# Welcome to the Board of Early Care and Learning

November 18, 2021



# DECAL November 18 Board Meeting: Webinar 101

#### For Board Members:

- Board meeting is audio only.
- You can mute and unmute yourselves.
- Report any sound or technology issues using the chat box, and a DECAL staff member will assist you.

#### For General Public:

- You will remain muted.
- The agenda does not include a Q&A session; this is standard for board meetings.
- The agenda does include a public comment period. Public may type comments in the chat box. Public comments will be shared with the Board.
- Minutes will be posted at a later date. Board Summary will be posted within two business days.
- PowerPoint presentation will also be posted.



# Board Meeting Welcome

Phil Davis, Board Chair



# Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- Approve 11/18/21 agenda
- Approve 08/26/21 minutes



# Commissioner's Updates

Amy M. Jacobs, Commissioner



# Spending Plan for Federal Relief Funds



# Federal Funding Received

# Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA)

- \$403,660,875
- Mitigate negative impacts of COVID on child care industry
- Support families

# American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

- More than \$1.5 billion
- To help stabilize Georgia's child care industry
- Additional CCDF monies to support providers, families, and the early care and education workforce



## Current Projects Funded by Federal Relief

#### STABLE 4ward

Distribute more than \$800M to licensed child care providers

#### CAPS Expansion

- Increase number of children served by 10,000
- Increase QR bonus payments by 15 percentage points per star level

#### Workforce Retention and Supports

Provide additional POWER payments to early learning professionals

#### Stakeholder Engagement

 Solicit feedback from families, teachers, directors, child care owners, DECAL staff, and stakeholder groups about ways to move forward post-pandemic





# Georgia's Pre-K Teachers of the Year





LaNita Carey Jackson Creek Academy - Lilburn



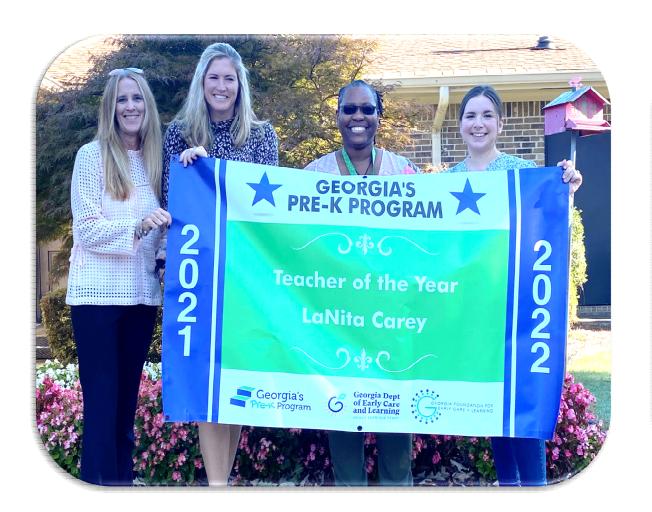
Stephanie Curington
Kings Chapel Elementary - Perry





## **TOTY Check Presentations**







# Georgia's Early Childhood Educators of the Year



**Diana Black Infant**Pookie Bear Learning
Savannah, GA



Sharon Floyd Infant Sheltering Arms Norcross, GA



Maria Claudia Ortega Toddler My Little Geniuses Marietta, GA



**Kayla Anderson Toddler**Greenbriar Preschool
Evans, GA



Whitney Carder
Preschool
Cleveland Academy
Cleveland, GA



Hannah Beth Reeves
Preschool
Academy for Little People
Chickamauga, GA





# Finance, Administration, & Nutrition Updates

Rian Ringsrud, Deputy Commissioner for Finance & Administration



# Finance Update – SFY 2022 Summary

Budget Comparison							
Data as of Sept 30th	Budget	Expenditures*	Remaining Balance	% Remaining			
BY PROGRAMS							
Child Care Services	\$430,945,908	\$135,941,411	\$295,004,497	68%			
Pre-K + (HS)	\$382,734,866	\$75,369,357	\$307,365,509	80%			
Quality Initiatives	\$74,683,305	\$8,656,710	\$66,026,595	88%			
Nutrition	\$163,075,623	\$41,116,622	\$121,959,001	75%			
Total	\$1,051,439,702	\$261,084,100	\$790,355,602	75%			

BY FUNDING SOURCE						
State General	\$57,726,235	\$11,250,531	\$46,475,704	81%		
State Lottery	\$382,559,866	\$75,318,636	\$307,241,230	80%		
Federal	\$610,818,601	\$174,483,439	\$436,335,162	71%		
Other	\$335,000	\$31,494	\$303,506	91%		
Total	\$1,051,439,702	\$261,084,100	\$790,355,602	75%		

<sup>\*</sup> Includes encumbrances.

#### Finance Update SFY 2022 Budget Summary – Q1





# **Introducing Happy Helpings**



Georgia's Summer Food Service Program

#### Rebranding the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

- Program operations/administration will remain the same; only the name is changed.
- Brand is fun, child-friendly, and a better match for connecting with intended audiences.
- Happy Helpings name/logo will be used in all promotions including online, video, social media, and statewide advertising.
- Goal of rebranding is to increase participation in the program

Visit www.happyhelpingsga.com



# Child Care Services Updates

Pam Stevens, Deputy Commissioner for Child Care Services



# School-Age Help and Relief Effort (SHARE)



#### Reminder about SHARE

- Needed to support providers caring for school-age children when school was held virtually
- Eligible providers:
  - Child care learning centers
  - Family child care learning homes
  - License-exempt providers
- Major components of the grants:
  - To train providers on appropriate practices for school-age care
  - To help providers modify space to accommodate virtual learning for school-age students

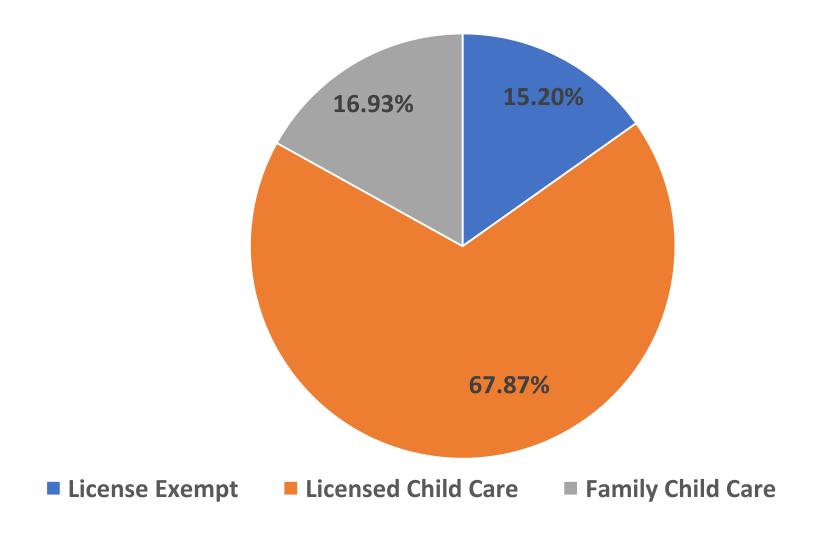


#### **SHARE Grant Amounts**

School-Age Capacity Range (Licensed & License- Exempt Centers)	Payment Tiers
1-25	\$1,720
26-50	\$2,150
51-100	\$2,795
101-200	\$3,440
201 and greater	\$4,300
Family Child Care Learning Homes	\$1,075

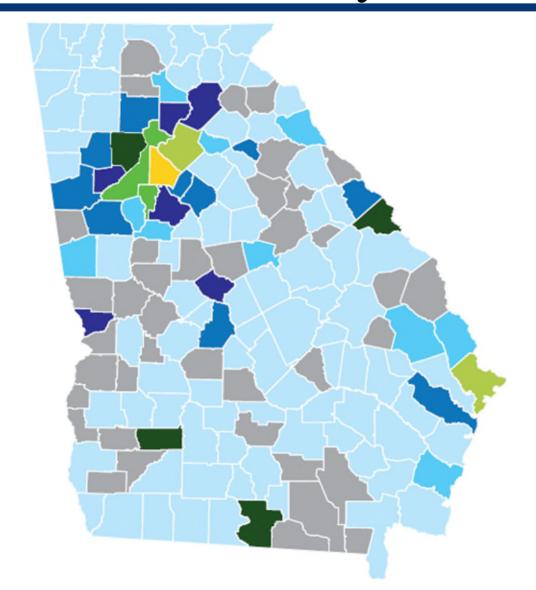


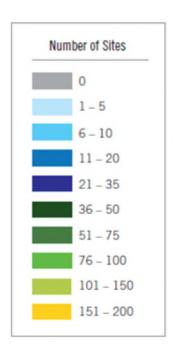
# 1,382 Approved SHARE Grant Applications





# SHARE Grantee Sites by County

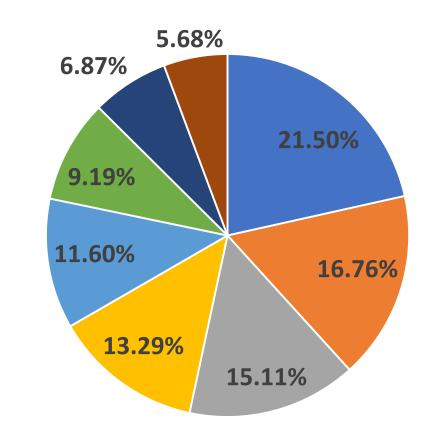






# Youth Served in March 2021 by Age

Total schoolage youth served in March 2021: 48,067



■ Age 5
■ Age 6
■ Age 7
■ Age 8
■ Age 9
■ Age 10
■ Age 11
■ Age 12



# Content of School-Age Programming

#### **Most Commonly Provided:**

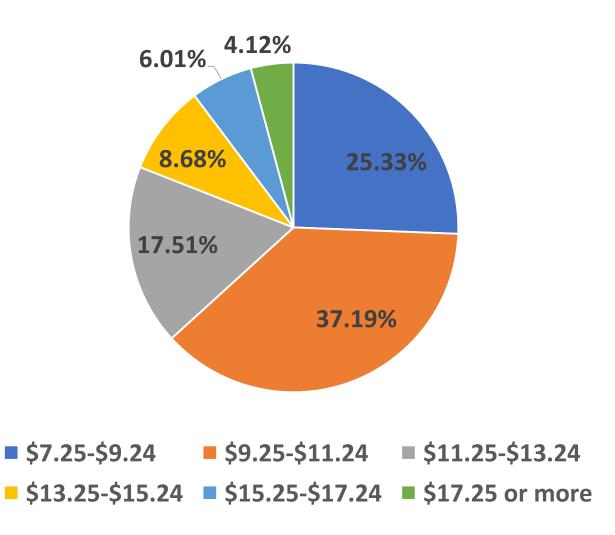
- Crafts
- Academic Enrichment
- Literacy/Reading Skills
- Social Emotional Learning
- Sports Recreation
- Health & Wellness

#### **Least Commonly Provided:**

- Community Service
- Visual & Performing Arts
- Mentoring
- Academic Remediation

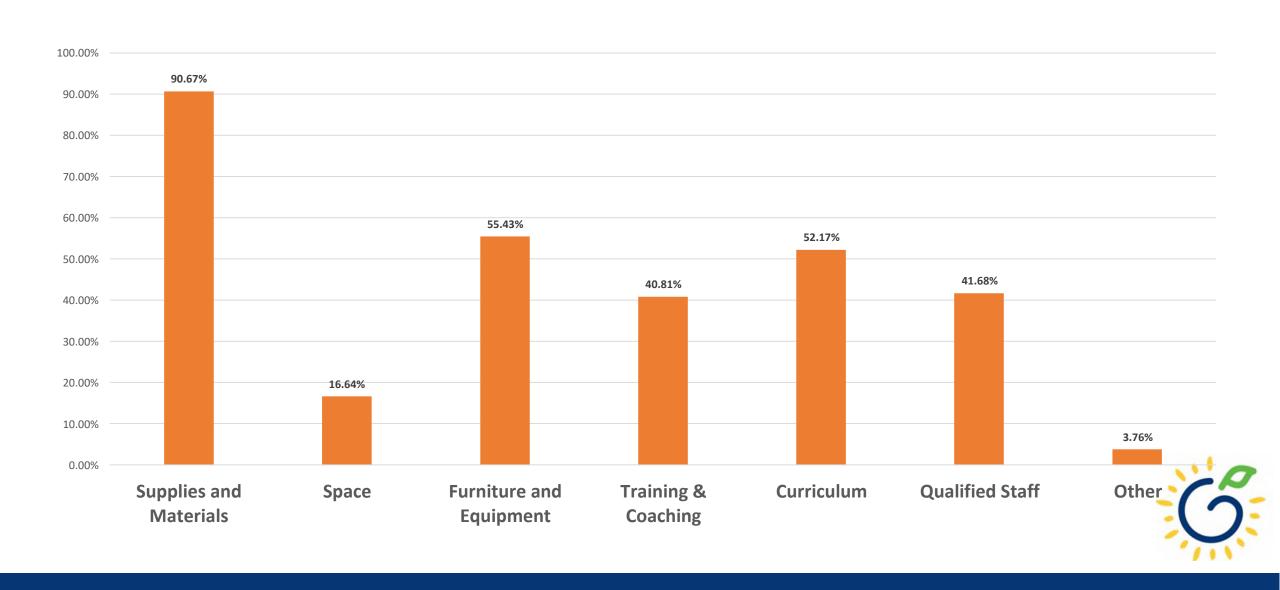


#### Average Hourly Wage for School-Age Care Professionals

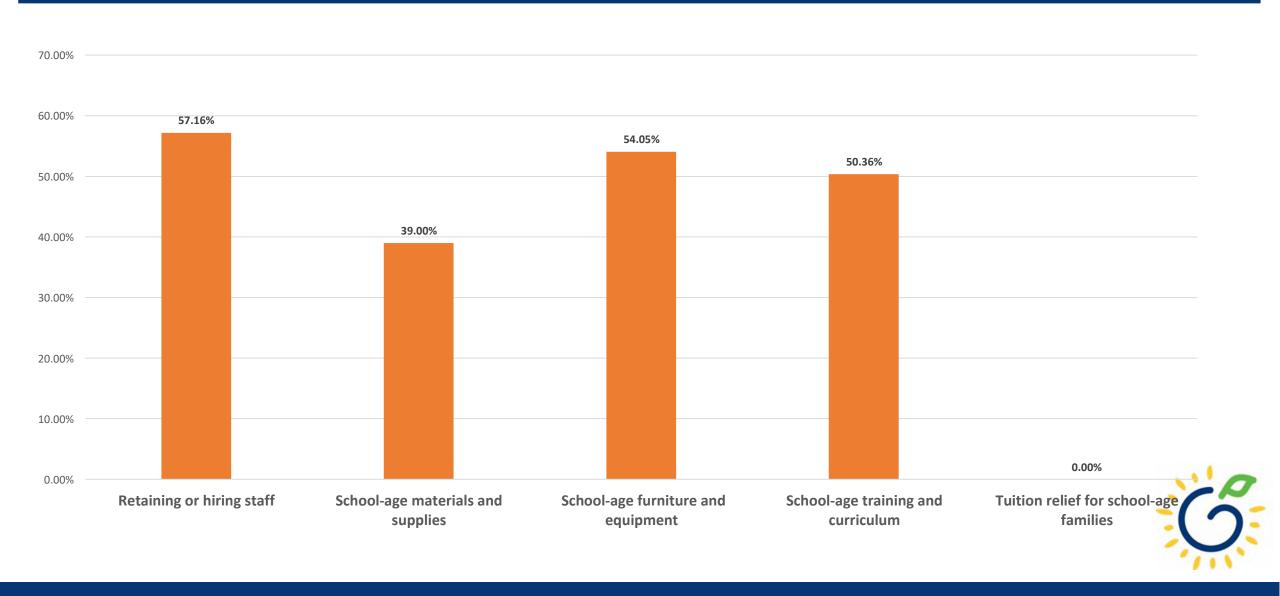




# Greatest Needs for School-Age Classrooms



## How Providers Intended to Use SHARE Funds



# Training for SHARE Participants Summary & Evaluation



# Training Offered to School-Age Providers

#### **Required Training (June 2021)**

Best Practices in School-Age Care

#### **Optional Training (August 2021)**

- Raising the Bar: Introduction to the Georgia Afterschool & Youth Development (ASYD) Quality Standards
- Building Positive Relationships
- Addressing Trauma and Building Resiliency in Youth
- Delivering Great School-Age Activities
- Inspiring School-Age Environments



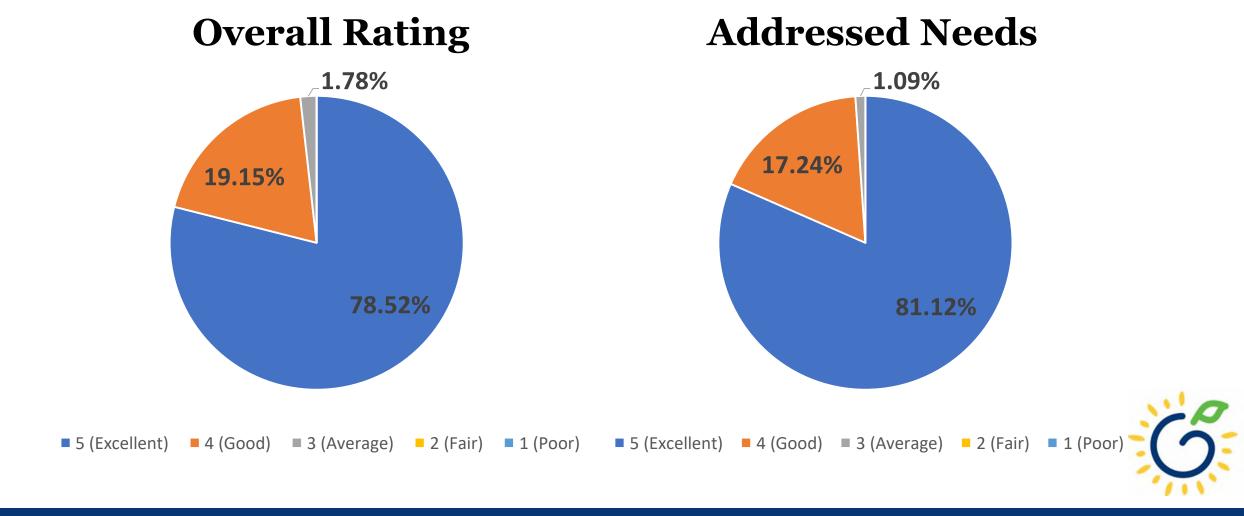
# Most Useful School-Age Training Topics

#### **Top School-Age Training Topics:**

- Best Practices
- School-Age Activities
- Building Positive Relationships



# **Evaluation of SHARE Training**



# Requested Future Supports & Training Topics

- Content segmented by age (5-7, 8+)
- Strategies to put information to use
- STEM, physical activity
- Working with school age in the digital age
- Conflict resolution and behavior management
- Lesson plans and activities, especially for youth with disabilities
- Access to high quality activities
- Academic support

More school-age training, resources, and grants



# What participants said...

"Very informative. Would recommend the webinar to all providers and instructors."

"Everything about the webinar was useful."

"I found everything to be of great help to me. I learned a lot!!"

"This was awesome! So helpful!"

"More state approved trainings for school-age care providers."

"More webinars please!"



"Participant interaction and the instructors explaining it all."

"Better understanding of school age children."

"Digging deeper to understand school age children's needs instead of just planning activities."

"New resources!"

"Exposure to Afterschool standards. So glad to see this." What was the most useful part of the webinars?

"Practical application."

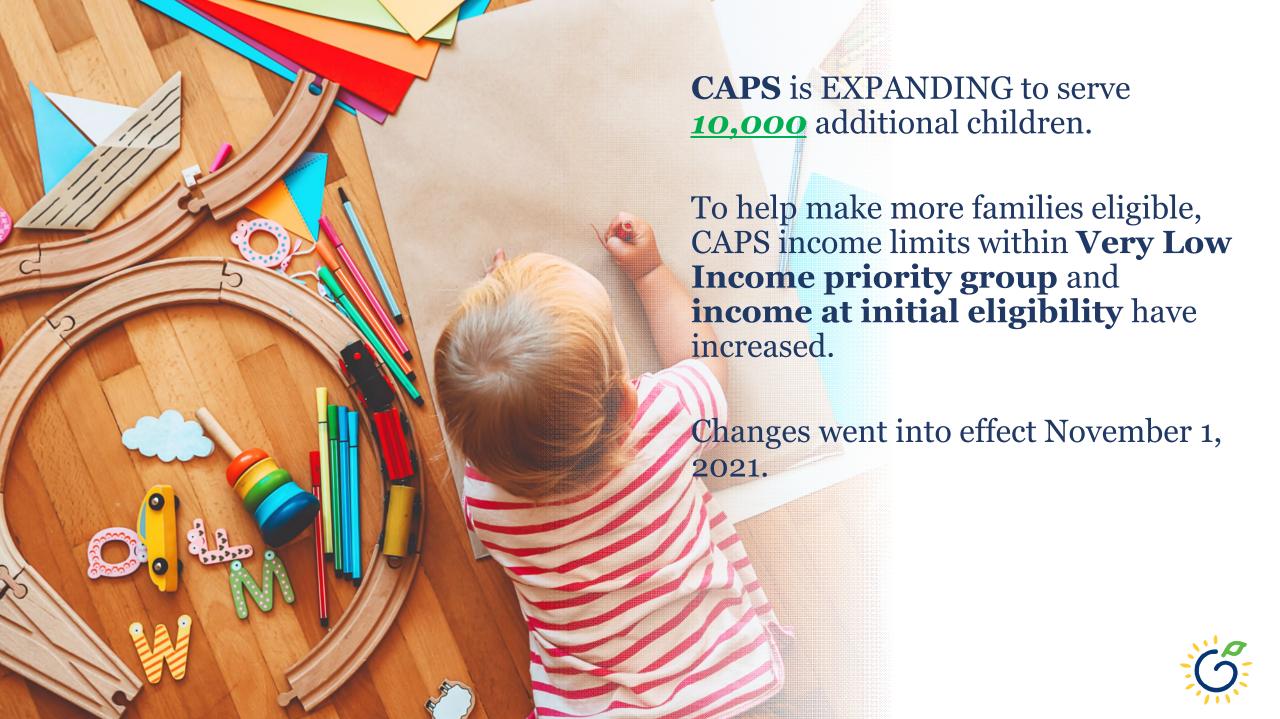


"Summer Activity Guide!"

# Federal Programs Updates

Elisabetta Kasfir, Deputy Commissioner for Federal Programs







• The income eligibility limit has increased by 70%.

• The income entry threshold increased from 50% to 85% of the State Median Income (SMI).



#### Income at Initial Eligibility: Example

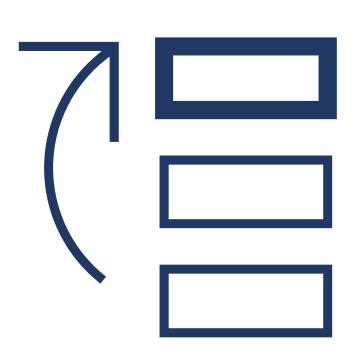


# For a family of 4, the income eligibility increased from

**\$42,426** (50% SMI)

**\$72,124** (85% SMI)

Effective November 1, 2021, to meet income eligibility requirements, the household income (for a family of 4) must not exceed \$72,124.



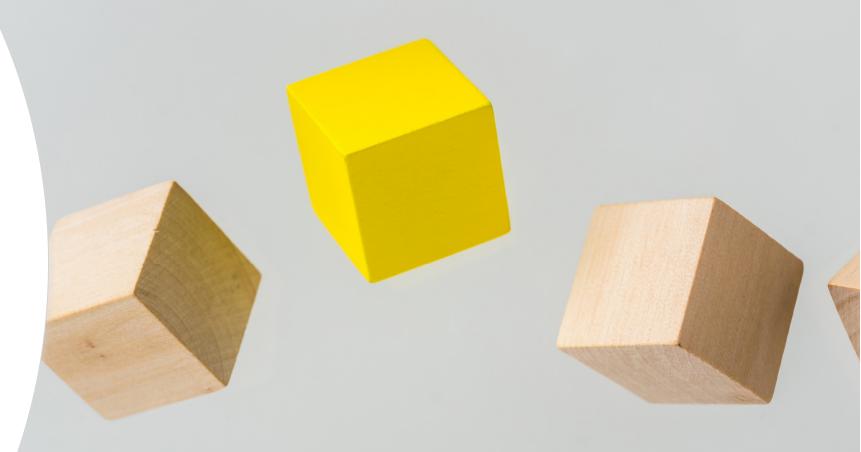
## Priority Groups

In addition to meeting eligibility requirements, CAPS requires that a family be in one of twelve priority groups to ensure CAPS scholarships go to populations who need them most.

#### Very Low Income Priority Group

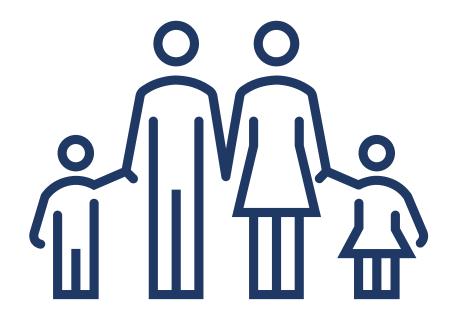
The income limit to qualify for "Very Low Income" priority group has **TRIPLED**.

The "Very Low Income" priority group eligibility threshold has increased from 50% to 150% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).





#### Very Low Income Priority Group: Example



## For a family of 4, the very low income threshold increased to

**\$39,750** (150% FPL)

**\$13,250** (50% FPL)

To meet very low income priority group eligibility requirements, the income threshold (for a family of 4) must not exceed \$39,750 effective November 1, 2021.



#### **Quality Rated Tiered Bonus Payments**



One-star programs will increase from 10% to 25%



Two-star programs will increase from 20% to 35%



Three-star programs will increase from 40% to 55%

Providers working toward achieving a star rating, in a provisional or probationary status, receive a 15% tiered bonus on the CAPS base rates.





### CAPS Emergency Payment Policies

## Payment based on Enrollment

Providers that are "Open for Care" or are in a "Temporarily Closed" status, as approved by CAPS, can bill for absent children if the child has attended at least once since enrolling in CAPS.

#### **Rate Changes**

Providers are not permitted to charge families enrolled in the CAPS program any tuition related fees. **However**, under CAPS emergency policy waivers, the policy prohibiting providers from charging families enrolled in CAPS a different rate than private pay families has been waived.

#### QR Tiered Bonuses

To support providers in raising their quality, DECAL has increased Quality Rated tiered bonuses by 15% per star level, as well as to those in a provisional or probationary status.



#### **ACCESS**

Awarding Child Care Education Scholarship Supplements is an initiative funded through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act.

Through ACCESS, CAPS is paying providers their full published rate for the type of care provided, including the family fee, **from May 17, 2021 through service period ending October 2, 2022**.

CAPS families will not pay the provider any tuition related fees or co-payments for child care services and are automatically enrolled.



I warding C hild C are F ducation S cholarship S upplements

CAPS is covering the full cost of tuition for families until October 2, 2022.

For Questions visit:

https://caps.decal.ga.gov/ or Call 1-833-4GACAPS

(1-833-442-2277)





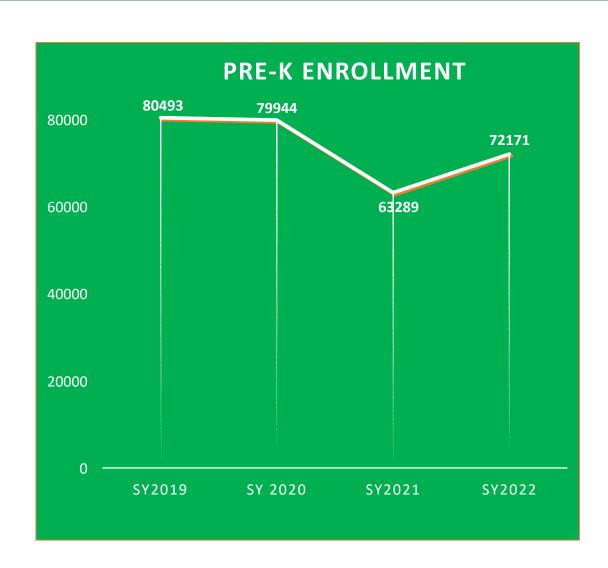
## Georgia's Pre-K and Instructional Supports Updates

Susan Adams, Deputy Commissioner for Georgia's Pre-K and Instructional Supports



#### Pre-K Update: Enrollment





Pre-K enrollment begins to rebound from the impact of the pandemic.

% of Four-Year-Old Population Served:

SY2019: 60%

SY2020: 60%

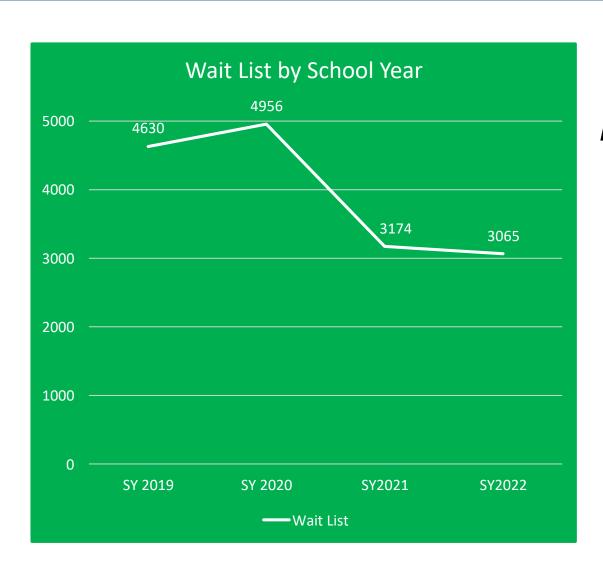
SY2021: 46%

SY2022: 53%



### Pre-K Update: Waiting List





## In SY 2021 and 2022, the number of children on the Pre-K waiting list has declined.

Students on the Pre-K waiting list are representing students of families who:

- did not have a slot at their preferred Pre-K site; AND
- Have chosen to remain on the waiting list at this time:
  - Enroll later in the school year
  - Delay enrollment until next school year

### Georgia Pre-K Week 2021





#### October 4 - 8 VIRTUAL Celebration!

 More than 820 Pre-K programs registered with Voices for Georgia's Children

#### VIRTUAL VIDEO LIBRARY

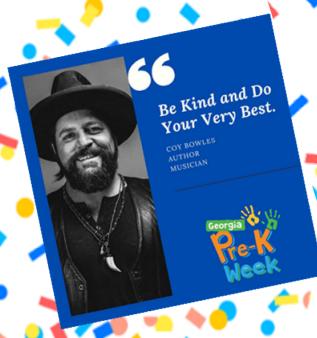
- Governor and First Lady
- 34 Legislators
- 8 Members of Congress
- 11 Agency Heads



#### Today's Lineup -Special Guests Videos from:

- Jeff Foxworthy
- · Atlanta Falcons
- Coy Bowles
- · FOX 5 Atlanta
- · Georgia Power
- Georgia's Own Foundation
- Georgia Archives
- · Lucky the Dog
- · Georgia-based children's book authors
- Students from Georgia colleges & universities!





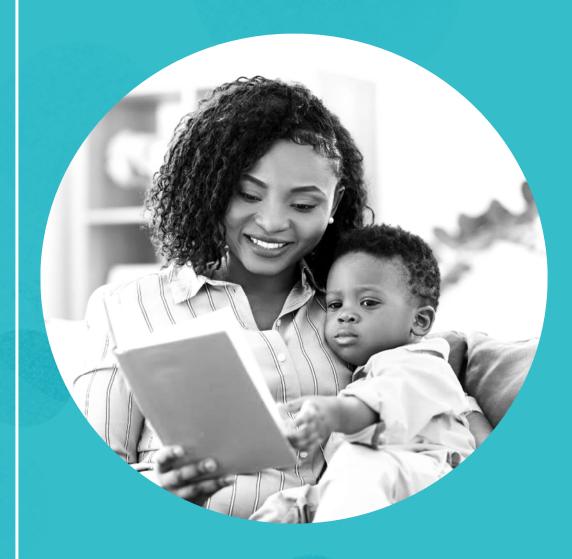








#### GEORGIA'S **Preschool Development Grant**BIRTH THROUGH FIVE



Strengthening Georgia's Early Childhood Care and Education System





Georgia was one of 20 states awarded a PDG B-5 Grant from the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education.

Builds on the initial

#### **2.9 M GRANT**

Georgia received in 2019

#### PDG B-5 Year 3



Preschool Development
Birth to 5 grant is focused on
six activities:

Conduct a statewide needs assessment to better understand the B-5 mixed delivery system

Develop a state-level strategic plan to guide and strengthen the B-5 mixed delivery system

Strengthen family voice and engage families in their children's care and education

Strengthen the workforce across the B-5 mixed delivery system

Improve overall **quality** and service integration, expand **access**, and develop new programs

Monitor & evaluate data use for continuous improvement, meaningful governance, and engagement



#### <u>Birth – 5 Needs Assessment Findings</u>

- Limited or no access to mental health services
- Further development of supports and resources needed to address persistent challenging behaviors and children/families impacted by trauma
- Need for a credentialing program for professionals to provide mental health services for children birth-5
- Investment in twogeneration strategies and programs

## Georgia Preschool Development Grant (PDG)



## Infant and Toddler Social and Emotional Health House Study Committee Recommendations

## **Establish IECMH State Level Leadership**

- ✓ IECMH Director housed at DECAL since November 2020
- ✓ IECMH Task Force with representatives from child serving state agencies convening monthly since February 2021



## Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health The foundation of all future development

Everyone who touches the life of a child can promote social and emotional well-being

Social and emotional development, or **infant and early childhood mental health**, is the developing capacity of a child from birth to 5 years old to...



...all in the context of family, community, and culture.



#### Goal:

# To build Georgia's early childhood system of care together!



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last a lifetime.

#### **IECMH Accomplishments**

#### Promotion/Prevention – Workforce Development – Policy/Finance

- Georgia Association of Infant Mental Health (GA-AIMH)
- Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) Training Pilot
- Medicaid Services Chart for ages Birth 6
- Regional trauma training and early child resiliency zone development Resilient Georgia
- Training Infant/Toddler Specialists in Zero to Three The Growing Brain Curriculum
- Diagnostic Classification (DC):0-5 Training
- IECMH Systems Analysis
- Home visiting study on Social-Emotional Learning
- Children's Mental Health Week at DECAL



## Quality Innovations and Partnerships Updates

Bentley Ponder, Deputy Commissioner for Quality Innovations and Partnerships



## Trauma-Responsive Care Grants

Laura Wagner, Community Outreach and Partnerships Director



### Community Impact Grants Overview

#### Four Opportunities:

- 2Gen Innovation Grants
  - Capacity Building
  - Implementation Funding
- Community Transformation Grants
- Trauma-Responsive Care Grants
- Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives





### Trauma-Responsive Care Grants



- \$10,000 awarded to communities to implement local projects focusing on how early childhood trauma can impact future learning and development for children birth to five and their families.
- Receiving on-going technical assistance and support through the Child Welfare Training Collaborative at Georgia State University.
- Four community organizations selected as grantees

## Trauma-Responsive Care Grantees

#### **Cobb Collaborative**

 Project Name: Mind Your Mind-Trauma-Responsive to Community Resilience



 Project Name: Building a
 Trauma-Responsive
 Community for Youngest
 Children in Northwest Georgia







### Trauma-Responsive Care Grantees

#### **Jasper County Family Connection**

- Project Name: Tri-County Birth to Five Circle of Care
- Clarke, Jasper, and Putnam Counties

#### **Jones County Family Connection**

 Project Name: Resilient Jones County





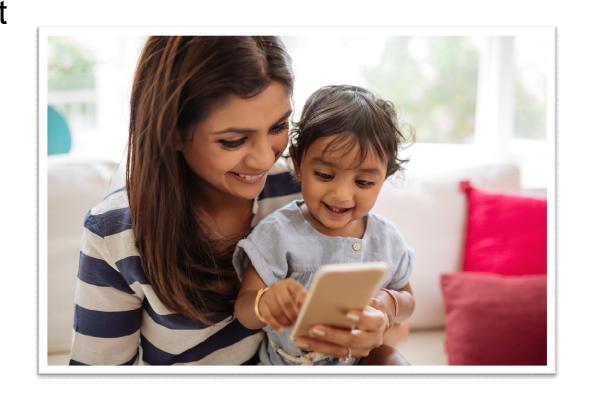


### Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives (ELLCs)

• \$5,000 mini-grants awarded to support continuing promising local practices begun under initial Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives grant.

#### Grantees:

- Bartow Collaborative
- Baldwin County Family Connection
- Cook County Family Connection
- Community Partnership of Elbert County
- United Way of West Georgia





### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Summit on Trauma and Resilience







## Stakeholder Engagement Project

Randy Hudgins, Research & Policy Analysis Director



## Stakeholder Engagement Overview



DECAL partnering with Urban Institute



Conduct representative stakeholder engagement



Identify additional projects for remaining CRRSA and ARPA funds



Accelerated timeline—data collection started late October



## Stakeholder Engagement Projects

#### **Surveys**

- October 26<sup>th</sup> November 10<sup>th</sup>
- Georgia Early Care and Learning Workforce Survey 5,983 completed
- DECAL Staff Survey **377 completed** (57.2% response rate)

#### **Interviews and Focus Groups**

- November 8<sup>th</sup> 30<sup>th</sup>
- 16 of 27 focus groups completed
- 64 families, including 44 receiving CAPS

#### **Administrative Data**

- Sample participants
- Contextualize feedback



#### Early Head Start: Critical Hire

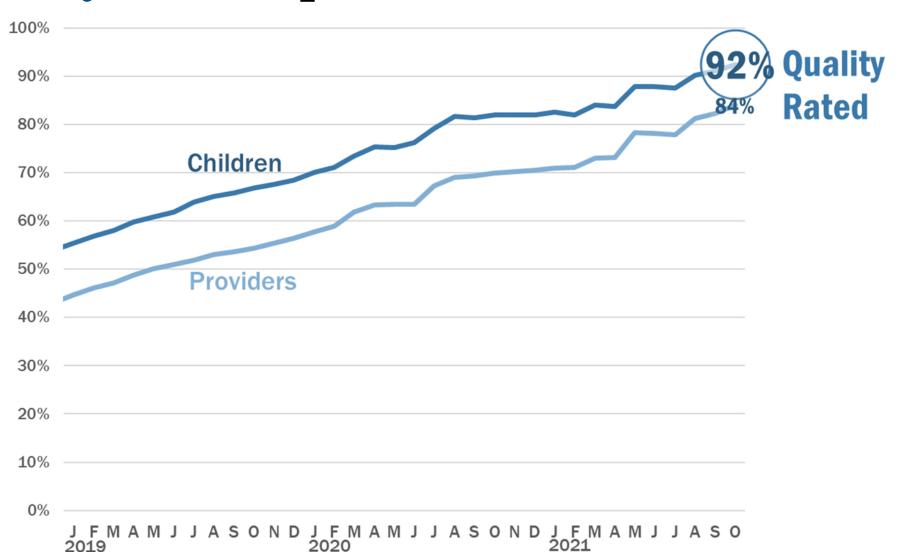


# Introducing New DEHSP Director: Megan Fickes

- 14 years of Head Start/Early Head Start experience
- Worked directly with Pennsylvania's statelevel EHS-CCP grant
- Has worked at the center level and with two home-based Early Head Start programs
- Proud mother of two!



## 92% of children receiving CAPS are at a Quality Rated provider.







## New CAPS/QR Provisional and Probationary Statuses



#### **Provisional Status:**

- Programs that are newly licensed and wish to accept CAPS Scholarships
- Programs that are new to CAPS

#### **Probationary Status:**

- Programs who participate in CAPS, complete the rating process, and do not earn enough points to rate
- Programs who participate in CAPS and allow their ratings to expire





## New CAPS/QR Provisional and Probationary Statuses



#### 3 STEPS:



1. Sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)



2. Meet Benchmarks of Progress



3. Earn Star Rating & Maintain CAPS Scholarships



## 2022 Ratings

- Quality Rated will continue to use the cohort system for programs to register for their rating. Cohort 1=January, February, March; Cohort 2= April, May, June; etc.
- Quality Rated will rate programs using TARO for Cohorts 1 and 2
  - Using TARO in Cohorts 1 and 2 means that QR can rate programs in every quarter
  - The available slots in Cohorts 1 and 2 will be more limited than Cohorts 3 and 4 to account for re-establishing reliability of ERS Assessors
- Quality Rated will rate programs using traditional live observations for Cohorts 3 and 4
- Process informed by provider survey
- Required rerates will have cohort slot priority



# Quality Rated Language & Literacy Endorsement



#### **Endorsement Overview**

- Aligned with and part of the Governor's Office and Language/Literacy Focus
- Implemented by DECAL's Instructional Supports and Quality Innovations and Partnership Divisions
- Developed with support from Expert Committee, Professional Development Committee, and Pilot Providers (final planning meeting was March 12, 2020)
- Endorsement includes professional development, financial/technical supports, and creation of a Growth Plan
- Eight programs received the endorsement in October 2021
- Next round will begin early 2022





## Participating Programs



- ABC, Another Bright Creation Early Learning and Daycare Center, Palmetto
- Discovery Point #61, Conyers
- Giselle Learning Academy, Clarkston
- Kid's World Learning Center, Statesboro
- Minnie Howell Child Development Center, Atlanta
- Rising Star Learning Center, Mableton
- The Learning Station, Ellenwood
- Whitfield-Dalton Day Care Center, Dalton



### Benefits & Supports for Programs

The eight providers who completed the Language and Literacy Endorsement pilot received:

- 1. Professional development for teachers
- 2. Professional development for administrators from Harvard Center for Early Education Leadership course
- 3. Classroom materials kits for teachers (valued at approximately \$700 per teacher)
- 4. Up to \$250 stipends for teachers and administrators
- 5. \$1,500-\$5,000 in technology grants for each pilot site based on staff size
- 6. \$1,450 in growth materials packages
- 7. \$500 continuous quality improvement bonus payment



<sup>\*\*</sup>All sites participated in evaluation activities. Final report in early 2022.



## Pilot Professional Development Activities

### Teachers attended interactive virtual trainings with DECAL staff and other experts

- Four trainings offered each for infant/toddler and preschool/pre-k teachers
- Included understanding language development in very young children and adopting and implementing best practices in language and literacy instruction

### Directors and other administrators completed a series of leadership trainings from Harvard University

- 60 hours of training, including professional learning coursework to develop the knowledge, skills, and tools to strengthen learning environments and foster quality improvement in early education settings
- Earned certificates in Early Education Leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education

#### Programs submitted Growth Plans

• Developed plans for establishing best practices in literacy instruction, implementing continuous quality improvements, facilitating ongoing professional learning, and sustaining high standards and sound teaching methods.







## Welcome to the Board of Early Care and Learning

## **Public Comment**

November 18, 2021



## Board Meeting Dates 2022

- February 17, 2022
- May 19, 2022
- August 25, 2022
- November 17, 2022



