



**Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning**  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

**Brian P. Kemp**  
Governor

**Amy M. Jacobs**  
Commissioner

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **DECAL Seeking Applications for Georgia's Pre-K Teachers of the Year**

### *Winner from Public School and Private Center Will Be Chosen*

**ATLANTA, Ga., (March 1, 2023)** – The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is seeking applications for Georgia's Pre-K Program Teachers of the Year for the 2023-2024 school year. DECAL will select a winner from a local public-school system and a winner from a private child care center.

“Since its inception, Georgia's Pre-K Program has helped more than two million children enter kindergarten better prepared to succeed,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “The key to the Pre-K program's success has been the dedicated teachers who engage Georgia's four-year-old students every day. Choosing Pre-K Teachers of the Year is one way to acknowledge and thank them for their hard work and commitment.”

The application for Pre-K Teacher of the Year is available on the DECAL website home page at [www.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov). Completed applications must be submitted no later than 5:00 PM on **March 24, 2023**. Finalists will be announced in May 2023, with the winners announced in the early fall.

To be considered for Georgia's Pre-K Program Teacher of the Year, the teacher must meet the following qualifications:

- Must have been employed as a Georgia's Pre-K lead teacher during the 2022-2023 school year.
- Must have taught as a lead teacher in a Georgia's Pre-K classroom for a minimum of three years.
- Must meet Georgia's Pre-K credential and Professional Development Registry requirements.
- Must be planning to continue as a lead teacher in a Georgia's Pre-K classroom during the 2023-2024 school year.
- Must be employed by a Georgia's Pre-K Program provider in good standing with all programs administered by DECAL (Pre-K, Child Care Services, Childcare and Parent Services [CAPS] and Nutrition Services).
- Must be willing to serve as an ambassador for Georgia's Pre-K Program. Duties may include but are not limited to public speaking, representing Georgia's Pre-K at meetings, and modeling effective classroom practices.
- Must be able and willing to travel as needed – including some overnight stays.
- Must be willing to have a classroom evaluation and interview conducted if chosen as a finalist.

For more information, contact Meghan McNail, Summer Transition Program and Outreach Coordinator, at [meghan.mcnail@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:meghan.mcnail@dec.al.ga.gov) or 770-357-4911.

This school year approximately 74,000 four-year-olds attend Georgia's Pre-K Program. The voluntary, lottery-funded Pre-K program has been recognized as one of the top programs in the nation, based on quality standards, teacher qualifications, and enrollment. Georgia's Pre-K Program is universal – meaning that any age eligible child residing in Georgia may attend the program regardless of family income. Georgia's model for providing the Pre-K program is unique in that it is offered through a public-private partnership in local school systems, in private child care centers, and in other facilities.

### **About Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning**

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning 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](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov).