



STATE OF GEORGIA  
Children's Cabinet

Full Children's Cabinet Meeting

March 14, 2023

Governor's Mansion

8 AM to 10 AM

## MEETING MINUTES

**Cabinet Members:** First Lady Marty Kemp, Amy Jacobs, Department of Early Care and Learning; Joy Hawkins, Governor's Office of Student Achievement; Jay Neal, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council; Kathleen Toomey, Department of Public Health; Shawanda Reynolds-Cobb, Department of Juvenile Justice, Richard Woods, Department of Education; Caitlin McMunn Dooley, Voices for Georgia's Children; Joanna Hill, Bright Promises Children's Center; Michelle Smith Lank, Kids World Learning Center; Allison Setterlind, Georgia Head Start Collaboration Office; Richard Ward, Georgia Chapter – American Academy of Pediatrics; Juanita Yancey, Georgia Head Start Association; Vonda Woodall, North Oconee High School

**Other Agency Representatives:** Dr. Dean Burke, Department of Community Health; Cayanna Good, Technical College System of Georgia; Megan Andrews, Department of Public Health

**Department of Early Care and Learning Staff:** Liz Young, Quandra Obi, Jerry Brown

**Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement Staff:** Alice Aka

**Carl Vinson Institute of Government Staff:** David Tanner, Malisia Taylor

### CALL TO ORDER

At 8:10 am, Commissioner and Co-Chair Amy Jacobs from the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) called the meeting to order.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Cabinet Co-chair, Joy Hawkins, asked for a motion to accept the day's agenda. Executive Director Jay Neal from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council moved to accept, and Superintendent Richard Woods with the Georgia Department of Education seconded. The Full Cabinet accepted the agenda unanimously.

### WELCOME

Children's Cabinet co-chair Amy Jacobs welcomed the Full Cabinet back.

Executive Director Hawkins made brief remarks on the pre-planning and focus for the rest of the year.

The Cabinet was then invited to share any member agency updates.

### **MEMBER AGENCY UPDATES**

Cabinet members provided updates on their work. A few of the updates included:

Executive Director Hawkins shared her appreciation for the Governor's budget surrounding education and the impact it can have for families across the state. Two literacy bills, House Bill 538 and Senate Bill 211, are moving through. Executive Director Hawkins also gave recognition to the 2Gen Academy and the difference it's making with her staff who are participants.

Commissioner Toomey shared appreciation for the Governor in putting pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV in budget.

Richard Ward, American Academy of Pediatrics, held a joint winter symposium with the Georgia OBGYN Society that included Commissioner Toomey and Dr. Burke.

Interim Commissioner Reynolds-Cobb is watching the 'Raise the Age' bill and preparing for any resources that may be provided in the budget. She discussed the opportunity to partner with Commissioner Tanner, Commissioner Broce, and Commissioner Noggle to find ways to bring more providers into the state and for them to accept dual committed kids, especially for mental health services. She also expressed appreciation for the \$2,000 increase in the budget. They are the 181<sup>st</sup> school district and also trying to maintain teachers and staff. It will give an opportunity to allow staff to grow.

Michelle Smith Lank, Kids World Learning Center, shared that she's in the classroom more often now than she has been. Finding quality teachers is a challenge. As there are challenges with staffing, safety and quality become greater issues. Some of the smaller centers and non-quality rated centers are struggling the most. There's a concern for children who receive CAPS scholarships. There may be a decline in families that can afford quality childcare. Her center is one of eight programs in Georgia with the first wave of the 'Language and Literacy Endorsement' for training.

### **2GEN ACADEMY UPDATE**

David Tanner with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government presented an update on the 2Gen Academy. Newsletters were emailed out to cabinet members a few weeks ago. A second cohort of the 2Gen Academy will start in September 2023. Each Cabinet organization will be invited to nominate two people to be part of the next academy. A class of 30 will be selected from the list of nominees. Full Cabinet members provided feedback and voiced their support for the 2Gen Academy.

### **INTRODUCTION OF CABINET 2023 THEME AND PRIORITY AREAS**

Commissioner Jacobs reemphasized the goals of the Cabinet that were set in 2019. The Cabinet has focused on the 2 Gen goal, literacy and last August the Cabinet learned how agencies define safety.

Going forward this year the Cabinet will focus on prevention. This prevention theme informs the Cabinet's priority areas for this calendar year. The Cabinet will focus on prevention efforts related to child safety and prevention efforts related to child health and well-being. Executive Director Hawkins added that prevention and home visits tie into the safety goal, health goal, and 2 Gen approach.

**PRIORITY AREA: ADDRESSING THE HEALTH-RELATED SOCIAL NEEDS THROUGH HOME VISITING PROGRAMS**

Commissioner Jacobs opened the discussion with a quick introduction to the topic.

Dr. Dean Burke, Department of Community Health, provided some background, including his professional experience. He discussed the low ranks of Georgia in maternal health, but feels optimistic about what can be done to improve outcomes for families. With the public health emergency ending, they are having to check the eligibility of all Medicaid recipients. A challenge with that is getting in contact with people. Full Cabinet members provided feedback and asked questions.

Commissioner Toomey, Department of Public Health, shared her excitement about what we can do with a home visiting strategy. They have formed a work group focused on the medical issues of mothers and discussed how to use home visits as a way to help families get the resources they need. Community health workers are key to this strategy. Commissioner Toomey requested input as they continue to develop how this will look. Full Cabinet members provided feedback and asked questions.

David Tanner gave an update of where the Carl Vinson Institute of Government's research team is with the home visiting inventory. The team has talked with several different people within agencies that are represented on the Cabinet. The Institute of Government requested validation and any feedback on the inventory from state agencies with home visiting programs. Full Cabinet members provided feedback and asked questions.

Full Cabinet members had a discussion related to potential partners in a home visiting strategy and some outcomes they would like to see.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

No public guests attended the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Jacobs at 10:03 am.