



Nathan Deal
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

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Media Contact: Reg Griffin
404-656-0239 (office)
404-309-8131 (mobile)
reg.griffin@decalfga.gov



**DECAL Announces Plans for \$93 Million in
Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Discretionary Funds**

Funding will support Georgia Families, Child Care Providers, Workforce

ATLANTA, Ga., (September 13, 2018) – Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has announced its plans for an additional \$93 million in discretionary funding the state will receive over the next two years from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). The CCDF is the primary federal funding source for child care subsidies to help eligible low-income working families access child care and to improve the quality of child care for all children.

Congress passed and the President signed the two-year budget deal in February, 2018. In May, 2018, DECAL held public hearings in Atlanta, Albany, and Savannah to gather input from providers, stakeholders, and the public on the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan for Georgia FFY 2019-2021. Those comments were invaluable to finalize our state plan and help formulate a plan to utilize the \$93 million in discretionary funding.

The agency will use the funds to: raise child care quality and increase access to high-quality early childhood education, with an emphasis on infant-toddler care; expand inclusion services; increase workforce professional learning supports; and maintain high safety standards.

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DECAL’s plans include increasing the base reimbursement rate for infant-toddler care; increasing the tier reimbursement rates for 1-,2-, and 3-Star Quality Rated providers, reducing family fees for families receiving Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) scholarships, expanding the number of Quality Rated Subsidy Grant (QRSB) slots and increasing QRSB reimbursement rates to 50% above the base reimbursement rate; increasing supports for teachers in addressing children’s social-emotional needs; and expanding workforce professional development and learning supports.

“These investments align with DECAL’s strategic priorities and affirm our commitment to supporting families, providers, and the child care industry workforce by providing them with resources, tools, and incentives to ensure that Georgia’s youngest learners have access to the highest quality care and education in safe and nurturing environments,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. She said the plan supports DECAL’s vision that “every child in Georgia will have access to high quality early care and education regardless of family income or location.”

The entire plan has been posted on the DECAL website at www.decal.ga.gov and can be downloaded here:

<http://decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/CCDF%20GRANT%20FUND%20SPENDING%20PLAN%20SUMMARY%20FINAL%20handout.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.decal.ga.gov.