



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

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Reg Griffin
404-656-0239
reg.griffin@dec.al.ga.gov



Aspen Institute Announces Policy Acceleration Partnerships

Georgia's DECAL Among Six Public Entities Partnering with Community Organizations to Advance Professional Success for Students Who Are Parents

Washington, DC (March 18, 2021) – Ascend at the Aspen Institute today announced recipients of the Aspen Policy Acceleration Partnerships – a new effort to support cities, counties, and states committed to increasing economic mobility and well-being for students who are parents. The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is among six public entities selected as strategic partners and field innovators who will work together with Ascend to achieve a shared goal of promoting postsecondary completion for parents by increasing access to supports and public benefits. These partnerships will ensure that policies and systems lead parents to credentials and careers that provide living wages, access to opportunities for advancement, and continued learning in sectors with high growth and demand. The awards are 18-month grants of \$150,000 that will fuel city, county, and state agencies' work in partnership with other public entities, parents, and community-based organizations.

Aspen Postsecondary Success for Parents (PSP) Initiative National Advisors, a cohort of leaders from higher education institutions and nonprofit organizations, designed the request for proposal for this effort and selected awardees. National Advisors share and inform strategies and recommendations to support student parents. Ascend PSP Parent Advisors, a group of student parents whose first-hand experiences drive the PSP Initiative, provided feedback throughout the selection process.

“It takes strong partnerships and innovation to advance postsecondary success for parents, which is why we turned to their communities for creative solutions. These exciting new partnerships are geographically diverse and designed to accelerate important work on behalf of parents and will serve as strong models for other cities and states. I’m thrilled to watch these innovations open doors for more student parents,” said Anne Mosle, vice president at the Aspen Institute and executive director of Ascend.

“Creating real solutions for student parents is within the reach of governors and state leaders through the incentivizing and scaling of cross-sector solutions,” said Amanda Winters, postsecondary program director at the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and PSP National Advisor. “The projects represented in the Policy Acceleration Partnership recipients represent exactly the types of innovative and collaborative efforts that can make a true impact.”

DECAL and Technical Colleges and Schools of Georgia (TCSG) will establish two-generation (2Gen) Community Leadership Teams at three TCSG campuses that will focus on understanding the issues, challenges, and opportunities that impact educational attainment for single mothers and student parents. The teams will include representatives from child care, secondary and postsecondary education, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), as well as parents enrolled in postsecondary or adult education. The lessons learned at the community-level will inform state-level policy and practice changes.

Other recipients include City of Long Beach, California; Colorado Community College System; Minnesota Officer of Higher Education; Pennsylvania Department of Human Services; and Rhode Island Department of Human Services.

“We’re honored to be selected as a Policy Acceleration Strategic Partner,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “DECAL will partner with TCSG and 2Gen Georgia to create innovative solutions to better serve students who are parents. We are committed to ensuring policies lead to better academic and career opportunities.”

About DECAL

The 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 and 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.decals.ga.gov.