging Behavior
- Attendance

- SEEDS Helpline
 - o 1-833-354-4357
 - o seedshelpline@decal.ga.gov

Important Dates

1 August

- **Class Reporting Manager open for Student Entry**

3 August

- **Reconciliation open for STP**
- **Pre-K teacher training opens**

3 August

- **WSO administrator logins will be reinstated**

11 August

- **Reconciliation opens for Pre-K**

12 August

- **August Payment Processes**

17 Aug

- **WSO teacher logins will be reinstated**



October 5-9, 2026



Finding DECAL Resources Just Got *Faster*

DECAL **FAST** is Georgia's new family portal that makes it easier than ever to find child care, Pre-K information, financial assistance resources, and trusted early learning services.

- ▶ Easily connect with resources to get the info you need.
- ▶ Learn about your child's development.
- ▶ Get support for social emotional development.
- ▶ Convenient access from your phone, tablet, or computer.

<https://families.decal.ga.gov>



Questions



Thank You!

Susan Adams

Deputy Commissioner

Pre-K & Instructional Supports

Susan.Adams@dec.al.ga.gov

Prek@dec.al.ga.gov

