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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Task Force issues Report on Family Engagement

Early Education is Shared Process among Families, Schools, and Communities

ATLANTA, Ga., (May 22, 2015) – A task force convened by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has recently issued its report on family engagement in early childhood education settings. The task force was composed of 55 members representing a range of stakeholders who serve children and families. Their report, titled *Roadmap for Engaging Families with Young Children*, included a definition of family engagement and outlined strategies to support child care providers in engaging families. Research shows that family engagement is a critical component of a young child’s success.

“A child’s early educational journey requires more than just great teachers and schools,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “An effective partnership between families – parents, grandparents, foster parents, aunts, uncles, siblings, the community – and teachers helps lay a solid foundation for children’s success in school. The work of this task force will equip early education programs across Georgia to partner with families to create a better future for our youngest learners.”

The task force defined family engagement as “the shared responsibility of families, 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.” The group concluded that effective family engagement is intentional, universal, respectful, collaborative, and equitable.

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In response to the task force's work, DECAL will invite families to participate on state advisory committees and will develop training and resources to provide early education programs with evidence-based strategies that will encourage families to be actively involved with their children's early education.

To review the full report, please visit:

<http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/documents/attachments/EarlyChildhoodGa-web.pdf>

About Bright from the Start

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia's children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages *Quality Rated*, Georgia's community powered child care rating system.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to www.dec.al.ga.gov.