

**Georgia Children’s Cabinet
Executive Meeting
Thursday, November 21st, 2013 - 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), Tonya Boga (OCA), Commissioner Bobby Cagle (DECAL), Commissioner Brenda Fitzgerald (DPH), Erin Hames (Governor’s Office), Bonnie Holliday (SCSC), Commissioner Keith Horton (DHS), Eric John (CJCJ), Corinna Magelund (Disability Services Ombudsman), Commissioner Avery Niles (DJJ), Commissioner Clyde Reese (DCH), Martha Ann Todd (GOSA)

Members Not in Attendance: Dr. John Barge (DOE)

Others Attending: Ember Bishop (First Lady’s Office), Hayley Howell (GOCF), Elisa Storyk (GOCF)

Agenda Issue	Discussion	Conclusion/ Action to Take/Follow up
Opening Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The meeting was called to order by First Lady Deal. Introductions and welcomes were made. ➤ First Lady Deal called for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 18th, 2013 Executive Cabinet meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The minutes were approved. 	Approved
Monthly Updates – Pre-K and Military Support Month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Katie Jo Ballard first thanked Commissioner Cagle for his dedication to our Pre-K. The Cabinet supported DECAL’s collaboration with Voices for Pre-K week. ➤ First Lady Deal, Katie Jo Ballard and Commissioner Cagle visited Discovery Point in Gwinnett County, as well as the KinderCare Learning Center. ➤ In addition, First Lady Deal, Katie Jo Ballard and Representative Amy Carter visited Moulton Branch Elementary and Pine Grove Elementary in Lowndes County for October-Pre-K Month. ➤ Hayley Howell, project manager, presented on updates for Military Month. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ First Lady Deal and Katie Jo Ballard first visited the King’s Naval Base in Camden County which has a school program called “Connections Club.” It offers leadership opportunities for kids; the kids led the First Lady around and were comfortable with speaking to her. ➤ First Lady Deal and Katie Jo Ballard also joined Albany RYDC facility director Sandra Cawthon in Dougherty County for a visit to the Marine Corps Logistic Base. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Utilizing volunteer support, this program provides military spouses and children with an opportunity to 	

	<p>become more involved within their community, fostering educational development and job placement opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ First Lady Deal commented on the promising and unique nature of the volunteerism effort shown in this military setting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A great way to look at the issue of unemployment—through volunteerism. ○ Can be used especially for resume development. ➤ First Lady Deal, Katie Jo Ballard also visited the base’s Reach Out and Read program at Fort Benning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Followed a mother and child through their pediatrician check-up which included the doctor talking about the importance of reading and providing a book. ❖ The First Lady reiterated the importance of parents reading to their children at an early age to develop learning skills. 	
<p>Monthly Highlights— Upcoming Events: STEM Education and Service and Volunteerism Month</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Lady Deal stressed that she “wants you to tell us what we can do to help you. The Children’s Cabinet is not about me, it’s about you. It’s a cooperative effort, I’m here to support you.” ➤ Katie Jo Ballard highlights that STEM Education is coming up for January. We have met with representatives from Georgia Tech, based on recommendations from Representative Dempsey. We are also working with Pedro Cherry and Georgia Power (with their Learning Power Program) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ We are looking at planning a day where we go on a visit to a Georgia Tech middle school and a high school that Georgia Power is involved with, and then also take a high school class to tour a technical college on a site visit. ❖ Represents how a continuum of STEM education is important for a workforce. ➤ Commissioner Cagle mentioned the Athens Clarke Career Academy attached to the Early Learning Center as a good example. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The school actually pays for all of the coursework for their high school students to take technical college courses. (STEM focus) ➤ Katie Jo Ballard also encouraged anyone who would like to take lead on a month for next year, or who has ideas for a project, to start thinking about that now and let her know. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Commissioner Fitzgerald suggested a SHAPE month theme that she would be willing to work on for the month of September. ➤ Bonnie Holiday also mentioned a potential partnership 	

	<p>between the Provost Academy and the DJJ for virtual services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ It may help with youth recidivism rates as well. ➤ Finally, Erin Hames highlighted another partnership that First Lady Deal has been personally involved with, through the Georgia National Guard, the Youth Challenge Academy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ First Lady Deal visited the program and was disappointed to learn that the children were only given the opportunity to earn their GED; she pushed the point that they should be able to earn their high school diploma as well and now for the first time, in December, we will have the first group of students that will graduate with their diploma as well as their GED. ➤ Commissioner Niles also mentioned Mrs. Deal’s visit to Gainesville RYDC, and how she pushed for students to get a high school diploma and not just a GED. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Commissioner Niles noted that they graduated in the last year more students with their high school diploma than in the history of DJJ. All because of the focus being put right where it is, on the high school diploma. ➤ Katie Jo Ballard moved on to explain that February is Service and Volunteerism ➤ During the last Full Cabinet meeting it was decided that a youth would be selected from each county to be nominated for this award. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ We have been working with the county commissioners to nominate someone from each of these counties. ➤ To narrow it down, GOCF will select a top 10, then the Children’s Cabinet will narrow it down to a top 5, and finally the First Lady will select the top winner for the state from these 5. ➤ County Commissioners sees this as a great opportunity to highlight the youth and their services in their communities, which we feel is often overlooked; as well as to encourage and promote leadership skills in our youth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ This is also a good opportunity to develop leadership not just in a school setting, but out in the larger community as well. ➤ Katie Jo Ballard presented the Servant’s Heart Award newsletter that explained the selection criteria, submission process and award description. 	
<p>Update on the Statewide CMO for Foster Care Children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commissioner Reese explained that for the past 3 ½ years, they have been working on a collaboration with Department of Human Services and Community Health. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ All kids selected are on the Medicaid program, and 	

	<p>all of them have been getting their medical care through a fee-for-service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The kids have numerous placements and their records don't easily follow them. They may end up on numerous prescriptions that they may not need. ❖ Commissioner Reese also mentioned that this will help in reducing psychotropic drug use and resulting dependency issues. <p>➤ So in conjunction Commissioner Cook, Commissioner Horton, and Commissioner Reese explained how they have been working to establish better continuity for these kids and the decision was made to move them from fee-for-service into one managed care organization—Amerigroup</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The goal is to implement this beginning January 1, 2014. ❖ Commissioner Reese confirmed that “we have gotten all the needed approvals from the federal government to do what we intend to do with this plan.” <p>➤ The ultimate result is ideally to have better coordination of care for the kids.</p>	
<p>Unified Data Project</p>	<p>➤ Katie Jo Ballard began by acknowledging that some data system have already been connected</p> <p>➤ Currently making progress on setting up this query database, we are waiting on few more legal reviews</p> <p>➤ Commissioner Cagle made mention of how well received this is; how much electronic record sharing is so important.</p> <p>➤ Eric John made the point that there are always issues and concerns with confidentiality, which is why this system is so important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Where you can access certain needed information while restricting access to unnecessary sensitive information. <p>➤ The idea is that not one entity is holding everything, and the main purpose of this is to coordinate services for each individual child.</p>	
<p>Common Core Update</p>	<p>➤ Common Core is essentially the standards that we have in place in Georgia (in English/Language Arts and Mathematics) for what we believe students need to know at each individual grade level to prepare them for eventually graduating high school.</p> <p>➤ Historically all states have had their own standards; where each individual state developed their own standards as well as their assessment tools to go along with them. This created difficulties in comparing data across states.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Georgia was <u>very</u> involved in the development process and ultimate adoption of these standards in 2010 led by the National Governor’s Association. ➤ As of now 46 states have adopted these common core standards. ➤ We weren’t required to adopt common core in order to win Race to the Top dollars. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ We adopted the common core to substantiate that we are preparing kids for college and a career. The funds received from Race to the Top were utilized to train educators on the standards. ➤ To address public concerns about this, the Governor has taken a number of actions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ In May, Governor Deal issued an executive order making clear that it is the state that sets standards and it is local districts that make curriculum decisions. ❖ He also made it clear that we would <u>not</u> be collecting personal data on the students and transmitting that data to the federal government. ❖ In addition, in August Governor Deal also asked the State Board of Education for a formal review of the standards, comparing the common core standards with the standards that Georgia had prior to the adoption of the Common Core, in order to hear from teachers, parents and other educational experts around the state for more thorough recommendations for him to use. ❖ The State Board of Education has started this process. It will probably take them about a year to do this. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One hearing will be held for each congressional district for this process. 	
<p>Recommendations for Nominating Youth Writers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Lady Deal explained that Southern Journal has offered to do a special presentation on youth writers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ This is to encourage and support writing in youth by having them be published (good for resume). ❖ How do we pick them? Should it be regional? Any suggestions or ideas? ➤ Commissioner Niles suggested that we look at foster kids and see if we can’t tie them into this somehow. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ It would be a great empowerment tool for them; it could promote their skills. ❖ And Commissioner Niles noted that he has a point of contact in DHS that he would be willing to work 	

	<p>with to facilitate this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Finally First Lady Deal stressed that people should contact Ember Bishop if anyone has any further suggestions/ideas. 	
Agency Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Lady Deal opened the floor for agency announcements and updates. ➤ Tonya Boga began by noting that OCA has finished their training season for this year for guardian ad litem for the state. ➤ Tonya Boga also gave some preliminary numbers: child fatality has about 6 more weeks before the report is due, but the numbers so far are consistent with what she has been reporting here and consistent with what we have put out as a state for children who have had DFCS involvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The highest category is unfortunately still sleep related deaths, but the number is coming down from last time (from 200s to 100s). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The messaging campaign we have been promoting recently may have had an impact. ➤ Commissioner Fitzgerald followed with her agency updates, beginning with first announcing two major positive updates for this year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ First is related to immunization rates—with this Georgia has moved up from 17th to 46th! ❖ Second is that for the very first time the March of Dimes gave Georgia a passing rate on our infant prematurity rate ➤ Next, Commissioner Fitzgerald passed around a demonstration book based on the Good Night Moon sleep book for babies to promote Safe Sleep. ➤ DPH has partnered with the Marcus Institute to create a series of instructional films to tell the mothers how important it is to talk to their children, and to teach them techniques to do this properly. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The series is titled “Are you talkin’ to me?” ❖ The films have been made and DPH will get them to review this coming Monday, and are willing to share this other agencies. 	
Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Lady Deal concluded the meeting and thanked the Cabinet members for their attendance and participation. ➤ The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m. 	