



# The GA Pre-K 411: Teacher Edition

## Welcome Back!



Fresh new supplies, sorted books, new toys and manipulatives, labels and hooks! It's back to school time!

We hope this new school season finds you rested, energized, and inspired as you embark on a fun-filled Pre-K year with your co-teacher and classroom of children. While August can be super busy and fast-paced, remember to take the time to get to know your students and their families. Making positive connections with your students is the first step in building trust, respect, and a positive classroom community!

We wish you a fun year ahead as you teach, learn, and grow with your students. Watching them take risks, face challenges, build confidence, and find their way is always such a reward. Whether this is your first year or your 21<sup>st</sup> year, welcome to Georgia's Pre-K! We are so glad you are here!

**Happy 2025-2026  
School Year!**

*Georgia's  
Pre-K :)*

## 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Georgia's Pre-K Week

Stay tuned for more details!



### In this newsletter you can find...

You asked, we  
answered!  
Q+A time!

Salary Insight

DECAL Teacher  
Training

WSO Tips +  
Reminders

SEEDS for a  
Successful Year!

DECAL Workforce  
Initiatives

Early Language &  
Literacy Lab

Other Pre-K +  
Agency Updates

# The Pre-K Scoop



**Q: Do my years teaching as a GA's Pre-K lead teacher and as a 2nd grade lead teacher at a public elementary school count towards Creditable Years of Experience? I've also had other teaching experience not in GA's Pre-K or a public school, will that count towards CYE?**

**A:** Time working as a Georgia's Pre-K lead teacher and a K-12 public school lead teacher does count towards CYE as long as you taught 6 or more months of the school year and meet the credential requirement. For more detailed information on the definition of CYE and teaching experience that counts towards CYE, refer to [Creditable Years of Experience](#).

**Q: I was a Pre-K teacher last year, does my employer need to add a year of CYE for 2024-2025?**

**A:** Action is not required by your employer, a year of CYE was automatically added for teachers who were reported in GAPREK as working 6 months or longer with an approved credential.

## Salary Insight



The Pre-K grant provides salary and compensation funding for lead and assistant teacher positions. This funding is allocated for the school year, and the actual amount paid to each teacher may vary depending on their start date and the number of hours and days worked.

The Assistant Teacher compensation for the school year is \$25,741.35. Lead Teacher salaries are determined using the [State Salary Schedule](#), which is based on the teacher's approved credential(s) and verified Creditable Years of Experience (CYE). The salary rates reflect the gross amount, which is an individual's total earnings before any taxes or deductions.

To determine your salary:

1. Locate your approved credential in the column headers of the salary schedule.
2. Identify the row corresponding to your verified CYE and associated salary step.
3. The intersection of your credential column and CYE row indicates your annual salary.

Please note: All Pre-K program personnel are employees of the individual Pre-K provider for whom they work. They are not employees of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning or the State of Georgia.



State Salary Schedule for Georgia's Pre-K

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

Fiscal Year 2026 July 2025 – June 2026		Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning Salary Levels						
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**
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
3	1	\$25,741.35	\$31,916.86	\$42,684.00	\$42,684.00	\$41,717.00	\$44,615.00	\$46,897.00
4	2	\$25,741.35	\$32,912.86	\$43,680.00	\$43,680.00	\$41,717.00	\$45,668.00	\$48,019.00
5	3	\$25,741.35	\$33,937.86	\$44,705.00	\$44,705.00	\$41,717.00	\$46,753.00	\$49,175.00
6	4	\$25,741.35	\$34,993.86	\$45,761.00	\$45,761.00	\$41,717.00	\$48,243.00	\$50,762.00
7	5	\$25,741.35	\$36,081.86	\$46,849.00	\$46,849.00	\$41,717.00	\$49,405.00	\$52,000.00
8	6	\$25,741.35	\$37,201.86	\$47,969.00	\$47,969.00	\$41,717.00	\$51,201.00	\$53,913.00
9,10	7	\$25,741.35	\$38,355.86	\$49,123.00	\$49,123.00	\$41,717.00	\$52,452.00	\$55,245.00

CLICK THE IMAGE TO TAKE YOU TO THE SALARY DOCUMENT

## 2025-2026 Regional Meeting

Georgia's Pre-K Specialists across the state enjoyed sharing this year's 'Back to School' information with programs! Did you miss your back to school meeting or see something you'd like to revisit?

The Regional meeting has been recorded for you! Click the graphics to take you there.



## IQ Guides + FAQ Documents

Instructional Quality (IQ) Guides are used as guidance documents for teachers. There are 4: Learning Environment, Planning Instruction, Daily Schedule, and Assessment.

FAQ documents provide clarification and definitions that align with the IQ Guides.

CLICK HERE TO TAKE YOU TO THE DOCUMENTS

# More to Know!

## DECAL Teacher Training Info

Be sure to read your confirmation email\* from GaPDS Support completely so you can save the date and make appropriate arrangements for class coverage, travel, children, pets and other obligations.

Prior to attending Understanding Challenging Behavior or New Lead or Assistant Teacher Training you are REQUIRED to watch this 1-hour [Pyramid Model overview podcast](#). The link will also be in your confirmation email.

Remember that every training has online coursework to be completed after attending face-to-face training. You will find instructions for logging in and the link to the platform here: [Online Coursework - Best Practices Training \(gsu.edu\)](#). It is recommended that you complete the quiz and assignment within four weeks of attending training. The deadline to complete the coursework for Recipes for Success in Center Time (pre-recorded) is 4:00 pm on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

\* Your training confirmation email is sent to the email address you have on file with your GaPDS account/profile.

### WSO Tips + Reminders

- The Work Sampling Online (WSO) system opened on Monday, AUGUST 18th for teachers.
- If you have changed schools, submit a WSO Help Ticket so that we can transfer your login to your new school.
- **Returning teachers:** If you do not remember your password, click on the 'Forgot Password' link on the WSO login page. If you do not remember your WSO username, or if you have changed schools, use this link to submit a WSO Help Ticket: [Georgia's Pre-K Work Sampling System Assessment Program](#).
- **New teachers:** Once your director sets up your WSO account, you will receive an email from [WSOsupport@pearson.com](mailto:WSOsupport@pearson.com). The email will provide instructions on how to create a WSO password. Teachers MUST login, create their class, and enter their class roster BEFORE attending WSO training (Day 1 of New Lead Teacher Training). Be prepared to bring a laptop to work on during training.
- Contact your Project Director to obtain your Class ID and the Student ID, First Name, Last Name, DOB for each student before you begin entering any students into WSO. These 5 fields need to match exactly between GAPREK and WSO.
- Only enter students that are physically attending into WSO.
- If you need assistance with WSO, submit a WSO Online Help Ticket at: <http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/Prek/PreKChildAssessmentProgram.aspx>.





# Agency Awareness

## Planting the SEEDS for a Successful School Year



As we welcome a new school year, it's the perfect time to reflect on how we can create nurturing, well-organized learning environments where all children can be successful. The SEEDS Program offers a powerful checklist to help early educators start strong, adapted from the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI).

### **Creating a Supportive Physical Environment**

The classroom environment lays the foundation for both learning and emotional well-being. This environment can be fostered by setting clear boundaries in learning areas, organizing movement to reduce open spaces, using visual cues to guide expectations, and providing a calm-down space where children can manage emotions. These thoughtful design choices help create a space where children feel secure and ready to engage.

### **Structuring the Day with Purpose**

Children thrive on routine. A visual schedule at eye level helps them understand what's happening now and next, how time progresses throughout the day, and when changes occur (e.g., holidays, weather). Balance is key—include both teacher- and child-directed activities and vary group sizes.

### **Establishing Clear, Positive Rules**

Keep rules simple and visual. Limit to 3–5 positively stated rules, teach and model them consistently, and post visuals at children's eye level.

### **Planning for Smooth Transitions**

Transitions can be tricky! Support children by giving advance warnings, using songs or games to keep them engaged, teaching specific steps for moving between activities, and minimizing the number of transitions.

### **Building Positive Relationships**

Connection is everything. Greet each child by name, speak at eye level, and use warm tones. Acknowledge positive behavior with smiles, thumbs up, or a gentle pat on the back. For dual language learners, incorporate key words from their home language. Use individualized forms of acknowledgment and attend to children in positive ways even when they are not engaging in challenging behavior.

### **Engaging Families**

Families are key partners in a child's success. Create a welcoming space that reflects their cultures and homes and keep communication open and consistent. Build relationships through celebration notes, visits, and classroom invitations, making your space one where families feel valued and connected.

Let's work together to plant the SEEDS of success—creating classrooms where every child feels safe, supported, and ready to grow.

**Have questions, need resources, interested in professional development, or need classroom support? The SEEDS Helpline is here for you—email or give us a call!**

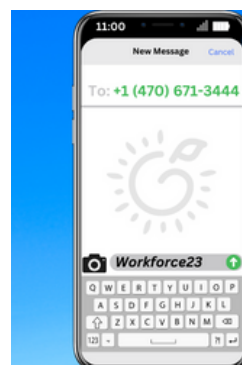
**SEEDS Helpline: 1-833-354-4357**

**Email: [seedshelpline@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:seedshelpline@dec.al.ga.gov)**

## DECAL Workforce Initiatives

Stay up to date on all DECAL Workforce initiatives by signing up for our Workforce Chat.

Just text "Workforce23" to 470-671-3444.



**For updates on DECAL's workforce initiatives**

**Text: *Workforce23***

**To: 470.671.3444**





# EARLY LANGUAGE & LITERACY LAB

## Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning



The Early Learning Language and Literacy Lab is LIVE on the DECAL website! This is your online hub for high-quality language and literacy trainings and resources designed to support Georgia's early learning educators, administrators, and professionals. With a special focus on the Science of Reading, this page will help early learning professionals explore evidence-based practices and strategies to improve language and literacy instruction. Under the Georgia Early Literacy Act (House Bill 538), starting July 2025, all teaching staff working in licensed child care learning centers and family child care learning homes are required to obtain two (2) annual Early Language and Literacy training clock hours. This page will assist early learning professionals with identifying training opportunities that fulfill this requirement. <https://www.dec.al.ga.gov/literacy.aspx>

### Quality Rated Workforce Bonus

Pre-K teachers working at child care centers with 1-, 2-, or 3-Star Ratings are eligible for the annual \$500 Quality Rated Workforce Bonus!

If you are a full-time staff member (30+ hours per week) and you've been employed with your program for at least 90 days, go to <https://dec.al.qr.payments.com/> to find your program's designated Payment Application Month.



Be sure to complete your application within your program's Payment Application Month to receive a direct payment of \$500! Eligibility requirements apply. For questions, contact Care Solutions at [support@dec.al.qr.payments.com](mailto:support@dec.al.qr.payments.com) or (800) 227-3410, ext. 613.

### CALi on the Web!

Did you know our new [website](#) design features CALi!? The CALi Chatbot can help guests navigate the website! You can find her on the bottom right corner of any page of the website.

Try it out!

[www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov)



Welcome To DECAL!  
Hi, I'm CALi. How can I help you?



## Thank you for reading!

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