

Bright from the Start:

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

A Report to Our Citizens, State Fiscal Year 2012



OUR FOCUS: EARLY CARE & LEARNING

In 2004, Georgia's leaders made a significant investment in the state's most valuable commodity; its' children. That year, the Georgia General Assembly created Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) by merging several state entities that served young children and their families, including the Office of School Readiness, units from the Department of Education, the Department of Human Resources, and the Georgia Child Care Council. This new department was one of the first in the nation that was solely dedicated to meeting both the early childhood education and the child care needs of the state's youngest citizens.

Early education is valuable and important because a child's most significant brain development occurs in the first five years, forming the basis for future learning. DECAL's goal is to lay a solid foundation on which the academic success of Georgia's future leaders and workforce can be built. Investing in Georgia's children and families will pay in dividends for decades to come; through the state's long-term economic growth, and by producing citizens equipped to deal with the challenges of the 21st century.

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MISSION

We are committed to nurturing Georgia's youngest children, keeping them safe and healthy, and to enriching their lives.



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

OUR PROGRAMS & SERVICES

DECAL leads the state's efforts to serve children and families by administering services in the following four main areas:

Our nationally recognized [Georgia's Pre-K Program](#) is a lottery-funded educational program that helps prepare four-year-olds for success in school.

[Child Care Services](#) licenses and monitors child care programs to ensure that they provide safe, healthy, and nurturing environments. The [Quality Initiatives Division](#) partners with internal and external resources to improve the quality of early care and education for children birth to school-age, and [Nutrition Services](#) provides nutritious meals for children and adults in day care settings throughout the school year and during the summer.



OUR PROGRAMS & SERVICES



DECAL oversees a wide range of programs focused primarily on children ages birth to school age and their families. DECAL's responsibilities include the following:

- Administering the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program
- Licensing and monitoring center-based and home-based child care facilities
- Overseeing the federal Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program to provide nutritious meals to Georgians
- Housing the Head Start State Collaboration Office
- Administering the federal Child Care and Development Fund and state matching funds to increase the affordability and quality of early care and education by providing subsidized child care and other quality initiatives



DECAL Commissioner Bobby Cagle visits a Georgia's Pre-K Program classroom.
Photo Courtesy of AJC



Georgia's Pre-K Program increases school success in later years.

- Administering Quality Rated: A systemic approach to assess, improve and communicate the level of quality in early education and school-age care programs
- Funding All Georgia Kids to provide free information and referrals for families seeking quality early care and education
- Providing technical assistance and professional development to early childhood educators and programs through the child care resource and referral agencies
- Offering support to families and early care and education programs who care for children with special needs
- Collaborating with Head Start , Family Connection Partnership, the Department of Human Services, the Department of Public Health, and Smart Start Georgia to blend federal, state and private dollars to enhance early care and education

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

"We are a transparent, timely and reliable resource to those connected to the care, safety and education of our youngest children."



DECAL Performance Measures	FY2010 Actual	FY2011 Actual	FY2012 Actual
Child Care Services (Increase Compliance)			
Percentage of child care learning centers, group day care homes, and family day care homes that are compliant with licensing rules	81%	88%	92%
Number of licensing, monitoring, technical assistance, and complaint investigation visits to child care learning centers, group day care homes, and family day care homes each fiscal year to increase compliance and raise quality	14,667	19,019	13,045
Pre-K (Increase Access and Quality Learning)			
Number of four year olds enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K Program	81,068	82,608	82,868
Percentage of classrooms implementing the Work Sampling System online to monitor and report student progress	9%	27%	53.3%
Quality Initiatives (Improve Program Quality & Professional Development)			
Number and percentage of licensed, compliant early care and education programs participating in the quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) to improve quality	n/a	n/a	751 (12%)
Percentage of INCENTIVES Program participants who increased their education level from the initial credential/degree earned for which an INCENTIVES payment was awarded	10%	9.26%	10.2%
Nutrition (Increase Access and Meals)			
Number of meals served per year by providers in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	86,001,243	85,200,000	80,667,591
Number of feeding sites per fiscal year for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), which increased as a result of focused outreach and training efforts	5,956	6,310	6,280

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

"We work to empower parents with relevant and accurate information so they can make the very best child care and early education decisions for their family."

OUR FINANCES



Services to citizens are provided through four major programs that form the structure of our financial accounting. Programs operate within their appropriated budgets and identified funding sources. Budgeted amounts must be adequate to provide legal authorization to spend funds, and revenues must be sufficiently available to cover allowable expenses charged to each funding source.

Programs and Funding Sources	2012			2011		
	Final Budget	Revenues	Expenses	Final Budget	Revenues	Expenses
Child Care Services						
Federal	6,904,782	6,904,782	6,904,782	6,670,664	6,670,664	6,670,664
State	1,203,033	1,203,033	1,203,033	1,174,851	1,174,851	1,174,851
Other	16,526	19,211	16,525	15,598	15,598	14,385
Nutrition						
Federal	117,884,856	117,988,046	117,884,856	118,192,394	118,227,039	118,192,392
Pre-Kindergarten Program						
Federal	269,771	269,770	269,770	422,515	422,535	422,514
State-Lottery	300,691,000	293,691,000	289,222,657	355,016,059	355,016,059	355,016,016
Other	4,791	6,398	4,790	-	5,924	-
Quality Initiatives						
Federal	20,349,304	20,349,302	20,349,302	21,543,784	21,543,784	21,543,783
Other	32,608	32,608	32,608	39,091	39,090	34,090
Grand Total	\$ 447,356,671	\$ 440,464,150	\$ 435,888,323	\$ 503,074,956	\$ 503,115,544	\$ 503,068,694

Additional Collections on Behalf of the State Treasury

In state fiscal year 2011, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning implemented a fee for Child Care Licenses as directed by state law. Collected fees are designated to be submitted to the State Treasury along with penalty amounts collected from Child Care Providers cited for core rule violations.

The following amounts were collected and submitted to the Office of the Treasury:

	2012	2011
License Fees	\$730,733	\$752,220
Penalties	\$55,590	\$29,017

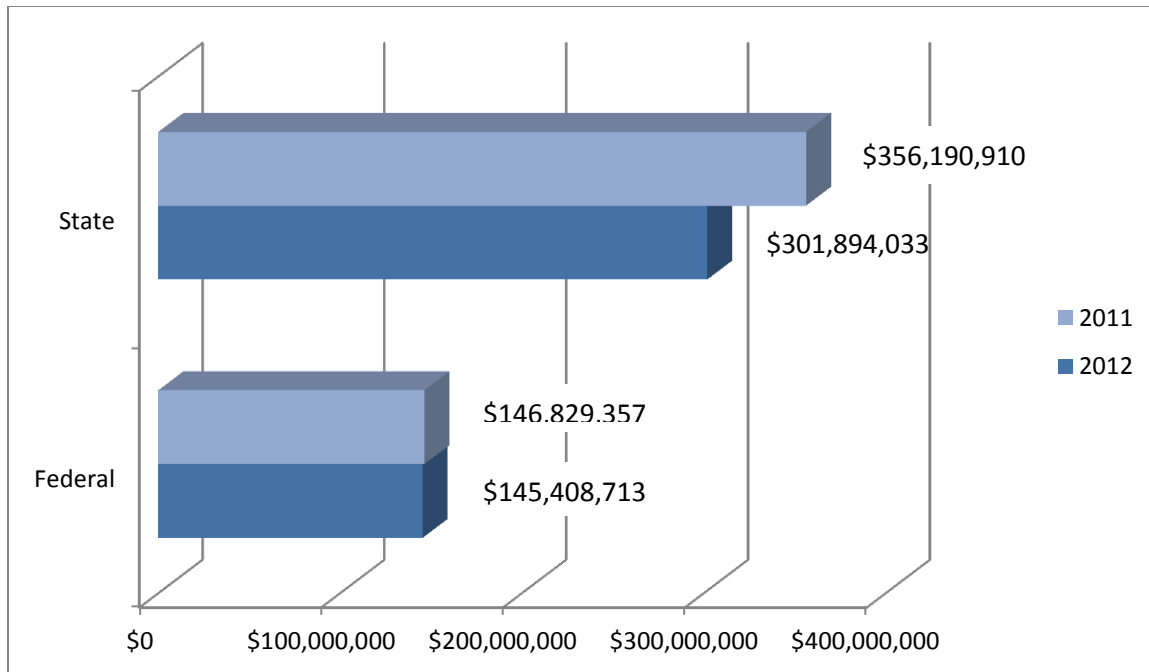
Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

“We believe investing in our youngest learners is critical to the long-term economic growth and potential of Georgia.”

Results of Financial Audit

The state Department of Audits and Accounts (DOAA) conducts an annual audit of the financial records of Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. State fiscal year 2012 marked the *tenth straight year* that our agency has received a clean audit opinion from the DOAA.

2012 Budget Comparison



Agency Totals

Funding Source	2012	2011
Federal	145,408,713	146,829,357
State	301,894,033	356,190,910
Other	53,925	54,689

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

*"We support our teachers and providers.
The quality work they do make them vital members of our team."*



FISCAL YEAR 2012 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Engaged 12 stakeholder advisory groups, soliciting input from multiple levels to maintain open communications with the early care, education, business and faith communities.
- Achieved 10th consecutive year of clean financial audits
- Launched Quality Rated <http://www.qualityrated.org/>
- Transitioned Georgia's Child and Parent Services (CAPS) Program to DECAL
- Launched Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) <http://www.gelds.dec.state.ga.us/>
- Celebrated Georgia's Pre-K Program's 20th year, and was recognized by the President of the United States in his State of the Union Address and a presidential visit to a Decatur early learning program

STRATEGIC THEMES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

Health & Safety

Promote safe and healthy early care and learning programs

Quality

Improve quality of early care and learning programs

Organizational Excellence

Foster organizational excellence through stakeholder engagement, enterprise solutions, and workforce development



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

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"Our agency is dedicated to remaining flexible and nimble in order to keep us on the cutting edge of early education and improve upon our existing services."