

**Georgia Children's Cabinet
Executive Committee
Thursday, March 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, Frank Berry (DBHDD), David Cook (DCH), Clyde Reese (DHS), Brenda Fitzgerald (DPH), Katie Jo Ballard (GOCF), Corinna Magelund (Disability Services Ombudsman), Erin Hames (Governor's Office), Bobby Cagle (DECAL), Avery Niles (DJJ), Martha Ann Todd (GOSA)

Members Not Attending: Dr. John Barge (DOE), Tonya Boga (OCA), Eric John (CJCJ), Bonnie Holliday (SCSC)

Others Attending: Ember Bishop (First Lady's Office), Matt Pitts (GOCF), Barbra Temple (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 Mrs. Deal. Introductions and welcomes were made. ➤ Mrs. Deal asked the cabinet if they approved of the minutes from the January 17, 2013 meeting ➤ Mrs. Deal welcomed Martha Ann Todd, the new Executive Director of the Governor's Office of Student Achievement to the board. ➤ Mrs. Deal announced that Representative Dempsey and Senator Unterman will be invited to serve on the Full Cabinet. ➤ Mrs. Deal announced that the cabinet would request Bonnie Holliday to continue to serve on the Executive Cabinet. Bonnie has entered the new role as Director of Commissioner for Charter Schools. 	Approved
Monthly Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mrs. Deal informed the cabinet that in February, the Cabinet focused on Juvenile Justice and visited a number of Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) Centers across the State. ➤ Commissioner Niles led visits in Gainesville and Atlanta. The Cabinet was allowed to see both Regional Youth Detention Centers and Youth Development Centers. Newton County Juvenile Court, a Governor's Office for Children and Families grantee, also was visited by the Cabinet. ➤ Mrs. Deal thanked Commissioner Niles and his staff for accommodating the Cabinet members and giving us the opportunity to see the positive things the State's Juvenile Justice Centers are doing. ➤ Commissioner Niles thanked the Cabinet for their participation and for giving DJJ the ability to highlight some of the things they do. Commissioner Niles noted that it is not often that you get to see the good things that go on in these facilities, and he appreciates the commitment that Mrs. Deal displayed in interacting with the youth. ➤ Commissioner Niles stated that if we are going to change the 	

culture of what we do, it will be through education.

- Katie Jo Ballard noted that she was very impressed with both the classroom sizes and structure. The kids were very skilled and engaged in their classroom activities. Commissioner Niles informed the Cabinet that the classrooms performed better when they were broken up in smaller groups.
- The Cabinet also observed a Peer Court in Athens, Georgia in which young individuals who have pled guilty were allowed to receive punishment from their peers. This GOCF funded program allowed Law students from the University of Georgia advise the judge, prosecutor, and offenders through the process.
- Mrs. Deal and the Cabinet also had the opportunity to visit the City of Atlanta's Weed and Seed program. Through this program, young people were allowed to come in and work with a counselor and probation officer to improve their lives.
- In the month of March, the Cabinet supported the First Lady's Read Across Georgia initiative. Mrs. Deal thanked all of those that were able to attend the Read Across Georgia Proclamation signing from the steps of the Capitol.
- Mrs. Deal has visited 249 schools, 133 counties, and read in 119 counties so far. The First Lady has established a goal of reading in every county in Georgia by the end of next year.
- Commissioner Cagle discussed the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Georgia's Read Aloud Day which was held on March 19. This competition promoted classrooms to read as many books as they could in 13 hours. In 2012, there were 14,000 books read in 13 hours. This year 28,000 books were read in 13 hours. The First Lady and Commissioner Cagle will go read to the classroom that read the most books.
- Katie Jo Ballard noted that the press that the First Lady's message is receiving, on the importance of reading, has helped reach not only the kids in the schools, but families in the communities.
- Mrs. Deal noted that April is Prevention Awareness Month. On Monday March 25th, the Governor will proclaim the month of April Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month from the North Wing of the Capitol. Commissioner Reese will speak on behalf of the Department of Human Services and give up-to-date statistics on child abuse and neglect.
- The Children's Cabinet will also have a "Blue Day" on April 8th to raise awareness for Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention. Katie Jo Ballard noted that all agencies can take photos of their staff in blue and send them to Matt Pitts, and he will post it on the Children's Cabinet site and Facebook page.
- Mrs. Deal noted that there will be a pinwheel garden at Georgia State on April 16th. There will be thousands of pinwheels placed for child abuse victims.
- On April 15th, the Cabinet will have a child advocacy press

conference at Twin Cedars Child Advocacy Center in LaGrange. This is one of the largest child advocacy centers in the state who also serves Alabama. It will be a great opportunity to raise awareness.

- Commissioner Berry noted that in April, it would be great to visit one of the Department of Behavioral Health's Crisis Stabilization units. This visit is being planned.
- Mrs. Deal informed the Cabinet that May has been designated as Healthy Choices. This will focus on nutrition, relationships, abstinence, libraries, and the importance of reading.
- Katie Jo Ballard informed the Cabinet that at the last full cabinet meeting, Stephanie Blank said she may be able to pull together some professional athletes to help us with this month. All ideas around this will be welcomed.
- Commissioner Cagle noted that they will have an event for nutrition and wellness that DECAL would love to work with Mrs. Deal on to promote.
- Mrs. Deal noted that June is "Fitness Month." Commissioner Fitzgerald noted that she would love to do something to show the good work that all of the parks are doing. Also, something with the SHAPE mobile and having Mrs. Deal attend.
- Erin Hames mentioned that there will be a competition set up with schools. They will ultimately reward a new gym for 3 schools. She noted the Governor's support for fitness and how this would be a great opportunity for the Cabinet to rally around the initiative. Commissioner Fitzgerald added that the Body by Jake organization has volunteered to put an entire gym up for the winning school. Erin Hames went on to say that the gyms that are awarded to the winners are very impressive. The fitness equipment will be geared towards young children.
- Commissioner Fitzgerald stated that they will look towards the schools that have the lowest scores on the SHAPE fitness tool. Some schools scored very low on the aerobic capacity portion which is one of the indicators of overall fitness.
- Commissioner Berry mentioned the KaBoom organization, which builds outdoor playgrounds for kids. He noted that if we tried to highlight one of their playgrounds, the recognition could encourage the company to consider a continuation of investment in Georgia. These playgrounds are full of kids every day after school. If we highlight KaBoom and its partners, it will show our support of fitness and how much the children value their company.
- Mrs. Deal noted that these are the areas we would like to spotlight because they are improving outcomes for our state's children. Private partnerships are a big part of getting our state moving in the right direction.

<p>Unified Data System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commissioner Reese distributed a timeline to the Cabinet of where the Unified Data System was at this point (attached). This system between the Department of Education and Department of Family and Children Services, will be for children in grades K-12. This will enable parents and teachers to track their children’s progress. Test scores, weaknesses, strengths, etc. will be tracked and shared. The Department of Human Services is essentially the parents for over 8,000 children in the state. ➤ This information will assist to prevent the disruption of the child’s education in the event that they transfer schools, by preventing a delay in their paperwork. This electronic data system will have instant access. Commissioner Reese noted that this information will be good to extend to the Juvenile Court Judges also. ➤ Commissioner Reese informed the Cabinet that this model with DOE is a good start. As a Cabinet, we can build off of this and work to break down barriers in the correspondence of our agencies’ information. ➤ Commissioner Reese informed the Cabinet that the majority of foster children are there because of abuse and poverty. Lack of education, mental health, and drug abuse are other factors that lead to the removal of kids from their homes. ➤ Mrs. Deal noted that if children are kept in school and not delayed when they move, there is a greater likelihood that they will be successful. ➤ Commissioner Niles informed the Cabinet that they have reached an agreement with the school system. When the kids leave a DJJ facility and return to school, they will not be behind the other children. ➤ Commissioner Cook noted the progress of the coordination of care with the managed care effort. They are looking for a single care organization by Jan 1st. Also, by Jan 1st, DCH is hoping to launch the health information exchange. This is where you can get access to the health care information through a secure network. This links the information sharing, and it could potentially be beneficial to the unified data system. ➤ Commissioner Reese noted that he and Commissioner Cook believe that when kids come into the state system and they have different doctors, many do not have their patient’s previous information. The continuity of medical care is very important, and DFCS and DHS have worked to get all the children in a managed care network. They believe this will help the doctor carefully select which medical decisions they make. ➤ Commissioner Berry added that DBHDD is supporting the other agencies, and is making sure that all children with mental health disorders get involved. He added that all the 	
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	<p>agencies involved have done a great job supporting them in the process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commissioner Niles informed the cabinet that over half of DJJ’s populations (26,000 youth) were on some kind of psychotropic meds, which are substance abuse drugs. Commissioner Berry added that historically about 90% of the DJJ system has either used or abused some kind of substance. ➤ Commissioner Cook noted that they are seeing good results on the higher protocols that are in place for kids to be able to access psychotropic medicines. ➤ Commissioner Reese noted that another partnership between DHS and DCH is the hire of a medical director. This person’s job is to look into the psychotropic drug problem in the foster care system. Commissioner Cook agreed to let DHS have access to their medical records, and the medical director is able to identify improper administration of psychotropic drugs in children. ➤ Commissioner Fitzgerald noted that DOE has allowed them to put 30 minutes of exercise in all schools next year. She would love to have someone evaluate if this has any impact on attention deficit disorder (ADHD). ➤ Commissioner Berry noted that on the behavioral health side, you have multiple agencies working with their children. This coordination of care, when these kids go from one agency to another agency to another, needs a system for these children to be tracked and cared for correctly. These conversations have been very helpful. Down the road, there will have to be a way to share information to help the kids to gain their independence, and get back to their families. 	
Immunization Cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Katie Jo Ballard informed the Cabinet that so far we have distributed 110,000 cards, and have had another 20,000 more requested. 	
Safe Sleep Posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Katie Jo informed the Cabinet that we have had a number of Domestic Violence shelters request posters. We have also been requested to put the posters in all colleges across the state. 	
Agency Announcements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Cabinet thanked Barbra Temple for volunteering and helping the Cabinet with the coordination of their projects. ➤ Commissioner Cagle informed the Cabinet that they are working with providers to train them to recognize signs of autism at a young age. ➤ Ember Bishop thanked the Cabinet and noted how thankful she and Matt were to their staff. They have done a great job working with us and supporting the coordination of the Cabinet’s projects. 	
Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am 	

