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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Georgia Awarded Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership Grant

Grant Expands Access to High-Quality Services for Infants and Toddlers and their Families

ATLANTA, Ga., (December 10, 2014) – Georgia has been awarded up to \$22 million in an Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Grant that will expand access to high-quality services for infants and toddlers and their families.

Administered annually over five years by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), the grant will deliver comprehensive Early Head Start services to infants, toddlers, and families in metro Atlanta through partnerships with existing child care centers and family child care homes. The grant was announced today by President Barack Obama at a White House Summit on Early Childhood Education.

DECAL, in collaboration with an existing Early Head Start grantee and child care resource and referral agency, will create early education hubs which will support the centers and family child care homes in providing critical family support services and high-quality instruction.

Sheltering Arms and Quality Care for Children, Inc. will serve as the early education hubs for the centers and family child care homes implementing Early Head Start.

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“This is great news for Georgia’s youngest learners and their families,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “This grant will build on work already being done through the \$51.7 million dollar Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) awarded to Georgia in December, 2013.” Commissioner Jacobs said Georgia has research to demonstrate the positive impacts of our early childhood education programs --- from infants to Pre-K --- and a strong early education department...one of only three in the nation... that can utilize many “in-house” resources to ensure successful implementation of this grant.

“From the launch of Georgia’s Early Education Empowerment Zones and Quality Rated program to our new Georgia Early Learning Development Standards, professional development and nationally recognized Pre-K program, Georgia is raising academic standards and providing quality early education for the state’s youngest learners,” added Commissioner Jacobs.

About DECAL

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) 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 voluntary quality enhancement programs.

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.