

## ABSTRACT

### ***Georgia's Pre-K Plus***

*Expanding Pre-K Access and Services to Children in Regions with High Needs*

Submitted by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

In its application for funding from the Preschool Expansion Grant, Georgia proposes to create and implement a model for expanding access to high-quality Pre-K and comprehensive services that will *minimize* the state's costs and efforts by *maximizing* the state's existing infrastructure. The proposed Georgia's Pre-K Plus program (GPP) will build on the success and infrastructure of the state's successful Georgia's Pre-K Program (Georgia's Pre-K).

GPP will be administered at the state level by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), one of three departments of its kind in the nation dedicated to serving the early care and education needs of children from birth to age five. DECAL has engaged 10 local school systems in five regions considered areas of high needs to participate in implementing GPP in Year One of the grant period. The 10 school systems that will partner with DECAL as subgrantees are: *Metro Region*: DeKalb County School District; *Central Region*: Bibb County School District; *Northeast Region*: Hall County Schools; Gainesville City School System; *Southwest Region*: Crisp County Board of Education; Macon County Schools; Sumter County Schools; *Southeast Region*: Liberty County School System; McIntosh County Schools; Long County Board of Education. Participation in GPP will be extended to child care centers and Head Start programs after Year One.

The goals of GPP are: 1) Add additional school year Pre-K slots that encompass the characteristics of a high-quality Pre-K program; 2) Expand summer transition services by increasing the number of Rising Pre-K and Rising Kindergarten slots; 3) Raise the quality of current Georgia's Pre-K by reducing ratios and class sizes; 4) Increase comprehensive services offered to children and families in all GPP slots; and 5) Provide resources and training to support English language learners, children with disabilities; children experiencing homelessness; and isolated/difficult to reach families.

The desired and expected outcomes for GPP are: 1) Improved quality of Georgia's current Pre-K program; 2) Increased access to high-quality Pre-K for income-eligible children; and 3) Improved outcomes for children with high needs and their families.

The populations that GPP will target are: 1) Children and families in poverty; 2) Children whose home language is other than English; 3) Children with disabilities; and 4) Families that are isolated/hard to reach.

Successful implementation of GPP will demonstrate: 1) a methodology for identifying areas of high need; 2) a process for phasing in program expansion by initially partnering with entities with the resources to be successful and then scaling up; and 3) designing and implementing a program by using existing resources and infrastructure.