



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Applications to Provide Georgia's Pre-K Program
in 2015-2016 Now Available**

Deadline for Submitting Applications is 5 PM EDT, April 21, 2015

ATLANTA, Ga., (March 25, 2015) – Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has posted the application packages for Georgia's Pre-K Program for the 2015-2016 school year on its website at www.dec.al.ga.gov. Providers currently participating in Georgia's Pre-K Program must reapply and can request expansion classes. New providers wanting to participate in the program can access the application and receive important information about the application review, award process, and grant funding. All applications are due **Tuesday, April 21, 2015**, at 5 PM EDT.

Georgia's Pre-K Program is an educational program for age-eligible children in Georgia. This year, approximately 84,000 four year olds are being served through Georgia's Pre-K Program in over 3,800 funded classes in every county in the state. Programs are offered at local public schools and through private for profit and non-profit providers of preschool services.

The goal of Georgia's Pre-K Program is to foster each child's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development through a rich learning environment, developmentally appropriate practices, and effective interactions with teachers. The nationally recognized full-day educational program is funded through the Georgia Lottery for Education and administered by DECAL.

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“Georgia’s Pre-K Program significantly improves school readiness skills in language, literacy, math, and general knowledge,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs, pointing to a recent study by the FPG Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. “By acquiring these skills at an early age, our students stand a greater chance of reading on grade level by the end of the third grade, which better positions them for future academic excellence.”

For more information about becoming a provider in Georgia’s Pre-K Program, call 404-656-5957 or 1-888-4GA-PREK and ask for the Pre-K Consultant of the Day or e-mail questions to panda.support@decals.ga.gov.

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.decals.ga.gov.