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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bright from the Start offering Pre-K Summer Transition Program

ATLANTA, Ga., (March 5, 2018) – For the eighth year, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) is offering a six-week intensive academic program for rising kindergarteners. To be eligible for the program, families must meet income eligibility requirements (85% of the state median income) and the following criteria:

- Child did not attend a Georgia’s Pre-K Program or Head Start program during the 2017-2018 school year, **OR**
- Child attended a Georgia’s Pre-K or Head Start program but did not attend the entire school year, **OR**
- Child attended a Georgia’s Pre-K or Head Start program the entire year but has been identified as needing additional academic support before entering Kindergarten.

- **OR** A child must be part of one of the following **PRIORITY GROUPS**:
 - Dual Language Learner (home language is a language other than English)
 - Foster care placement
 - Child’s family is without permanent housing (homeless as defined by McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act)
 - Child with an Individual Education Program (IEP)

- Additional consideration will be given to providers that serve children in a Turnaround Eligible School: <https://gosa.georgia.gov/turnaround-eligible-schools-list>

“The goal of Georgia’s Pre-K Program is to prepare four year olds to successfully enter kindergarten, but some students either miss that opportunity or need additional help. The Summer Transition Program (STP) was created to support those students,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “Dedicated Pre-K teachers and providers make this program successful, and we appreciate their willingness to participate again this summer.”

“The Summer Transition Program is a great opportunity for these young students to build their skills and confidence before moving into kindergarten,” added Susan Adams, Assistant Commissioner for Georgia’s Pre-K Program and Instructional Supports. Adams said the intensive, high quality instructional program will begin in early June.

Early education providers (public schools and private child care centers) that are compliant or in good standing with DECAL programs (Pre-K, Child Care Services, Nutrition Services, Audits and Compliance, and Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) are eligible to receive a Summer Transition Program class.

Early education providers that want to offer the Summer Transition Program in their area can access an application beginning today. The deadline to submit completed applications is **March 22, 2018**. DECAL will choose providers to participate through a competitive application process, and locations chosen to provide the STP will be announced in late April. After DECAL awards the summer classes, a list of participating providers will be posted to www.decal.ga.gov, and parents can register their children directly with providers.

The STP has been evaluated by independent researchers with results indicating strong impacts for the children served – especially in crucial language and literacy skills.

For more information about the Summer Transition Program, visit the DECAL website at <http://www.decal.ga.gov/Prek/SummerTransitionProgram.aspx> or email questions about the program to summerschool@decal.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.dec.state.ga.us.