



Nathan Deal
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Reg Griffin
404-656-0239 (office)
reg.griffin@dec.al.ga.gov



**First Lady & Georgia Children's Cabinet
Celebrate Georgia's Pre-K Month in October**

Sandra Deal Will Travel the State Reading to Pre-K Classes

ATLANTA, Ga., (September 24, 2014) – If you're looking for Georgia's First Lady Sandra Deal during the month of October, just check a Pre-K Classroom anywhere in the state. In celebration of Georgia's Pre-K Month, the First Lady will be reading to Pre-K classes statewide, starting Wednesday, October 1, 2014, in Cobb County. Her visits are presented by the Georgia Children's Cabinet and Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL).

“The governor and I have worked diligently to increase the percentage of Georgia's children reading at or above grade level by the completion of third grade,” said Mrs. Deal. “By focusing our efforts on our youngest learners, we have the ability to teach them these crucial skills that lay the ground work for all their future academic and career endeavors. Research shows that our nationally recognized Pre-K program has greatly improved and enhanced our students' reading and literacy skills. We must continue investing our time and resources in these young scholars because they are undoubtedly capable of being the future leaders of our state.”

Approximately 60% of all four-year-olds in Georgia are served by Georgia's Pre-K Program and Head Start, with a statewide Pre-K enrollment of nearly 84,000.

Pre-K centers across the state will celebrate Georgia Pre-K Week October 6-10, 2014, welcoming state, business and community leaders to visit and learn about the value of early childhood education. 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 pioneered in Georgia 22 years ago.

“All Georgians can be proud of what our state is doing in early care and education. We continue to be national leaders in these important areas,” said Amy M. Jacobs, DECAL Interim Commissioner. “And we appreciate the tireless efforts of the Governor and Mrs. Deal and other state and local leaders in supporting Georgia’s Pre-K Program, not only during Georgia’s Pre-K Month, but also throughout the year.”

The First Lady will kick off Georgia’s Pre-K Month on Wednesday, October 1, 2014, 9:15 AM at CreekStone Academy, 2400 Ellison Lakes Drive in Kennesaw, Georgia. She will then be joined by DECAL Interim Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs and members of the Georgia Children’s Cabinet during a 10:00 AM visit to Ivy Hall Day School, located at 1730 Tuscan Heights Boulevard in Kennesaw.

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 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.dec.al.ga.gov.