



Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Reg Griffin

404-656-0239

reg.griffin@dec.al.ga.gov

Gov. Kemp and DECAL Award 24 New Quality Rated Language and Literacy Endorsements

Expanded Program Trained 15 Child Care Centers and Nine Family Homes in Early Literacy Education

ATLANTA, Ga., (June 16, 2023) – Governor Brian P. Kemp and Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs announced that 15 child care learning centers and nine family learning homes have received Quality Rated Language and Literacy Endorsements after completing training to create meaningful, intentional, and individualized literacy instruction for young learners.

DECAL expanded the Language and Literacy Endorsement Program in 2022, inviting family child care learning homes to participate for the first time. The group of 24 child care providers receiving new Endorsements join the eight centers that earned the distinction during the inaugural program in 2021.

The 15 child care learning centers earning a 2022 Endorsement are: **Bemiss Academy Preschool, Inc.; Building Foundations Learning Academy, LLC; Busy World Learning Center; Days R Bright Academy, LLC; Kangaroo Pouch Child Development Center, Inc.; Lemon Tree Academy Monroe; Little Ones Learning Center; Love Bug Learning Center @ Greenbriar; Meadowdale Learning Center – Moody; Meadowdale Learning Center – Perry; Pat-A-Cake Learning Academy; Rainbow Academy of Learning; Seeds of Excellence Christian Academy; Storyland Child Care and Learning Center; and Trinity AME Early Learning Center, LLC.**

The nine family home provider recipients are: **Bertha Lawrence (A Step Up), Brenda Burns, Carolyn Pleasant (Pleasant Family Childcare), Dayana Cross (Mrs. Dayana’s Home Daycare), Jacqueline Collister (Brookwood In-Home Montessori), Myra F. Abdus-Saboor (Teach the Children Early Learning Center), Nahema Augustin (Great Achievers), Olivia Ferriera (A Fresh Start Family Childcare), and Shannon Moon (Polkadot Patch Childcare).**

“Congratulations to these providers for earning a Quality Rated Language and Literacy Endorsement,” said Governor Kemp. “This new group of providers will help us continue to make progress strengthening the pre-reading skills of Georgia’s young children during a critical stage of their development.”

“I couldn’t be more pleased that a second group of child care learning centers and the first cohort of family child care learning homes have met the criteria to become Quality Rated Language and Literacy Endorsement recipients,” said Commissioner Jacobs. “These recipients further validate the Governor’s decision to launch this initiative that will raise literacy proficiency among all early learners across the state for years to come.”

Governor Kemp tasked DECAL with creating the Quality Rated Language and Literacy Endorsement to help improve student literacy, and encourage and support child care providers in emphasizing language skills among the state's birth-to-age 5 population. DECAL developed the innovative and critically important Endorsement program criteria, components, structure, and resources in consultation with a panel of early care and education experts.

Providers receive an Endorsement after demonstrating a commitment to literacy education that follows accepted standards; successfully completing a program of training and professional development; and creating an approved quality improvement project for sustainable language-rich environments. The child care center directors and family child care home owners completed many hours of training that included professional learning coursework to develop the knowledge, skills, and tools to strengthen learning environments and foster quality improvement in early education settings. Meanwhile, teachers from the child care centers received training in understanding language development in very young children and adopting and implementing best practices in literacy instruction.

In recognition of their achievement, Endorsement recipients were also awarded stipends, a bonus payment, and a package of classroom materials. Funding for the Endorsement program was provided by the Sandra Dunagan Deal Center for Early Language and Literacy and the Child Care and Development Fund.

About Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) 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. 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.al.ga.gov.