



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
BRIGHT FROM THE START

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DECAL Awards New Transformation Grants to 18 Community Groups
Grantees' projects will serve critical needs of children and families

ATLANTA, Ga., (February 3, 2023) – The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has awarded new Community Transformation Grants to 18 community collaboratives for initiatives targeting children in the birth-to-8 age group and their families. Another eight groups that received Grants in 2021 will receive additional funds to continue advancing their community projects.

The 18 organizations receiving 2023 Community Transformation Grants (CTGs), ranging from \$50,000 to \$125,000 each, are: Athens Area Community Foundation; Black Child Development Institute-Atlanta; Brooks County Board of Commissioners; Bulloch County Board of Education; Family Connection Communities in Schools of Berrien County; Food Bank of Northeast Georgia; Greenbriar Children's Center; Hand, Heart, and Soul Project; Jasper County Family Connection; Men About Change; 9to5 National Association of Working Women; Prevent Child Abuse Rockdale; Pulaski County Schools; Quality Care for Children; Resilient Georgia; Rome Board of Education; Safe Harbor Children's Center; and Wiregrass Georgia Technical College.

The eight CTG grantees from 2021 that will each receive an additional \$50,000 for their ongoing projects in 2023 are: Baldwin County Board of Education; Cook County Family Connection; Georgia Organics; Greenbriar Children's Center; Gwinnett County Public Schools Foundation Fund; Quality Care for Children; United Way of Central Georgia; and University of West Georgia College of Education Early Learning Center.

“We congratulate and thank the 18 new and eight continuing Community Transformation Grant recipients for developing such worthwhile and impactful initiatives,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “Through the 26 Grant awards, DECAL is helping these community partnerships move the needle in serving the most pressing needs of young children and families across Georgia.”

The CTG recipients were selected through a rigorous application process. Representing communities across the state, they each submitted a proposal detailing their experience and capabilities, and the project they planned to develop in response to one of the following focus areas that matched an identified need in their area:

- Increasing access to high-quality early childhood programs for infants and toddlers (6 weeks to 36 months)
- Increasing access to high-quality early childhood programs for dual language learners
- Increasing access to high-quality early childhood programs for children living in rural areas of Georgia
- Supporting children with social-emotional and behavioral needs
- Reducing food insecurity for children and their families
- Strengthening and coordinating early learning services for children in foster care or protective services to ensure they have needed supports and resources
- Providing mental health services for children and their parents and caregivers
- Providing enhanced services to young children related to the early identification and treatment of developmental delays and disabilities
- Developing a system of care to support children and their families experiencing homelessness
- Supporting the early childhood education (ECE) workforce, including child care learning center teachers, program directors, and administrators; family child care learning home providers; and other ECE professionals working directly with children and families

The CTGs have a term of 18 months, but DECAL hopes that many of the funded projects will be expanded or scaled-up over time. The Grants were created in 2021 to encourage the creation of early education partnerships composed of community agencies and other stakeholders that would design, tailor, and implement innovative projects to increase access to and the quality of early childhood services and resources. The Grants awarded in 2021 were funded from the three-year, \$11.2 million Preschool Development Renewal Grant (PDG) awarded to Georgia by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education and concentrated on children ages birth to 5. For 2023, all 26 Grant awards are funded under the American Rescue Plan and are directed to the birth-to-8 population. DECAL has engaged Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS) to conduct an independent evaluation of the Community Transformation Grant program.

About DECAL

The 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 and 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.