BRIGHT *from the* **START**

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

PANDA
Pre-K Application and Database Access

Pre-K Application Handbook

Revised 7/10/2009

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Getting Started

Log onto PANDA at the following address: http://www.decal.ga.gov/panda

Type in the user ID that you received by e-mail from DECAL.

The first time you log in, your password will be **initpass** (short for *initial password*). You will be instructed how to change your password on the next screen.

Passwords

Your password must contain between 10 and 14 characters. There must be at least one number and one special character included.

These qualify as special characters: ! @ # $ % ^ & * ( ) + < > ?

You will also be asked to type in a secret question and answer, such as your favorite color or the name of your pet, in case you forget your password.

As the PANDA system will be used to transmit sensitive data, DECAL is requiring that all passwords for the system be secure. Secure passwords are difficult for hackers to break should they somehow obtain a username. Secure passwords are required to meet the several criteria.

Passwords for PANDA must:

- be at least 10 characters in length (no longer than 14)
- contain at least one number (0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9)
- contain at least one special character (i.e. ! " # $ % & ' ( ) * + , - . / : = ? @ [ ] \ ^ _ { } | ~)

An example of a valid password for the PANDA system is as follows:

dx#psm4hbz

Your username and password should not be shared with anyone else. You should not write your username and password down and store it under your keyboard or on your monitor where it is readily available.

* = required

New Password:

Confirm New Password:

Here's a helpful hint to remember your password

What is your:

Your Answer (hint to remember your password):

Change Password

Enter the required information and click **Reset Password**. You will be returned to the login screen.

Login now with your user ID and your new password.

If you forget your password, click on the **Forget Your Password?** link below the login button. You will be taken to a screen where you can reset your password using the secret question you entered.

If you leave your computer or discontinue working in PANDA for more than one hour, you will need to login again when you return. There will be a message reading **Session Timeout** beneath the user ID field.

PANDA Welcome Screen

You are now at the PANDA welcome screen. The left side of the screen has several menu items, depending on your role with your company. Possible menu items include User Management, Enter Application, View Application Status, and Edit Company Profile.

Entering an Application

To begin entering a Pre-K application, click on **Enter Application**.

The first time you visit this page, you will see just one tab – **Read Me Files**.

Below the tab is your company name and the status of the application. The application status will be **Not Submitted** at this point. Later, the status will move through several stages, depending on they type of application submitted: **Submitted Incomplete**, **Submitted Complete**, **Under Review**, **Pending Approval**, **Partially Awarded**, and **Awarded**.

If you request an expansion class or new site, the status will be **Submitted Incomplete** until the mail-in documents are received by DECAL. When all the documents are received the status will then change to **Submitted Complete**. As applications are reviewed and classes are awarded, the status will change.

The application type can be **New**, **Continuation**, or **Expansion**.

The type of program will be **Pre-K 10 Month Program**.

Program Year should match the upcoming school year.

Read Me Files

Read and agree to each mandatory document. There are three documents which will appear one at a time. You must click the first document before you can click the second, and so on.

If you have difficulty opening the **Read Me Files**, please refer to **Appendix A** at the end of this document for help.

Click on the **PANDA Application Information Package**. When the document opens, read the document and click **Agree** at the top of the screen. The window will close and return you to the **Read Me Files** tab.

Next, click on **Proposed Program Changes**. When the document opens, read the document and click **Agree** at the top of the screen. The window will close and return you to the **Read Me Files** tab.

Now click on **PANDA Critical Reporting Dates**. When the document opens, read the document and click **Agree** at the top of the screen. The window will close and return you to the **Read Me Files** tab.

There should now be a check mark next to each of the Mandatory Documents, and you should have additional tabs at the top of the screen. The tabs will be labeled **Online Forms** and **Mail In Forms**.

Read Me Files	Online Forms	Mail in Forms

Example Pre-K, Inc.

Application Status	**Not Submitted**
Application Type	**New**
Program	**2010 Pre-K 10 Month Program**
Program Year	**2010**

Pre-K Application Mandatory documents

Applicants must open, read, and acknowledge each of the documents listed in the Pre-K Application Mandatory documents section below. Click the document name to open and read the document. Click the Agree button as you read and acknowledge each document. You may want to print a copy of each for your files. After you have read and acknowledged the mandatory documents, the Online Forms tab will appear next to the ReadMe Files tab. Click on this tab to continue entering your application.

PANDA Application Information Package ☑

PANDA Proposed Program Changes ☑

PANDA Critical Reporting Dates ☑

Pre-K Application Recommended Documents

Although applicants are not required to acknowledge the documents listed in this section, applicants are encouraged to read all documents listed here

Pre-K Provider's Operating Guidelines 2008-2009 School Year (2009-2010 Guidelines Available 7/1/2009)

Checklist for Continuation/Expansion Providers

Authorization Agreement for Auto Deposit of Funds (Changes Only)

At the bottom of the page are documents that are recommended for more information concerning Pre-K, such as the Bank Change form.

Online Forms

Click the tab labeled **Online Forms**.

Click the first form, **Pre-K Program Application**. The form will appear on the screen.

Click **Edit** to enter edit mode and being making changes.

Red boxes around fields denote required information. You may make changes to any field except **Program Legal Name** and the checkbox for being an online user.

When finished with changes, click **Save**.

Now click the **Next** button to move on to the listing of sites for your company.

To select a site, click the yellow box in the **Select** column to the left of one of the sites.

Click **View Site Details** to bring up the Site Form. This is where you will make changes to site-level data, and request expansion classes if applicable.

Changes can be made to the Pre-K site contact, phone/FAX numbers, and mailing address. Any changes to the site name, street address or curriculum require prior DECAL approval and can only be changed by DECAL staff.

At the lower right of the screen is a **Continuation Classes** table with class information for the site, including the credential level and number of teachers and children. This information is based on the previous year's rosters and cannot be edited.

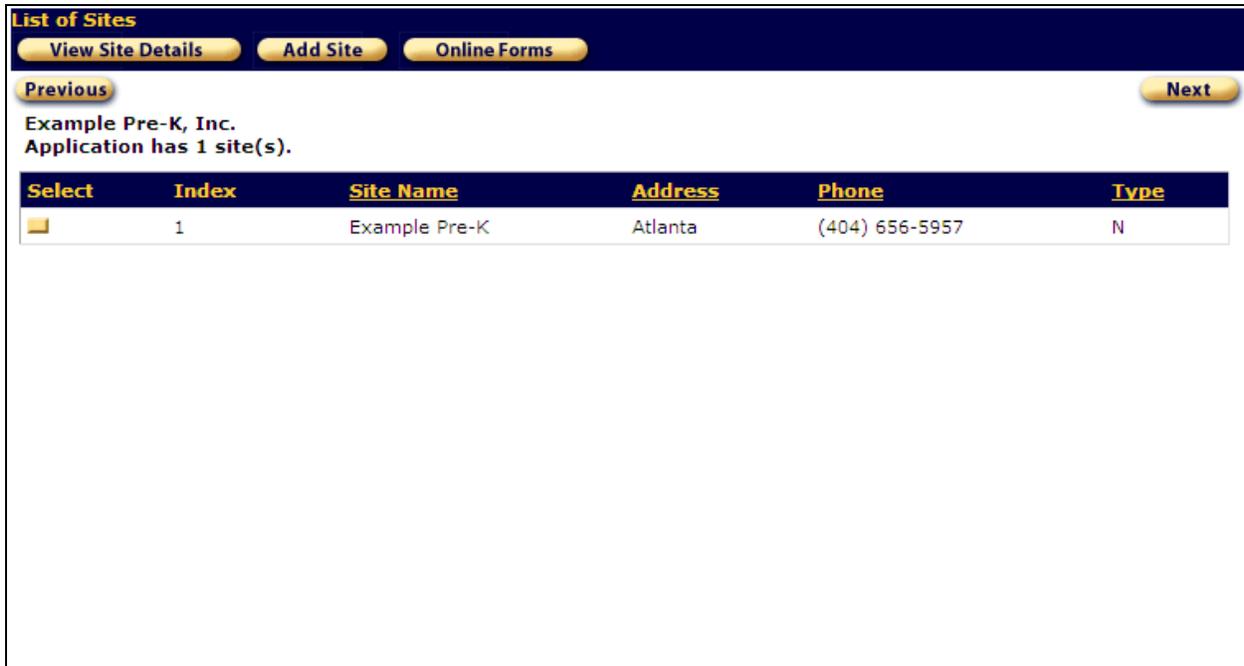
Requesting an Expansion Class

To request an expansion class at the current site, scroll down to the **Expansion Classes** table on the left side of the screen. Enter information for the teacher and the number of children.

For example, to request an expansion class with 20 children and a Certified teacher, enter a **1** next to Certified in the **# of Teachers** column, and enter **20** under the **# of Kids** column in the **Expansion Classes** table. Then click **Save**.

If you have not yet hired a teacher, make your best guess as to the credential of the teacher you will be hiring. If the class is awarded and the credential of the teacher differs, you will be able to change it on the first roster.

Requesting an Expansion Site

To request a new site for your company, click **Return to Site List** to go back to the site listing screen.

Now click the **Add Site** button at the top of the screen. This will allow you to add an expansion site.

IMPORTANT – DO NOT add a new site unless you are actually requesting an expansion site. Expansion classes at existing sites need to go on the site form for the existing site, as explained in the previous section.

A blank Site Form will come up where you can enter the information about the expansion site, including the teacher credential and student information. Red fields are required. Click **Save** when you have entered all data. You should see a message that the site was successfully updated.

Now click **Return to Site List** to go back to the site listing. Your newly added site should now appear in the list along with your continuation site(s).

Click **Next** to move on to the **Program Assurances**.

Assurances

If you are not currently in edit mode, click **Edit**.

Go down the page and read and check the box next to each item. You must check all assurances before saving.

At the bottom of the page, you must fill in your program hours. If you enter the starting time and hit TAB, the ending time will automatically be populated. You cannot enter starting times before 7:30.

If you have a 3-year-old program, you can enter the number of 3-year-old children at your site. This is for informational purposes only and is not required.

Click **Save** to save your work. If any checkboxes are not checked, the page will not save. Look for red asterisks next to any required fields that were not properly filled out.

Click the **Next** button at the top of the screen to continue.

Expansion Class Justification

If you apply for an expansion class or expansion site, you will see this page after you complete the Assurances. Otherwise you will not see this page. Again, red fields denote required information.

Complete each section and click **Save**. Remember that the system will time you out if the screen is not refreshed within one hour. You may want to type your answers into a word processing program first, then copy and paste them into PANDA to avoid being timed out.

Click **Next** to move on to the **Vendor TIN** screen.

Vendor TIN

The **Vendor TIN** (Taxpayer Identification Number) screen contains information required of all state vendors under Georgia law.

Click **Edit** to make changes if you are not already in edit mode.

You will not be able to edit the **Business Entity** or **FEIN** fields. Changes to these fields require additional paperwork to DECAL.

If you are not a governmental entity, you will need to complete the business designation and demographic information. The demographic question applies to the ownership of the company.

Complete the tax-exempt information.

At the bottom of the screen, enter the operating fiscal year of your company. If you operate on the calendar year, enter January 1 of the current year as the Start Date and December 31 of the current year as the End Date. The State of Georgia Fiscal Year runs July 1 through June 30. The Federal Fiscal Year runs October 1 through September 30.

Click **Save** to save your changes.

Submitting an Application

Click the **Online Forms** button at the top of the screen to return to the **Online Forms** tab. Each form should now have a checkmark next to it.

If any form is missing a checkmark, that means it did not save correctly. Click on the form to go back and complete it. All forms must be checked off before you will be able to submit the application.

When all forms are checked off, click the **Read Me Files** tab at the top of the screen. You should now have a **Submit** button at the bottom of the screen.

If you do not see the **Submit** button, go back to the **Online Forms** tab and make sure all forms are checked off. Also note that only project directors or users that are assigned the Provider Management role will have access to the **Submit** button.

IMPORTANT: If you wish to request expansion classes or sites, you must do so BEFORE clicking **Submit**. See the appropriate section above for information on requesting expansion classes or sites.

Click **Submit** to submit your application to DECAL. A message will appear that you have successfully submitted your application.

Thank you for your interest in the Pre-K program. Your online portion of the application has been successfully submitted to the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). DECAL will review your application and will inform you of the status for the upcoming school year.

Once you click **Submit**, you will no longer be able to make any changes. The Application Status should change from **Not Submitted** to **Pending Approval**, or if you applied for expansion classes, **Submitted-Incomplete**.

If an application is submitted in error, send an e-mail to panda.support@decal.ga.gov for assistance.

Mail-In Forms

The **Mail-In Forms** are only required for expansion requests. IF YOU ARE A CONTINUATION PROVIDER NOT REQUESTING EXPANSION, YOU DO NOT NEED TO MAIL IN THESE DOCUMENTS.

Read Me Files   Online Forms   Mail in Forms

Expansion applications are not considered complete and ready for DECAL review until all required documents are received by DECAL. Please note that continuation providers who are not requesting expansion classes do not need to mail in any documents. For more information, review the Checklist for Continuation/Expansion Providers on the Read Me Files tab.

Please forward all required supporting documents to:

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
10 Park Place South, Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30303
Pre-K Program Application Document Enclosed

Picture of the room(s)

Current DECAL License

Secretary of State's certification page

Direct Deposit Changes

First Page of DECAL Licensing Study showing room capacities

For expansion requests, the application cannot be processed until the appropriate items have been received by DECAL. When they are received the boxes next to each item will be checked by DECAL staff.

NOTE: Not every form listed will be required for each expansion request. See the document titled **Checklist for Continuation/Expansion Providers** on the **Read Me Files** tab for more information about which forms are required.

Application Status

You can view your overall application status at any time on the **Read Me Files** tab of the application.

For more detailed information, select **View Application Status** from the menu on the left.

This screen shows the status of the application. When the application is approved or awarded, you can see the site name, number of classes applied for, number of children and approval status. Click the **Select** button next to a site to see class information.

Continuation classes in good standing will generally be approved. Expansion requests will be reviewed by consultants and sent to the Assistant Commissioner for Pre-K for approval. Funding cannot take place until the budget has been approved by the Georgia legislature and signed by the Governor.

For More Information

E-mail – PANDA Support (panda.support@decal.ga.gov)

Telephone – call 404-656-5957 or 1-888-4GA-PREK and ask for PANDA Support or the Pre-K Consultant of the Day.

Appendix A

The **Read Me Files** are in Microsoft Word format. If you don't have Microsoft Word installed on your system, you will need to download and install the free Word Viewer from Microsoft at the following address:

http://office.microsoft.com

Follow the instructions on screen to download and install the Word Viewer. Log back into PANDA, and you should now be able to view the Read Me Files.