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Georgia Pre-K Program Celebrates 32 Years of Providing Quality Early Education

ATLANTA – Voices for Georgia’s Children and the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) are proud to announce that the 14th annual Georgia Pre-K Week is set to take place from October 7th to 11th, 2024. This event celebrates quality early learning and highlights the importance of early childhood education across the state.

Launched in 1992 as a pilot program with just 750 students, the Georgia Pre-K Program has become a nationally recognized model, laying a solid foundation for academic excellence and future success for more than two million children statewide. This year’s Georgia Pre-K Week continues the tradition of inviting state and local leaders to engage with Pre-K classrooms across Georgia.

“Quality early learning lays the foundation for lifelong success – nurturing curiosity, fostering resilience, and empowering children to reach their fullest potential,” said Judy Fitzgerald, Executive Director of Voices for Georgia’s Children. “We understand the crucial role that early education plays in a student’s success. Children who experience quality early learning environments are more prepared for kindergarten, and this early start helps set them on a positive path for the future.”

Research shows children enrolled in the Georgia Pre-K Program make significant growth across all learning domains, including math, language and literacy, and social-emotional skills. Those gains happened for all students, regardless of gender or income differences. Those gains were shown to be sustained through the end of kindergarten, with another period of higher-than-expected gains occurring in 4th grade.

“Georgia Pre-K has consistently garnered bipartisan support and advocacy from governors, state, and local leaders,” said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “This annual event offers a valuable opportunity for advocates to witness firsthand that their commitment to the program yields significant benefits.”

She added, “We’re excited for this year’s participants to explore *A Magnificent Field Trip to the Governor’s Mansion*, written by former Georgia football player and literacy advocate, Malcolm Mitchell, with the state’s youngest learners.”

Georgia Power returns as a premier sponsor of Georgia Pre-K Week, continuing a decade-long tradition of supporting early education. Georgia Pre-K Week 2024 is supported by Governor Brian Kemp and First Lady Marty Kemp, state commissioners, state and local elected officials, and other longstanding community partners across the state.

For more information about Georgia Pre-K Week, please visit www.gaprekweek.com.

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About Voices for Georgia's Children

Voices for Georgia's Children is the state's only comprehensive policy and advocacy organization committed to improving the lives of Georgia's children. Through research and analysis, public education, convening and engagement with state decision makers, Voices is striving to ensure ALL children thrive. Our work is framed in a holistic "whole child" perspective that allows us to identify how different policies impact children and to propose solutions that benefit children on multiple levels. For more information, go to www.georgiavoices.org.

About Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

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 Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Child 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 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.