



STATE OF GEORGIA
Children's Cabinet

Executive Children's Cabinet

January 7, 2021

Zoom Meeting

8 a.m.-10 a.m.

Summary

1. CABINET UPDATES

Commissioner Jacobs provided updates for the Executive Cabinet. Three new members of the Executive Cabinet were announced: Candice Broce is the Chief Operating Office for the Governor; Trey Bennett is the Deputy Executive Counsel for the Governor; and Commissioner Greg Dozier with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG).

Rachel Davidson, Office of the Child Advocate: The Summit 2020: Georgia's Child Welfare Conference was held in November and was successful. It was primarily virtual. Planning for The Summit 2021 is underway with a focus on interdisciplinary topics. If any member agencies would like to present or participate in the Summit, please do. OCA has developed a Model Child Abuse Protocol that is under heavy revision to incorporate feedback. A draft will be shared for feedback with the Cabinet, if possible.

Commissioner Greg Dozier with TCSG: funding was given for three new College and Career Academies this year. Due to COVID, seeing a decrease in dual enrollment. Traditional enrollment is also down, but not as much in dual enrollment. Average age of student is older and with children, so COVID

impacts their enrollment. Received a grant to launch an e-Campus for a statewide platform for a uniform approach to classes.

Commissioner Judy Fitzgerald, DBHDD: Free Your Feels campaign is continuing and going well. The Governor's investment in the APEX program in schools is helping to connect community providers with families with needs and to resources in the community. On a sobering note: DBHDD has a lot of resources on suicide prevention and suicide response, but unfortunately, we've had to deploy teams to support school settings and community settings due to attempts or suicides that have occurred. Go to <https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/bh-prevention/suicide-prevention>. This landing page includes the 5-year 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, which offers a wide variety of resources and connections. Please don't hesitate to contact DBHDD for additional information.

Executive Director Jay Neal, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council: January is human trafficking awareness month. We have been working with OCA and DFCS and Child Advocacy Centers of Georgia to develop a statewide response. Previous response was metro-centered and are now developing it to be a statewide response. Child Advocacy Centers of Georgia administering a new hotline: 866-END-HTGA.

Commissioner Tyrone Oliver, Department of Juvenile Justice: Our census is down due to COVID and courts being closed. We've had a graduation. We thought it was very important to hold a graduation in a hybrid model. Thirty-two students received diplomas and 30 received their GEDs. We're working on re-entry and jobs and issuing some scholarships for kids and DJJ-involved youth to continue their education at technical colleges in Georgia.

Commissioner Amy Jacobs, Department of Early Care and Learning: Access to child care for parents to continue to go to work; in spring 70% had closed their doors, and now 80% are re-opened but enrollment is down 25% prior

to the pandemic. We have received CARES dollars and delivered \$92M to the child care industry. We will be receiving more funding from Congress and will be developing a funding plan. Through GEARS funding, we created SOLVE – virtual online learning for children K-7th grade that provides scholarships for children to have a place to go to attend school (in child care centers) if their parents have to continue to work. We have also expanded this effort to include children with disabilities up to age 21 who need an out-of-home program and lifted the income requirements to receive the scholarship. We are working closely with DOE and community coordinators who work directly with the school systems. It is also on our website.

Commissioner Robyn Crittenden, Department of Human Services: The \$600 stimulus will not include child support offset. You may hear that custodial parents will be upset because they will be unable to get back child support. Please refer them to us. It will be a big change from the last stimulus check.

2. LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATES

Commissioner Jacobs, DECAL: Parents are deciding not to send their children to Pre-K due to circumstances surrounding the virus. We are hearing some families may be deciding to send children next year, which DECAL will need to react to in terms of slots and availability. Summer Transition may see an uptick in enrollment, and we'll be watching that very closely. Georgia Pre-K is funded by lottery dollars, so we'll be focusing on that during the session.

Bert Brantley, Deputy Chief of Staff- External Affairs, Governor's Office of Georgia: Session may be lighter than usual due to the pandemic. Anticipate the State of the State address and budget will be released on Thursday, January 14th.

Executive Director Jay Neal, CJCC: Crime Victim's Compensation Program, there is a medical cap of \$15K on a medical claim for a victim of a violent

crime. We are proposing a worker's compensation fee schedule and is considered payment in full. Sexual assault kit tracking to eliminate backlogs in testing. We've received a grant to set up the ability to track the kits from time of purchase and are working on agency legislation that will put into statute the responsibilities of each one in the chain of command for the kits, so we won't see another backlog issue.

Rachel Davidson, Office of the Child Advocate: Recently started a pilot program focused on the quality of legal representation of children in foster care and we're working on legislation to support those efforts. Working on tuition waivers/grants/scholarships for children in foster care to support secondary education – may be on the table for legislation this year.

Director Tom Rawlings, Division of Family and Children Services: There may be legislation, not from DFCS, that is focused on post-secondary education tuition support. DFCS is looking to expand options for foster care while ensuring court oversight of the process. We know if we can keep children out of formal custody while at the same making sure they are safe and protected it can lead to better outcomes for children. For children with disabilities, if we can maintain them with family or a family-like setting – improve therapeutic foster care system to support those both in custody and those in danger of entering the system due to high needs. On the federal side there is a temporarily increase of 15% in the amount of SNAP benefits, the Community Block Grant increased, and the education voucher has also increased. We also understand there will be funding for housing assistance.

3. DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS - INTRODUCTION

Executive Director Hawkins introduced Bert Brantley, Deputy Chief of Staff for External Affairs for the Governor.

4. COORDINATED COMMUNICATION PRIORITIES

Executive Director Hawkins, Governor's Office of Student Achievement:

We've started reaching out for a coordinated communication plan for the Children's Cabinet. We also have a new website:

www.gachildrencabinet.org for the Children's Cabinet. We've worked with the Cabinet and the Literacy Coordinating Council for reading resources for the summer slide and it can be found on the website. We will also be sharing information on the Free Your Feels Campaign and have already pushed that out to school boards, etc. The website provides a place for external website links and the ability to share information internally via the website.

5. COVID-19 VACCINE PLAN UPDATE

Commissioner Toomey was unable to attend due to the COVID pandemic and vaccine rollout.

Commissioner Frank Berry, Department of Community Health: We are reporting on hospital bed capacity on a regular basis. We have several areas throughout the state who have no beds for any type of emergency and they're having to either turn away or transport to other hospitals. It's very dangerous right now and we need to continue to wear a mask and social distance. From a long-term care facility standpoint, we did our first vaccinations for long-term facility staff. We're only seeing about 30% of long-term care staff being willing to take the vaccine and we are not forcing staff to take it, when there are first responders who also need to receive it. We are aware that we will be working on COVID in long-term care facilities for a longer period of time.

6. MARCH FULL CABINET PREPARATION

David Tanner, Carl Vinson Institute of Government: We are working on a meeting that will include Ascend from the Aspen Institute to provide a training on a 2-Gen approach and an action plan. The training will help level-set us on language, approach, and indicators to assist tracking our 2-Gen efforts and activities. We will share what's been going on a local level as well.

7. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS DISCUSSION

David Tanner, Institute of Government: Provided a recap of the strategic plan and indicators from the March 3, 2020 Cabinet meeting.

Safety: adding in food and nutrition, number of children receiving food stamps, P-EBT, free lunch, food bank, and runaway and missing children, school climate (check for PBIS measure)

Literacy: Question: do we anticipate the standardized testing measures to be accurate reflection during the pandemic? Answer: No, Milestones may still be waived in 2021; even if not, there will be fewer students taking tests because we cannot require students to go into the school to take summative tests. There will be "blips" in the data.

Health: APEX may perhaps be used as a proxy measure; access to early intervention services for birth through five.

2-Gen: The training with Ascend will help provide more context for potential indicators, so we can revisit at those times.