

## SPRING 2026

Dear Early Learning Professionals of Georgia:

I am writing today to share highlights of data DECAL recently published about the early learning workforce in Georgia and show how we use data to inform our investments in the workforce. You can download the infographic fact sheet here:

[https://www.dec.al.ga.gov/documents/attachments/ECE\\_Workforce\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](https://www.dec.al.ga.gov/documents/attachments/ECE_Workforce_Fact_Sheet.pdf)



We looked at data about workforce demographics, compensation, and credentials. A few highlights:

- The workforce is 97% female and 50% African American. More than two-thirds, 78%, work full time. More than half are under 40, and 32% are under 30.
- Both lead and assistant teachers earn less than \$30,000 per year on average. The average is just over \$26,000 for assistant teachers, and just under \$30,000 for lead teachers. These averages do not include Georgia's Pre-K teachers who recently transitioned to the K-12 pay scale.
- About half, 51%, of the workforce has no degree or credential. Of the 49% with a degree or credential, nearly two-thirds are ECE-specific.

DECAL's mandate for the federal CCDF funds we receive is to increase the availability, affordability, and quality of child care services in Georgia. We invest in the workforce to improve the quality of early care and education.

I am pleased to report that the agency's major investments already align with the needs of the workforce. In 2025 we invested \$33.6 million in professional development. Of that, \$9.9 million was paid directly to teachers and other workers at Quality Rated programs in the form of \$500 annual salary supplements.

The remaining \$23.7 million funded the:

- DECAL Scholars program—Awarded more than 2,000 scholarships for basic ECE credentials.
- Thriving Child Care Business Academy—Enabled 1,700 child care owners and administrators to receive free business training.
- Infant Toddler Specialist Network—Facilitated 95 trainings that reached 1,229 professionals.
- SEEDS program—Coached more than 1,700 educators; trained more than 4,000 participants in social-emotional learning; and delivered Pyramid Model training to more than 700 ECE teachers.
- Early Language and Literacy Lab—Launched in 2025 and offers 187 approved trainings.

## FREE One-On-One Business Coaching by Civitas Strategies

<p><b>REAL DECISIONS. REAL OUTCOMES.</b></p>  <p>One-on-One Business Coaching is Free &amp; Virtual        To Learn More &amp; Enroll go to: <a href="https://wkf.ms/3Univ4i">https://wkf.ms/3Univ4i</a>        Email: <a href="mailto:GACOACHING@CIVSTRAT.COM">GACOACHING@CIVSTRAT.COM</a></p>	<p><b>FROM CONFUSION TO CLARITY</b></p> <p>✦ "This coaching helped me slow down, see the full picture. I walked away with clarity, confidence, and a clear plan forward." - Georgia Provider ✦</p> <p>Each Coach Session is a Step Toward Smarter Decisions and Greater Confidence</p>  <p>One-on-One Business Coaching is Free &amp; Virtual        To Learn More &amp; Enroll go to: <a href="https://wkf.ms/3Univ4i">https://wkf.ms/3Univ4i</a>        Email: <a href="mailto:GACOACHING@CIVSTRAT.COM">GACOACHING@CIVSTRAT.COM</a></p>	<p><b>FROM CHAOS TO CONTROL</b></p> <p>✦ "I feel more organized, more focused, more confident." - Georgia Provider ✦</p> <p>Each Coaching Session is a Step Toward Sustainable, Smart Business Management</p>  <p>One-on-One Business Coaching is Free &amp; Virtual        To Learn More &amp; Enroll go to: <a href="https://wkf.ms/3Univ4i">https://wkf.ms/3Univ4i</a>        Email: <a href="mailto:GACOACHING@CIVSTRAT.COM">GACOACHING@CIVSTRAT.COM</a></p>
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Civitas Strategies coaches are helping GA child care business owners make real, mission-driven decisions and achieve real outcomes during One-on-One Coaching through the DECAL Thriving Child Care Business Academy. From financial management and marketing to taxes and technology, these aren't just conversations. They're catalysts. Providers come to the free, 30-minute virtual sessions confused and in chaos. They walk away with clarity and confidence, armed with real strategies, not just generic advice. Each coaching session is a step toward smarter decisions and sustainable, smart business management. During the calls,

### Coaches Offer...

- ✔ Clear Strategies
- ✔ Confidence to Make Decisions
- ✔ Continuing Support

### ...For a Range of Business Challenges:

- 📌 Sales & Marketing: Clarify pricing, set reasonable enrollment targets, create impactful messaging to families
- 📌 Utilizing Technology: Simplify admin tasks with tools like Google Drive + Forms
- 📌 Financial Planning: Make informed decisions about leases, risk, and growth
- 📌 Retirement & Tax Prep: Understand credits, depreciation, and compliance for discussion with tax and financial advisors
- 📌 Risk & Growth Management: Know when and how to expand

### What Owners Have to Say:

*"This coaching helped me slow down, see the full picture. I walked away with clarity, confidence, and a clear plan forward."*

*"I feel more organized, more focused, more confident."*

Sign up for individual coaching through the Thriving Child Care Business Academy today at <https://wkf.ms/3Univ4i>.  
 Questions? Email [gacoaching@civstrat.com](mailto:gacoaching@civstrat.com).



## Sign up for CAPS Text Reminders

Text "CAPS" to 1-833-685-4957

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We will publish this data annually. The workforce demographics are unlikely to change a lot over time, but our investments will impact compensation and workforce credentials, and we will track improvements in both areas.

Sincerely,

Susan Adams

Deputy Commissioner for Pre-K and Instructional Supports

## Looking to Go Back to School?

Check out [decalscholars](#) to learn more about resources you may qualify for. In addition to educational counseling, they offer CDA, academic, and Montessori scholarships!

You can also click on the [image](#) to the right for an overview of the DECAL Scholars Programs.



## Substitute Teacher Registry on GaPDS

You can now find a [Substitute Teacher Registry](#) on GaPDS. Individuals must complete a 4-part series on [OLLI](#) to earn the Substitute Micro Credential Certificate.

The required training will help you know that these individuals have a foundation in early childhood. The topics covered include:

- Building Relationships
- Classroom Management
- Professionalism and Ethics
- Working with Children

While it will be up to individual employers to ensure that all other licensing requirements are met, as this registry continues to grow, it should serve as a great starting point for identifying substitutes when the need arises.

## Training & Events

If you are looking for training, take a look at our [calendar of our scheduled training](#) on our website.

You can also [contact us](#) if you have a request for a future training.

Access links for other professional development opportunities by visiting

[DECAL's Workforce Supports and Learning](#).





# Congratulations to Central East Georgia's Recent Quality Rated Programs

Developing Minds Academy V	★★	Universal Love Daycare & Learning Center	★
Na-Na's Day Care Center	★★	The School Kids Club/Whiz Kids	★★
Walker, Lethia P	★★	First Baptist After School Program	★★★★
CUC Academy	★★	Little Tots Learning Academy	★★★★
Ward, Nekeshia B	★★	Big Blue Marble - Evans Towne Center	★★
Positive Growth Education Center	★★	Kids In Motion Academy Tucker	★★
Prime Time Discovery - Tobacco Road	★	Blue Ridge Preschool & Daycare	★★★★
West Haven Preschool	★★★★	Eye On Your Child Care Center, Inc.	★★
Magic Learning Academy	★★	St. Stephen's Day School	★★
Solid Love Daycare Learning Green, LLC	★★	Prime Time Discovery- Richmond Hill Elementary	★★
Learning Tree Christian Academy	★★	Bright Minds Learning Center	★★★★
Childcare Network #160	★★★★	Kidz Biz Child Care Center	★★
Montessori School of Covington	★★	Kidz Zone Child Development and Learning Center	★★

For ratings from 12/23/25-3/26/26

## Benefits of Play for Children

### SOCIAL

Playing with others helps children learn how to **negotiate group dynamics, collaborate, and compromise.**

### EMOTIONAL

Through play, children can **explore and manage emotions** in a safe and controlled environment, while also **developing empathy and understanding** for others.

### PHYSICAL

Active play supports **balance, coordination,** and the development of both **gross and fine motor skills.**

### COMMUNICATION

Play provides opportunities for children to **practice language skills, expand their vocabulary,** and **express ideas effectively.**

### COGNITIVE

Play encourages **thinking, reasoning, remembering,** and **problem-solving, supporting overall attention and learning.**

### CREATIVE

Imaginative play allows children to **think creatively, develop original ideas,** and **discover unique solutions** to challenges.



*Our office will be closed on May 25<sup>th</sup> in observance of Memorial Day and on June 19<sup>th</sup> in observance of Juneteenth.*

## AT A GLANCE



Subscribe to #DECALDownload wherever you stream podcasts.



Find this and other resources to support your work on the DECAL website.



## Chop, Look, Listen

Caring for Georgia's children means keeping them safe in every moment – especially during meals and snacks. That's why the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) has launched Chop, Look, Listen, a new initiative designed to help early childhood educators prevent choking and promote safe eating habits. Click on the logo to the left for more information!

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS, WEBSITES AND EMAILS

### CAPS Provider Relations

833-4GACAPS (442-2277)

[CAPSProviderSupport@decals.ga.gov](mailto:CAPSProviderSupport@decals.ga.gov)  
[decals.ga.gov](http://decals.ga.gov)

### Leap Early Learning Partners

706-922-7182

[LeapCCR@augusta.edu](mailto:LeapCCR@augusta.edu)  
[leapccr.org](http://leapccr.org)

### BFTS Child Care Services

404-657-5562

### Poison Control Center

800-222-1222



Visit our [website](#) to find resources on a variety of important topics and links to other websites that can help support the work you do.



Don't get our emails? You can [add your email](#) at any time (personal and/or business).



Follow us on [Facebook!](#) You can also send us suggestions for things you would like to see posted.



Visit our [Training & Events page](#) to see our current training calendar and how to contact us if you don't see what you need.

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

A full list of closure dates can be found [here on the Augusta University website](#).