



Leveraging American Rescue Plan Funds to Support ECE Workforce Entry

Through ARP funds, DECAL's Professional Learning Unit has initiated several projects to support entry into Georgia's early childhood workforce. The primary focus has been to increase access to the Child Development Associate (CDA) and the Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC), both of which are considered entry level credentials.

CDA with CLASS

DECAL has partnered with Teachstone to offer the CDA with CLASS at no cost to the workforce. The CLASS, which stands for Classroom Assessment Scoring System, is used in Georgia's Pre-K, Head Start, and Early Head Start to evaluate classroom quality. CLASS concepts are embedded into the CDA content for participants in this course. Priority is given to professionals working in Georgia's Pre-K, Head Start, and Early Head Start classes.

CDA Trainer Grants

DECAL has issued a grant opportunity to state approved trainers to offer the CDA in their communities. Trainers must partner with a local child care program (or group of programs) to offer CDA training, in-class coaching, supplies, and financial supports to CDA participants. Each grantee is eligible to receive a maximum award of \$22,500.

Professional Development Specialist Training

DECAL is providing financial supports for state approved trainers to complete the CDA Professional Development Specialist (PDS) training. CDA participants are required to have an in-class observation conducted by a trained PDS before the CDA is awarded. Priority is given to trainers who are bilingual and/or who are willing to travel to rural communities where access to a PDS is more limited.

Technical College System of Georgia Grants

DECAL has partnered with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) to issue grants to technical colleges to support offering the CDA and/or TCC in their adult education programs. Students in adult education programs are working on a high school equivalency at the same time they are earning a credential.

Updates to DECAL Scholars

The DECAL Scholars (www.decalscholars.com) program has been updated to offer even more financial supports to early childhood professionals pursuing a degree or credential. Updates include paying the full cost of the CDA, paying for CDA renewals, and offering financial supports to pay for substitutes while teachers are completing coursework. The POWER program has also been updated to become POWER-ED (Providing Our Workforce Essential Recognition for Educational Development), which provides wage supplements for Scholarships recipients while they are pursuing their credential. The DECAL Scholars program is funded through the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) and ARP dollars will be utilized to support the additional programs.