

Georgia's Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge Grant September 2015 Newsletter

Welcome to our first newsletter! Each month, the Early Learning Challenge Team will be sending out updates about the progress of our grant.

Were you forwarded this email? You can sign up to receive our monthly updates here: <http://bit.ly/ELCEmail>

September Spotlight: Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) Teacher Toolboxes



With funding from the Early Learning Challenge grant, the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has led the development of teacher toolboxes for the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). The GELDS Teacher Toolboxes are resources designed and developed to support teachers as they plan developmentally appropriate, standards-based, learning experiences

for young children birth through five. There are four different toolboxes available for teachers, one each for teachers of the following age groups: infants and one year olds, two year olds, three year olds, and Pre-K. Each toolbox provides teachers with hundreds of activities linked to the GELDS across a continuum of development including the age range before and after the one they currently teach. This will assist teachers to more readily plan activities that meet a wide range of developmental needs. In addition, each toolbox contains tips for transition, embedding technology, and adapting activities for children with disabilities.

The toolboxes will be available to order at custompoint.rrd.com/DECAL in September. With funding from the Early Learning Challenge grant, DECAL is able to offer the boxes for free, and customers will only pay the cost of shipping when they order. Approximately 3,800 toolboxes were shipped to Georgia's Pre-K classrooms in mid-August in conjunction with the GELDS 104 training that they will attend beginning in September. The GELDS 104 training is an in-depth course designed to introduce teachers to the toolbox and provide opportunities to use the toolbox to plan developmentally appropriate activities for children. GELDS 104 training will be provided for free by DECAL's regional Child Care Resource and Referrals (CCR&R) agencies in early 2016 for all child care providers.

For more information about this project, contact Brandy Locchetta at brandy.locchetta@decal.ga.gov.

By the Numbers: Quality Rated

Quality Rated is Georgia's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). Similar to rating systems for other industries like restaurants and hotels, Quality Rated assigns a rating (one star, two star, or three star) to early education and school-age care programs that meet certain standards over and above the minimum state requirements.

A key goal of Georgia's Early Learning Challenge Grant is having 100% of Georgia's child care programs to participate in Quality Rated. A participating child care program is in the process of becoming Quality Rated. Check out our progress to achieving 100% participation in Quality Rated below!

Eligible Child Care Programs *Participating* in Quality Rated by Type:

Child Care Program Type	Count	Percentage
Child Care Learning Center	1,484	50.48%
Family Day Care Home	714	34.68%
Group Day Care Home	92	40.17%
Other	63	6.56%
Total	2,353	38.02%

Quality Rated Child Care Programs by Type:

Child Care Program Type	One Star	Two Star	Three Star	Total
Child Care Learning Center	159	253	83	495
Family Day Care Home	38	73	56	167
Group Day Care Home	7	9	3	19
Other	18	23	8	49
Total	222	358	150	730*

*14.05% of all eligible child care providers in Georgia are Quality Rated.

You can find out more information about Quality Rated at www.QualityRated.org and on Quality Rated's Facebook page (www.fb.com/QualityRated).

For more information about this project, contact Pam Stevens at pam.stevens@decal.ga.gov.

The Economic Impact of the Early Care & Education Industry in Georgia



Register for
The Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Georgia
A Briefing and Public Policy Forum

Learn the results of the 2015 *Early Care and Education Economic Impact Study* and discuss public policy implications in a town hall meeting format.

Dates:
September 29: Valdosta - Valdosta State University
October 14: Macon - Middle Georgia State University
October 21: Atlanta - Georgia Railroad Freight Depot
October 23: Athens - The University of Georgia

Preliminary Agenda:
7:45-8:15am: Registration
8:15-10:00am: Study Briefing
10:15-11:30am: Public Policy Forum

Visit www.decal.ga.gov/EconomicImpactRegistration.html to register and for detailed location information.
For more information email bftsresearch@decal.ga.gov.

Presented by:



The results of a recent economic impact study commissioned by DECAL will be discussed at four public policy forums across the state beginning next month.

DECAL commissioned the University of Georgia and Georgia State University to study the impact of the child care industry on the economy of Georgia. The most recent study in 2007 showed that child care programs in Georgia created over \$4.1 billion in revenues annually, while creating over 61,000 jobs.

The Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education (GPEE) will join UGA, GSU, and DECAL in presenting the results from the study September 29 in Valdosta, October 14 in Macon, October 21 in Atlanta, and October 23 in Athens. At each location registration will be held from 7:45 to

8:15 AM followed by a Study Briefing from 8:15 to 10:00 AM and a Public Policy Impact Forum from 10:15 to 11:30 AM.

Please click [here](#) to register. We hope to see you there!

Promoting Early Learning Outcomes: Georgia's Family Engagement Task Force's Final Recommendations

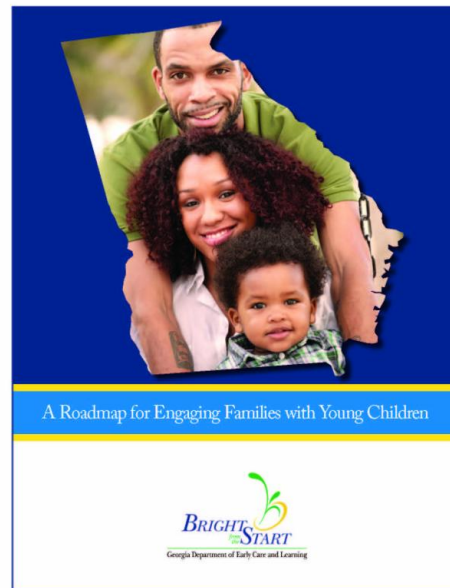
Early in 2015, DECAL wrapped up a series of Family Engagement Task Force meetings in partnership with the [BUILD Initiative](#). The task force was a key component of the Early Learning Challenge grant that was charged with creating statewide family engagement principles, values, and implementation supports to be broadly adopted and used in the state's early learning and development programs. Building on the strong family engagement work already underway around the state, the task force sought to create a common definition of family engagement and a framework for a statewide strategy. The group initially focused on DECAL's work specifically with the intention of supporting implementation over time to all child- and family-serving agencies in Georgia. The task force engaged 55 child- and family serving stakeholders representing state and community agencies, early and higher education, and families.

As a result, the task force developed the following definition for family engagement, as it applies to communities, agencies, and families of young children across Georgia:

Family engagement is the shared responsibility of families, early education programs, schools and communities to actively promote, support, and sustain family wellbeing, healthy child development, strong family child relationships and lifelong learning for all children and families.

Authentic and effective family engagement is:

- Intentional- purposeful action beginning before birth and continuing through life
- Universal- occurring across all settings where children learn
- Respectful - capitalizing on the unique strengths and responding to the exceptional needs and challenges of each family
- Collaborative - building strong relationships between families and all organizations and agencies working with children and families, including creating opportunities for family leadership and decision making

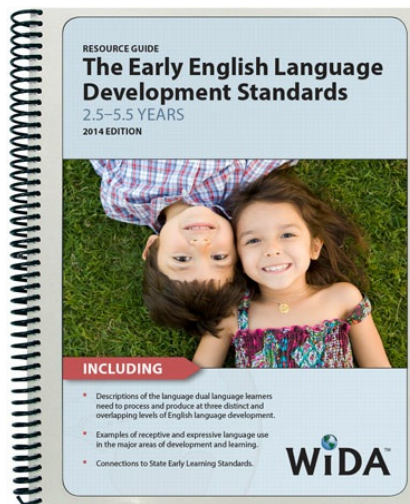


[Click here](#) to view the Family Engagement Task Force's full report in English and Spanish.

- Equitable- promoting work that identifies the root causes of disparities and supports actions to address them, provides services responsive to the culture, language and ability of each and every child, and engages leadership that reflects the ethnic and linguistic diversity of children and families

For more information about this project, contact Stacey Schaff at stacey.schaff@dec.al.ga.gov.

Ensuring Success for Dual Language Learners: Partnership with WIDA Early Years



Focusing on dual language learners, children who are learning English and one or more languages, is part of Georgia's commitment under the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge. DECAL's partnership with World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Early Years aligns with Georgia's focus on supporting high needs children, developing a great workforce, and improving family engagement. WIDA Early Years is part of WIDA, a non-profit organization housed within the Wisconsin Center of Education Research at the School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison. More information at www.wida.us/EarlyYears.

DECAL's partnership with WIDA focuses on supporting young dual language learners (DLLs) enrolled in early care and education programs. A key aspect of this partnership is increasing Georgia's capacity to provide training to early childhood educators. WIDA Early Years is conducting two train-the-trainer programs in Georgia in 2015. The Master Cadre program consists of in-person and technology-based learning, as well as technical assistance, over the course of seven months. Members of the Master Cadre will learn about the WIDA Early English Language Development Standards Framework and how to utilize these standards to support, instruct, and assess young DLLs in early education and care programs. Master Cadre participants will develop their facilitation skills and receive assistance from WIDA Early Years staff to develop their own presentations and training sessions about the content of the program.

The first Master Cadre program ended in July 2015 and 20 trainers are now able to deliver trainings based on the content learned in the program. A second Master Cadre will begin in September; participants should complete the program by March 2016 and then be eligible to conduct trainings based on the content.

This partnership should result in many more training opportunities for early childhood educators and will assist them in identifying dual language learners and supporting their language development - a key for school readiness.

For more information about this project, contact Laura Reid at laura.reid@dec.al.ga.gov.



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