

**DECAL - Bright from the Start****Meeting Minutes**

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**Early Care and Learning Board  
Meeting****11/7/2006 1:00:00 PM**Omni Hotel - Hazelnut Room  
Atlanta, GA

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**Marsha H. Moore, Commissioner**

Jackie McDowell	Board Member
Gabrielle Braswell	Board Member
Janice Gallimore	Board Member
Melissa Turner	Board Member
Maggie Martinez	Board Member
Victor Morgan	Board Member

**Attendees**

Justine Strickland	Assistant Commissioner for Child Care & Child Care Policy
Marsha Moore	Commissioner
Karen Robinson	Assistant Commissioner for Programs
Leslie Lowe	Deputy Commissioner
Luann Purcell	Chair
Carlene Talton	Secretary
Ted Mallory	Vice Chair
Tiffany Gibson	Board Liaison
Mark Waits	Executive Assistant to the Commissioner
Ashley Peacock	Director of Legal Services
Megan Larkins	Office of Planning & Budget

**I. Election of Officers**

Ashley Peacock announced the election results and presented Tiffany Gibson, Board Liaison, with the official Certification of Election Results.

**II. Call to Order**

Chair Luann Purcell called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

**III. Introductory Remarks**

Chair Luann Purcell shared some inspirational thoughts about leadership and then presented Ted Mallory, Vice Chair, and Carlene Talton, Secretary, with copies of the books from which she quoted. She then turned the meeting over to Commissioner Moore. Commissioner Moore reviewed the agenda for the meeting and then shared some introductory remarks to set the context for the discussion items to follow. She shared Georgia's definition of school readiness and presented an overview of the work of the

department using a graphic/analogy of a bridge.

#### **IV. Discussion Items**

##### **a. Brain Development/Early Childhood Information**

Assistant Commissioner Justine Strickland presented on brain development in young children and how the department is utilizing brain development research as a foundation for all they do. She then gave an overview of the Georgia Early Learning Standards (GELS) ending with an explanation of what's to come in 2007: the GELS activity guides...Early Learning Activities for Parents and for Teachers. She also talked briefly about Better Brains for Babies (BBB) and provided each board member with a copy of one of BBB's brochures. In a follow up discussion, board members indicated how important the following items are: 1. Format of the activity guides is critical if you want parents and teachers to really use them. The guides must be user-friendly with verbiage appropriate for parents. 2. Marketing/ Distribution (How will parents know that these resources are available?) Commissioner Moore mentioned the department increased the Public Relations staff who will help market the GELS activity guides. Also, the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (R & R's) will be involved in distribution to local communities. The department is working on funding to produce these documents in Spanish.

##### **b. Pre-K Assessment**

Mary Mazarky, Prekindergarten Division Director, gave an overview of Georgia's Pre-K Program, discussed typical four year olds, their needs, and how the Pre-K content standards are aligned with the GELS and with the kindergarten Georgia Performance Standards. Her presentation reviewed the typical learning areas in Pre-K classrooms. She continued by discussing the assessment of Pre-K classrooms using the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) evaluation tool. She gave a brief overview of the components of the PQA. She also introduced the history and implementation of the Work Sampling System (WSS) currently being rolled out in prekindergarten programs statewide. The WSS is an appropriate way to look at the development/ growth of children in the Pre-K program. She ended her presentation with a brief discussion of the importance of transitioning Pre-K children to kindergarten.

##### **c. Review of Quality System Indicators Paper**

Assistant Commissioner Karen Robinson provided an update on the work of the Quality System Indicators Committee (QSIC). She referred to the most current draft of the concept paper entitled, "Enhancing an Early Care and Education Quality System." She reminded the board the goal of the committee is to develop a systemic framework of quality measures and evaluation standards for Georgia's early care and education system. The first task of the QSIC is to identify indicators of quality, and the second task is to determine how to measure quality. She reported on what the QSIC has been doing and then looked at four overall components of their work. The presentation included examples of the indicators the committee has

developed thus far. She ended the presentation with the results of a survey completed by committee members after the last meeting revealing the level of satisfaction with the way the process is being conducted.

d. eBoard Review

Board Liaison Tiffany Gibson provided a brief overview of eBoard and used pictures of the eBoard pages to familiarize board members with the program.

## V. Action Items

Before moving to the action items on the agenda, there was a discussion among board members requesting Commissioner Moore indicate what the biggest challenges currently facing the early care and education community are. Commissioner Moore responded by giving the following two challenges: 1. funding, 2. buy-in from the public and the public recognizing how important quality child care and early education are to a child's success. The board recommended the department look at how much it costs to retain a child in the first grade in an effort to support the importance of laying a solid foundation for academic success from birth to age five.

a. Bylaw Review and Approval

Chair Luann Purcell thanked the Bylaws Committee, Ted Mallory and Maggy Martinez, for their work on this important document, and she thanked the other board members for their review and response to the bylaws. While not reviewing the entire document, she called attention to several additions the bylaws committee had made to the document: \*Board Assessment \*Strategic Planning for the Board \*Addition of Ethics Committee \*She asked for board discussion on the Media Policy specifically regarding what questions board members can/cannot answer from the media. It was decided board members can respond to broad questions such as mission, goals of the agency, etc. but that questions about specific programs and/or incidents should be referred to Commissioner Moore's office to be handled by her or her staff. \*Renumeration/Reimbursement - specifically relating to training for the board. She recognized the importance of board members participating in early care and education training and said that the department will help make board members aware of training opportunities at the state and national levels. She pointed out participation in training will be affected by the availability of funds. Chair Purcell pointed out the bylaws do not contain any statement about the number of times the board will meet per year. When she asked for feedback from the board relating to meeting once per quarter, all board members expressed they feel meeting once per quarter is sufficient. She also mentioned if the board is directed to meet more often, the plan will be to meet in person once per quarter with additional meetings taking place via conference call. A motion was made to accept and approve the bylaws as submitted by the committee; the motion was seconded. The board voted unanimously to approve. (Board Member Gallimore had to leave the meeting just prior to the action items.)

Voting

Jackie McDowell - Yes  
 Gabrielle Braswell - Yes  
 Janice Gallimore - No Vote  
 Melissa Turner - Yes  
 Maggie Martinez - Yes  
 Luann Purcell - Yes  
 Carlene Talton - Yes  
 Ted Mallory - Yes  
 Victor Morgan - Yes

## b. Review Committee Assignments

Chair Purcell pointed out committee appointments had been made and distributed after the previous board orientation, on August 7-8, 2006. She reminded the board, however, a fourth committee - the Ethics Committee - has been added. She instructed board members interested in serving on the Ethics Committee to e-mail her to express their interest. If necessary, the board chair will contact people to ask them to serve. The Board asked for clarification on which staff would serve as liaisons to the particular committees. The Board members expressed their desire to be clear on what the committees could do to be supportive of the work of the various divisions within the department.

**VI. Commissioner's Report**

Commissioner Moore introduced Assistant Commissioner Leslie Lowe who explained the state budget cycle. The Commissioner then reviewed the department's budget requests for FY 2007 (Amended) and FY 2008. She also reviewed three pieces of legislation the department hopes to introduce in the next session of the General Assembly. 1. Create background/driving history check for employees of early care and education programs who provide transportation to children in care. 2. Amend existing background check law for employees of early care and education programs. The current law provides that a person receives an unsatisfactory determination for all felonies and certain misdemeanors. Bright from the Start proposes to add additional misdemeanor offenses to the definition of crime in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of children in care by making persons ineligible to work in child care facilities who have committed these serious offenses. 3. Transfer the requirement of DHR to notify child care facilities that they should carry liability insurance contained in O.C.G.A Section 49-5-12(t) to this agency's code section. Commissioner Moore provided an update on the following key initiatives/efforts in which she is currently involved: 1. Alliance of Education Agency Heads (AEAH). The AEAH was created by the Governor to ensure the state agencies dealing with education are communicating, coordinating, and when possible, collaborating to create a seamless education system for children from birth through post secondary school in Georgia. \*One priority of the AEAH is to increase the high school graduation rate. Board member Jackie McDowell encouraged Commissioner Moore to represent private institutions at the alliance meetings. 2. Workforce Investment Board. The Commissioner represents early care and education on the board that oversees the creation and implementation of the Governor's workforce development system in Georgia. 3. National Early Childhood Accountability Task Force.

The Commissioner serves on this task force sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts to look at appropriate ways to assess preschool children. The task force is also looking at the place of preschool education in No Child Left Behind. The task force report should be out soon.

4. PK-3 Alignment. Bright from the Start and the Georgia Department of Education received a grant from the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) to explore aligning Pre-K-3rd grade. The state team will look at developing models that could be piloted in certain regions of the state - one of the first tasks is to pinpoint where is the disconnect. Commissioner Moore mentioned the team will pull together a conference in winter 2007 where the idea of Pre-K-3 alignment in Georgia will be discussed.

5. Economic Impact Study - The department has contracted with the University of Georgia and Georgia State University to study the economic effect of the child care industry in Georgia. The study will require the creation of two committees: a. a technical advisory committee, b. a policy advisory committee. Commissioner Moore asked the board members to recommend people in their areas to serve on these committees. Board members can send names/contact information to Commissioner Moore or Tiffany Gibson. One board member mentioned local chambers of commerce would be an effective resource to tap into.

6. Customer Service - Commissioner Moore reported on the document recently produced by the department's leadership development team identifying approximately 50 initiatives/efforts the department has begun in the past year to enhance/improve customer service.

7. Balanced Scorecard. The Commissioner explained the efforts being made to ensure the effectiveness of the department in accomplishing the goals/objectives of the department's strategic plan using the Balanced Scorecard. Assistant Commissioner Leslie Lowe is working closely with staff to apply the Balanced Scorecard approach to all the department is doing. In closing, Commissioner Moore opened the discussion for questions and comments. It was asked by a board member if it would be appropriate for committee members to attend relevant meetings, talk with his staff liaison, etc in order to ensure support to the department. It was also asked if the department creates and distributes an annual report. Commissioner Moore informed the board the PR division is currently working on a report that will be ready before the legislative session in January.

## **VII. Adjournment**

Chair Purcell thanked everyone for their attendance and participation in the meeting, reminded them of the next meeting scheduled for February 8, 2007 and encouraged members to attend the reception with the boards from NAEYC and GAYC. She then officially adjourned the meeting.

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Board Chair

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Board Secretary