

**Georgia Children’s Cabinet
Executive Meeting
Thursday, March 19th, 2015 - Minutes
Executive Cabinet: 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM
The Governor’s Mansion, 391 W. Paces Ferry Road, Atlanta, GA**

Attendees: First Lady Sandra Deal, Katie Jo Ballard (GOCF), Commissioner Frank Berry (DBHDD), Ashley Willcott (OCA), Commissioner Brenda Fitzgerald (DPH), Commissioner Avery Niles (DJJ), Commissioner Amy Jacobs (DECAL), Bobby Cagle (DFCS), Commissioner Keith Horton (DHS), Martha Ann Todd (GOSA)

Members Not in Attendance: Erin Hames (Governor’s Office) Eric John (CJCJ), Bonnie Holliday (SCSC), Superintendent Richard Woods (DOE), Commissioner Clyde Reese (DCH),

Others Attending: Alyssa Botts (First Lady’s Office), Katie McCreary (First Lady’s Office) Meredith Shaddix (GOCF), Barbara Tempel (GOCF)

Agenda Issue	Discussion	Action to Take up
Opening Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Lady Sandra Deal called the March 19, 2015 meeting of the Executive Children’s Cabinet to order at 8:10 AM. ➤ Greetings were made and First Lady Sandra Deal and she introduced Jack Embelton, shadowing Ashley Willcott from St. Martin’s Episcopal School, and Frank Berry’s daughter Dory who would serve as a page for the Senate that day. ➤ Mrs. Deal opened the floor for an approval vote of the November 20th, 2014 Executive Cabinet meeting minutes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The minutes were approved. ➤ First Lady Deal introduced Katie McCreary and Alyssa Botts now that Ember is with Economic Development. Katie and Alyssa provided their cards to be contacted by the Cabinet for emails and scheduling. 	Approved
Initiatives Update: SPLASH Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interim Director of GOCF, Katie Jo Ballard, welcomed everyone and introduced the plans for the SPLASH Campaign kickoff for year two. The kickoff has been moved up this year to reach both legislators while they are still in session and children while they are still in school. The press conference will be held in the North Wing of the Capitol. Representatives from Ga. Power, DOE, OCA, and others will be present to advocate for child water safety. ➤ Additionally she asked if the Cabinet would allow DNR to speak at the press conference despite not being a member of the Children’s Cabinet. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ This motion was approved. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A sunscreen packet with the SPLASH logo was included in every Cabinet folder. These will be distributed at the conference, along with visors and beach balls donated from DJJ. Additionally DOE purchased 200 books to be distributed to kindergarten classes in the five counties with the highest drowning incidents. ➤ Director Cagle stated he was going to look into purchasing one for each foster child between the ages of four and five in addition to putting some in waiting rooms of DFCS facilities. ➤ Martha Ann Todd requested some for the reading mentor program at GOSA. ➤ Commissioner Niles requested some books in DJJ centers so the youth could communicate water safety information to their younger siblings upon release. ➤ Ashley Willcott stated that OCA was going evaluate if OCA could utilize a small amount of funding to purchase books for distribution in the counties with the highest number of drowning incidents. 	
<p>Initiatives Update: Child Abuse Prevention Month and Mental Health Awareness Month</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Katie Jo Ballard mentioned April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. There will be a photo on March 25 at the Capitol and she reminded the Cabinet to wear blue for child abuse prevention. ➤ Katie McCreary spoke of school and program visits in April for Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Cabinet is invited to attend a visit to Lafayette Middle School in Walker County, a Pinwheel garden, a DFCS office, and a Positive Parenting Program in Cartersville in April, the date to be determined. April 17 will serve as Wear Blue Day for child abuse prevention month. ➤ Katie Jo Ballard brought up Bobby Cagle’s awards for social workers in DFCS. He expressed it had received much positive feedback as a method to boost morale and attention paid to children as well as boosting outlook. There will be a tour of the Mansion for the winners and their guests. ➤ Bobby Cagle expressed that advocacy centers such as Safe Path and Powerhouse for Kids were extremely helpful and suggested including them in the visits. ➤ Commissioner Berry discussed Mental Health Awareness Month, also in April, and invited the first lady to come visit the after school programs and clubhouses in the state, as well as visit the 5k walks for mental health. ➤ Commissioner Berry also provided a brief update on the settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice. He is confident they will be able to move all patients into communities by June 30, and they are still working on negotiations for the more severely affected mentally disabled patients. 	

<p>Initiatives Update: Read Across Georgia</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Lady Deal introduced “T.J.’s Discovery”, the book she has been collaborating to write with the Atlanta Speech School. The book is designed to encourage parent and teacher engagement while teaching children critical vocabulary and thinking skills. The book is centered around a camping adventure. DNR has partnered with us by sending rangers to the classrooms to speak about park amenities and programs within their communities. 	
<p>Initiative Update: College and Career Readiness Month</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Katie Jo Ballard introduced May as College and Career Readiness Month, formerly Youth Employment Month. The change occurred to include a wider variety of government programs as well as ages to expose children to the importance of college and other career ideas. She asked for updates and ideas on how to advance this initiative. ➤ Commissioner Niles said DJJ is in the process of opening 5 career academies and suggested one of these as a possible site visit. ➤ Martha Ann Todd stated Matt Arthur would be a good person to reach out to on promoting dual enrollment in colleges as well. 	
<p>Initiative Update: Safe Sleep Campaign and Immunization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Katie Jo Ballard brought up the Safe Sleep Campaign and asked for ideas to advance the campaign again this year. ➤ Commissioner Fitzgerald discussed a new curriculum that has been created for use in the DECAL childcare facilities to teach safe sleeping habits. Also, their findings show 72 percent of babies that have sleep accidents sleep with an adult. Director Vernon Keenan at GBI is working on creating a state evaluation protocol to standardize local investigations of sleep related accidents. ➤ Bobby Cagle said all social workers and foster parents will be receiving specialized training for safe sleep. Social workers all have smart phones that will be equipped with a training video to show pregnant mothers and young parents safe sleep techniques ➤ Commissioner Berry added the idea of adding an advertisement into a phone bill to reach a broader population; both for SPLASH and Safe Sleep. ➤ Bobby Cagle said his office puts forth over 400,000 pieces of mail a month and he would look into adding that into the literature distributed from DFCS. ➤ Commissioner Fitzgerald volunteered to have her staff reduce the size of the poster to be utilized in mail outs. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ashley Willcott said adding Safe Sleep ads to hospital bills could also be helpful. ➤ Commissioner Niles said he saw a very effective PSA in a movie theater, and offered that as a successful idea to reach the broader population. ➤ Ashley Willcott said that she has the contacts for running PSA's and would follow up. ➤ Katie Jo Ballard passed around the new immunization cards for the Cabinet to see. 375,000 have been given out so far with 175,000 more on the way. ➤ Commissioner Fitzgerald stated that Georgia has very strong immunization rates. She also said upon entering school 98.4 percent of all children are immunized. 	
<p>Child Welfare</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Katie Jo Ballard brought up Senate Bill 138, the Child Welfare Reform bill. It codifies Governor Deal's Executive Order having Director Cagle report directly to him, as well as establishes the duties and purposes of the DFCS State Advisory Board. ➤ Bobby Cagle discussed the bill and addressed some of the major highlights. The bill created a child abuse registry allowing DFCS to place those substantiated for child abuse on it; however, it is accessible only to DECAL and DFCS. Those affected receive a timely notice and can appeal their placement if placed on the registry wrongfully. Additionally the budget included substantial increases for DFCS and it passed intact. It passed nearly unanimously. 	
<p>Individual Updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commissioner Fitzgerald announced that channel 11 did a segment on the SHAPE program in elementary schools and it airs tomorrow night on the evening news. ➤ Katie McCreary asked the Cabinet to send her contact information to those in charge of social media in their divisions. She would then be glad to promote their social media activity on the First Lady's page. ➤ Commissioner Niles announced the number of children getting their diplomas within DJJ has increased in the past 5 years. ➤ Commissioner Horton announced that the second phase of the faith based community alliance is now successfully taking over in the populations which it has been implemented. It rallies pastors and other faith leaders around critical issues to help strengthen and support the community. They are now successfully collaborating with other churches on issues such as foster care and mental health to make a positive difference in their region. 	

Closing Remarks	➤ Mrs. Deal thanked the Executive Board for their attendance and participation.	
Adjourn	➤ The First Lady thanked everyone for coming and called the Executive Cabinet meeting adjourned at 9:40AM.	