



For Immediate Release

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**Leaders to Celebrate Early Education, School Readiness
During Georgia 2014 Pre-K Week Oct. 6-10**

ATLANTA, Sept. 17, 2014 — Pre-K centers across the state will celebrate Georgia Pre-K Week, welcoming state, business and community leaders to visit and learn about the value of early childhood education.

Oct. 6-10 is the state's official Pre-K Week, hosted by Voices for Georgia's Children (www.georgiavoices.org) and supported by Georgia Power, Synovus and Scholastic Corporation. The weeklong, statewide celebration brings together a diverse group of leaders and places them in Pre-K classrooms in all 159 counties, drawing attention to this hallmark program that was pioneered in Georgia 22 years ago.

"Georgia's nationally recognized Pre-K program supports a critical developmental milestone each year for 84,000 four-year-olds," said Pat Willis, Executive Director of Voices for Georgia's Children, a child advocacy organization. "Our state's outstanding Pre-K program and other health and early learning programs work together to help children read to learn by third grade."

Georgia Pre-K Week invites community leaders into the classroom showcasing how early education is making a difference for our children. Gov. Nathan Deal and First Lady Sandra Deal will be among the first to read a children's book to a Pre-K class and experience firsthand the joy and excitement of our youngest learners. Copies of *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons*, written by Georgia children's author Eric Litwin and illustrated by Georgia artist James Dean, were donated for the event.

Georgia Pre-K Week is developed in cooperation with the Georgia 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 (bcdi-atl.org), Ferst Foundation for





Childhood Literacy (www.ferstfoundation.org), Georgia Association for Young Children (www.gayconline.org), Georgia Child Care Association (www.georgiachildcare.org), Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (www.geears.org), Georgia Family Connection Partnership (www.gafcp.org), Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education (www.gpee.org), Georgia Public Library Service (www.georgialibraries.org), Multiple Junior League Chapters (gailspac.org), Quality Care for Children (<http://www.qualitycareforchildren.org/>), and United Way of Greater Atlanta (www.unitedwayatlanta.org).

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 children are safe, healthy, educated, employable, and connected to their family and community. Our mission is to be a powerful, unifying voice for a public agenda that ensures the well being of all of Georgia's children.

About "Pete the Cat"

Voices for Georgia's Children is proud to have "Pete the Cat" as the honorary mascot for Pre-K Week. "Pete the Cat" (www.petethecat.com) is the creation of Georgia artist James Dean who illustrated the book, *Pete the Cat And His Four Groovy Buttons*, written by Georgia children's author Eric Litwin. Through the generosity of Scholastic, Voices for Georgia's Children provided copies of *Pete the Cat And His Four Groovy Buttons* to all legislators to read to Pre-K students across the state.

