



www.gaprekweek.com

2016

October 3 – October 7

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Reilly Mesco, 404-343-2353

rmesco@georgiavoices.org

Reg Griffin, 404-309-8131

reg.griffin@decal.ga.gov

Statewide Celebration of Early Learning Draws State and Local Leaders and Sponsors

ATLANTA, (September 27, 2016) – Leaders from around the state will show their support for early childhood education by visiting early learning classrooms as part of this year’s Georgia Pre-K Week Oct. 3-7, 2016. The event is organized each year by Voices for Georgia’s Children, a policy and advocacy non-profit organization, and supported by more than 15 child-focused partners.

Launched six years ago, support for Pre-K Week from government, business and community leaders continues to grow. Georgia Power and Synovus return as corporate sponsors for the third year in a row. In addition, the Georgia School Board Association returns for a second year recognizing the important role school districts play in supporting early learning. Additional key supporters include various state commissioners, elected officials, as well as Gov. Nathan Deal and First Lady Sandra Deal.

“Such broad support from so many of our state’s most influential citizens shows us that Georgians really understand the long term value of quality early learning for each and every child,” said Emily Pelton, Executive Director of Voices for Georgia’s Children. “On top of that, one could say that the steady increase in the number of early learning centers participating in Quality Rated, the voluntary, quality rating system for child care, ultimately will help give Georgia’s youngest learners the foundation they need to grow into productive and healthy adults.”

During the week, hundreds of state, business and community leaders will visit Pre-K centers to witness early learning in action and to read a favorite children’s book to the young learners. In addition to countless local mayors, city council members, public safety employees, and professionals from all walks of life,

nearly three out of every four state legislators have participated, as well as almost half of Georgia's Congressional delegation.

"It is incredibly gratifying every year to experience the support of Georgia's state and local leaders as they visit and interact with children in our early childhood care and education programs," said Amy M. Jacobs, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), the Georgia agency that administers Georgia's Pre-K Program and licenses and monitors the state's child care learning centers. Jacobs continues, "Their interest and involvement clearly illustrates that Georgia's policy makers, parents, and public understand more than ever that quality early education impacts the future of our students, their families, and our state."

Georgia Pre-K Week is developed with the full support of the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). Joining Voices for Georgia's Children as partners on Georgia Pre-K Week are Black Child Development Institute-Atlanta, Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta, Ferst Foundation for Childhood Literacy, GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students, Georgia Child Care Association, Georgia Family Connection Partnership, Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education, Georgia Public Library Service, Georgia Vision Project, multiple Junior Leagues throughout Georgia, Metro Atlanta YMCA, Quality Care for Children and United Way of Greater Atlanta.

About Voices for Georgia's Children

Established in 2003, Voices for Georgia's Children (www.georgiavoices.org) is a nonprofit child policy and advocacy organization that envisions a Georgia where all children will thrive because they are safe, healthy, educated, connected to family and community, and prepared to be productive and responsible citizens. Our mission is to promote equity, quality, and accessibility in systems created to serve children's needs. We are dedicated to advancing policies and implementation actions that ensure the best possible outcomes for children.

About Georgia Power:

Georgia Power's commitment to education spans its more than 100-year history and is emphasized companywide. One of many ongoing efforts includes the company's Learning Power program, which features Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) lessons highlighting energy basics such as simple circuits and energy efficiency, as well as activities to help students understand how energy is made and distributed from generation facilities to their homes. The Learning Power program has reached more than 390,000 students, PreK through 12th grade, since its launch in 2011. For more information about how the company is working to advance education and help build Georgia's highly skilled workforce of tomorrow, visit www.georgiapower.com/community.

About Synovus Bank:

Synovus Bank is a Georgia-chartered, FDIC-insured bank. Synovus Bank, together with its affiliates, provides commercial and retail banking, investment, and mortgage services to customers through 28 locally-branded divisions, 253 branches, and 335 ATMs in Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee. Synovus Bank was recognized as one of America's Most Reputable Banks by *American Banker* and the Reputation Institute in 2016 and 2015. Synovus Bank is on the web at synovus.com, on Twitter [@synovus](https://twitter.com/synovus), and on LinkedIn at <http://linkedin.com/company/synovus>. Equal Housing Lender.