

**Georgia Children’s Cabinet
Executive Meeting
Thursday, July 17th, 2014 - 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, Richard Dunn (GOCF), Commissioner Frank Berry (DBHDD), Director Ashley Willcott (OCA), Commissioner Brenda Fitzgerald (DPH), Corinna Magelund (Disability Services Ombudsman), Commissioner Avery Niles (DJJ), Commissioner Amy Jacobs (DECAL), Bobby Cagle (DFCS), Bonnie Holliday (SCSC), Eric John (CJ CJ)

Members Not in Attendance: Commissioner Clyde Reese (DCH), Commissioner Keith Horton (DHS), Martha Ann Todd (GOSA), Erin Hames (Governor’s Office)

Others Attending: Ember Bishop (First Lady’s Office), Hayley Howell (GOCF), Andy Sunderland (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 July 17, 2014 meeting of the Executive Children’s Cabinet to order at 8:00AM. ➤ Greetings were made and First Lady Sandra Deal introduced the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget’s Health & Human Services Division Director Richard Dunn in his new position as the interim executive director of the Governor’s Office for Children and Families, and Commissioner Amy Jacobs in her new role as commissioner of the Department of Early Care and Learning. ➤ Mrs. Deal opened the floor for an approval vote of the March 20th, 2014 Executive Cabinet meeting minutes. 	Approved
Office of the Child Advocate Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Office of the Child Advocate Director Ashley Willcott presented data on child drowning deaths in Georgia. From May 1st to the week of July 7th, 10 deaths reported. None of the drowning deaths were in metro Atlanta. 5 were in private pools. 4 were in private ponds. 1 was in a community pool. In all cases, lack of supervision was to blame, although all had designated supervisors. All were preventable. Supervisors were not intoxicated. 	

<p>Initiatives Update: SPLASH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Governor’s Office for Children and Families Government Liaison Hayley Howell updated the board about the SPLASH posters specifically that GOCF had sent out over 1,300 posters to a variety of participants, including DECAL, DNR, Georgia Power, DJJ, and others. She also updated the board about the SPLASH water safety event that took place on June 16th. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ GOCF Interim Executive Director Richard Dunn asked if there was a sense of what percent of kids are able to swim by age 6. Ms. Howell indicated that she did not know but would attempt to find out. ➤ Ms. Willcott indicated that these posters were largely going out to places where drowning deaths did not occur, and that this is perhaps a reflection of the efficacy of the SPLASH initiative. ➤ GOCF Legislative Fellow Andy Sunderland reiterated Ms. Howell’s points, and indicated that a majority of the posters were sent to pool management companies. ➤ Mrs. Deal brought up an experience with Georgia Power where children swimming in a lake were wearing arm floatation devices that attach to the chest so they’re unable to slip off (2-in-1 swim trainers), and that the board should look into this. ➤ Department of Health Commissioner Brenda Fitzgerald brought up the possibility of getting convenience stores like Wal-Mart to participate in water safety campaigns by selling floatation devices at the front of the store. ➤ Department of Early Care and Learning Commissioner Amy Jacobs indicated that Target sells them at the front of the store. ➤ Division of Family and Children Services Executive Director Bobby Cagle suggested the board support a dollar-off policy for water floatation devices at these stores. ➤ Department of Juvenile Justice Commissioner Avery Niles said that almost every county has a “Safe Kids Coalition” which supports other safety campaigns, such as bicycle/helmet safety, and that perhaps they need support and encouragement to make water safety a priority for them as well. These “Safe Kids Coalitions” receive state funding to do this, so incorporating water safety would be possible. ➤ Mr. Dunn said that day care centers should play a role in this, as well. 	
<p>Initiative Update: Immunization Cards & Site Visits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ms. Howell updated the board on the GOCF immunization site visits to hospitals around the metro-Atlanta area, including five visits that follow the board meeting. ➤ Mrs. Deal highlighted the importance of the immunization cards, especially the detachable cards which allows parents to keep up with their children’s immunizations. The First Lady 	

	<p>also brought up the recent upswing of preventable diseases spreading by the lack of immunization, specifically whooping cough, polio, and hepatitis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commissioner Fitzgerald indicated the statistical numbers of children who suffer from a lack of immunization with numbers off the top of her head, but said that she would retrieve the formal numbers. ➤ State Charter Schools Commission Executive Director Bonnie Holliday brought up the recent push to ramp up immunization records at schools, including universities. ➤ Ms. Howell updated the board on the number of cards that were sent out over the course of this year, 159,145, and total 272,500 overall. 	
<p>Initiative Update: Dog Attack Safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Special Assistant to the First Lady Ember Bishop updated the board on dog attacks of children, which she was wondering if this was something the board would want to push and incorporate into their missions. The issue was initially brought to their attention via an internal Emory University study. ➤ Ms. Willcott updated the board on dog attacks of children that resulted in death. From 2009-2012, four children died from dog attacks in Georgia. ➤ Ms. Bishop indicated that GA has a higher-than-average rate of dog bites than the country as a whole. Pit bulls accounted for the highest number of these bites. ➤ Ms. Willcott indicated reservations about targeting a specific breed of a dog, with concurrence from the board. A consensus was reached to expand the initiative to include all dogs rather than single-out pit bulls or other specific breeds. ➤ Ms. Bishop indicated that the board would receive negative pushback if they specifically targeted pit bulls. ➤ Mrs. Deal highlighted that a lot of dog attack prevention is simple parental involvement and common sense practices, similar to the water safety campaign. Supervision is a vital part of prevention. ➤ Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Commissioner Frank Berry suggested incorporating all board safety campaigns into a single flyer for new parents, including hot cars, water safety, dog safety, and immunization. A broad discussion about the length to which the board should go to influence parents while attempting to educate them took place, with a consensus that an all-encompassing flyer would be good, directing attention to a website. ➤ Governor’s Office of Disability Services Ombudsman Corinna Magelund suggested that the board seek out pet-owner associations for literature about dog safety with children. 	

	<p>Sandra Deal encouraged the board to reach out to such groups. Sandra Deal also suggested that such literature should be provided to veterinarian offices.</p>	
<p>Monthly Highlights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ms. Bishop highlighted the importance of magazine visibility for board members, and Sandra Deal suggested that this could be a long-term way to get attention for board issues. ➤ Commissioner Niles discussed his article in the Southern Journal Magazine, which brought attention to issues that the board deals with and brought the community into the fold. ➤ Ms. Bishop brought up the importance of including community members in such articles, as it helped young people develop certain skills, such as interviewing, and contributing their works for potential publication, all while bringing attention to the work of the board. ➤ Commissioner Fitzgerald updated the board on youth health initiatives. First Lady Deal highlighted the fact that the Cabinet schedule for September reflects a focus on the “Healthy Choices” initiative. Commissioner Fitzgerald said that their physical fitness initiatives are going well, and that they wanted to focus on the nutrition aspects of youth health. Commissioner Fitzgerald said that there are plans to visit school gardens around the state. ➤ Ms. Bishop brought up the fact that GA’s immunization awareness month coincides with the national campaign, as well, which is helpful. ➤ Commissioner Jacobs updated the board on DECAL works, including a new pre-K book that was aided by the First Lady, as well Pre-K Week on October 6-10. The commissioner highlighted the importance of reading to a pre-K class and said that anybody who wanted to should contact her. ➤ Ms. Bishop encouraged board members to invite the First Lady to their events, but to give adequate notice. ➤ Mrs. Deal highlighted the importance of incorporating young mothers who are leaders of their communities, as they can often touch their own community in ways that the board cannot. ➤ Mrs. Deal indicated that the military appreciation events in November had not been solidified, but encouraged board members with ideas to bring them forward. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Mrs. Deal highlighted the importance of supporting Georgia’s veterans. 	
<p>Individual Updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mrs. Deal began a conversation about the state charitable contribution plan. ➤ A broad conversation about the importance of this program, as well as the office and societal benefits. Commissioner Berry 	

	<p>contributed lessons from his experience as the previous head of the program, including interoffice competitions and charity events as a means of bolstering participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Commissioner Niles said that there is a tentative event on August 19th with an invitation of the First Lady and cabinet. ➤ Director Cagle thanked the First Lady and Governor for the addition of 100 new social workers for DFCS, which will play a huge role in bringing the case loads to a manageable level. ➤ Mr. Dunn suggested that DFCS make a bigger deal about the role that social workers play, to encourage and inspire them in their new position. Sandra Deal agreed, and suggested that the idea of “changing lives” play a central role in inspiring new social workers to reduce turn-over rate. ➤ Ms. Bishop suggested that the First Lady come to meet new social workers to thank them for their work. Bobby Cagle encouraged this suggestion. ➤ Commissioner Berry highlighted that there are career opportunities for social workers, and that this isn’t just a job, but is a public service. ➤ Mrs. Deal and Ember Bishop encouraged board members to invite the First Lady to events. ➤ Council of Juvenile Court Judges Executive Director Eric John updated the board on his work and thanked the Governor for signing the Interstate Compact Bill in his organization’s presence. ➤ Mr. Dunn updated the board on the current state of GOCF, which is still in business, and funding for board initiatives, which will come from the children’s trust fund. ➤ Commissioner Berry and the board thanked Richard Dunn for the great work that OPB does to support their departments and the board. 	
<p>Closing Remarks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mrs. Deal thanked the Executive Board for their attendance and participation. 	
<p>Adjourn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The First Lady thanked everyone for coming and called the Executive Cabinet meeting adjourned at 9:30AM. 	