



Georgia First Lady Sandra Deal Shares Importance of Quality Rated to Greater Dalton Chamber of Commerce



Earlier this month, Georgia First Lady Sandra Deal spoke on a panel hosted by the Greater Dalton Chamber of Commerce about the importance of Quality Rated. Mrs. Deal emphasized the importance of achieving a Quality Rated star rating, saying that a Quality Rated child care program goes "well above" minimum state licensing requirements.

Further, Mrs. Deal added that she "would encourage all daycare providers to take part" in Quality Rated because "it gives them the opportunity to learn how to increase the quality of the early learning efforts they offer."

While in Dalton, Mrs. Deal visited the Whitfield County-Dalton Day Care Center, a three star Quality Rated child care program. Derek Cerentano, Board Member and parent of a child attending the Whitfield County-Dalton Day Care Center said knowing that his child's program is Quality Rated gives him great comfort. Because of the program's Quality Rated star rating, "We know the center is

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Georgia Rates its 900th Quality Rated Program!



Congratulations to Childcare Network #218 in Columbus for being Georgia's 900th Quality Rated Child Care Program!

providing our child with not only a great environment in which to learn, but also that he's learning at a high level," said Cerentano.

Marlen Salaises is an early childhood education student at Dalton State College and also teaches at the Whitfield County-Dalton Day Care Center. When asked how Quality Rated has benefited her as a teacher and student, she explained:

*Teachers, like me, are always challenged to keep up to a certain standard that helps the children have a learning, friendly environment. **Being Quality Rated pushes me to strive for the best, the standards make sure that quality is not compromised. Quality Rated reminds me that the children are affected by what they learn here which will help them later on in their education.***

Jillian Murphy, another member of Whitfield County-Dalton Day Care Center's board, explained that as a nonprofit, their program is committed to providing high quality and that Quality Rated is a reliable symbol to families and their community about the quality of care they provide. Murphy added that the program's star rating helps them pursue additional funding and recruit families to their center.

DECAL Awards Family Engagement Grants to Five Georgia Early Care and Education Organizations

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) announced earlier this month that it will award Family Engagement Opportunity Grants to five early childhood care and education organizations across Georgia. The purpose of the grants, which total over \$60,000 from Georgia's Early Learning Challenge grant, is to promote, encourage, and support community and family awareness and advocacy and to provide families access to free resources related to parent leadership and child development.

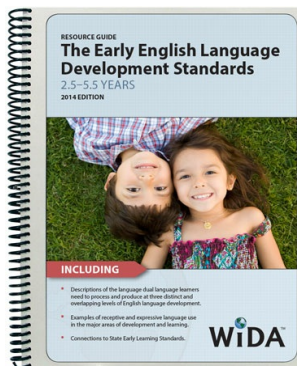
Grant recipients include Prevent Child Abuse Athens, Inc. in Clarke County; Sandy's Sandbox in Bibb County; Georgia Hope in Gilmer County; Emmaus House in Fulton County; and Moultrie YMCA in Colquitt County. To be eligible, applicants had to be located in one of Georgia's Early Education Empowerment Zones (E3Zs) or Metro Atlanta. The E3Zs are regions of the state that work with DECAL and other state agencies to pilot early education system reform initiatives and partnerships that support better outcomes for young children. Eligible applicants could apply for a maximum of \$15,000 for a one-year program or project.

"An effective partnership among families, communities, and educators helps lay a solid foundation for children's success in school," said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. "We congratulate these organizations on receiving family engagement grants and wish them well as they equip their communities to

partner with families and create a better future for our youngest learners."

Prevent Child Abuse Athens will use grant funds to involve parents in healthy cooking sessions, first aid and CPR training, and a literacy/back-to-school event. Sandy's Sandbox requested funding to inform parents and families about healthy childhood development and to teach useful skills to reinforce education at home. Georgia Hope will receive funds to offer two consecutive 14-week parent skills training series to high-risk families in Gilmer County. Emmaus House will use funding to offer spring and fall training on stress management skills for parents. The Moultrie YMCA will use this grant opportunity to offer programs on developmental milestones for preschoolers, to develop literacy in young children, and to promote overall wellness for families.

Institute Series about the WIDA Early English Language Development Standards Framework



A key portion of Georgia's Early Learning Challenge grant focuses on supporting Dual Language Learners. To accomplish this, Georgia has joined the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment consortium to support dual language learners (DLLs) from 2 ½ and 5 ½ years old.

In partnership with WIDA Early Years, the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) will be hosting an institute series about the Early English Language Development Standards Framework for individuals who work with programs implementing the WIDA E-ELD Standards Framework, Master Cadre trainers, public school partners (PreK-3), and higher education faculty. This five day institute will provide participants with the tools to support DLLs in the classroom.

[Click here for more information, dates, and to register.](#)

Foundations of Coaching Training Program

Through the Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge Grant, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is partnering with Clayton Early Learning and Qualistar Colorado to offer an in-depth training experience that will provide participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively coach early care and education professionals.

Coaching is a form of professional development used to describe a focused and ongoing professional learning experience. It is a

flexible way of meeting teachers' individual needs and can occur on its own or alongside other professional development such as courses or workshops.

The Foundations of Coaching training program develops early care and education coaches who work with early care and education professionals to help them come up with new ideas and strategies, improve existing skills and develop new abilities. Coaches provide support and encouragement to educators, helping them to reflect on current practices, apply new skills and brainstorm solutions to current challenges.

The Foundations of Coaching training program provides:

- Face-to-face classroom instruction
- Opportunities to practice coaching skills
- Feedback and coaching from course instructors
- A limited number of stipends to assist with the cost of substitute teachers and travel expenses
- The training itself is free; participants are responsible for their own meals and any travel and/or lodging expenses.

Requirements for participation:

- Preference will be given to participants working in two or three-star Quality Rated programs located in the following counties: Bibb, Brooks, Colquitt, Cook, Echols and Lowndes.
- Opportunity to practice coaching skills. Participants must identify one or two people to practice coaching with during the course. For example, a participant may identify one or two teachers who currently work in their center for a series of practice coaching sessions.
- Ability to record practice coaching sessions and submit recording to course instructors. Participants will submit 4 video recordings of coaching sessions and will receive feedback and coaching from the course instructors.
- Ability to participate in one-on-one coaching calls with instructors during the course.
- Maintain confidentiality.

The Foundations of Coaching training program will take place in the Tifton, Georgia area with an exact location to be announced. The training dates and times are:

Course Dates	Course Times
Friday, March 18, 2016	1:00pm - 5:00pm
Saturday, March 19, 2016	9:00am - 4:30pm
Wednesday, April 13, 2016	9:00am - 4:30pm
Friday, May 6, 2016	1:00pm - 5:00pm
Saturday, May 7, 2016	9:00am - 4:30pm
Monday, June 13, 2016	9:00am - 4:30pm

[Click here for more information and to register.](#)

Contact Laura Reid at Laura.Reid@dec.al.ga.gov or 404-463-0788 if you have any questions.

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