

**Georgia Children’s Cabinet
Executive Meeting
Thursday, September 18, 2014 Minutes
Executive Cabinet: 8:00 AM to 8:30 AM
The Governor’s Mansion, 391 W. Paces Ferry Road, Atlanta, GA**

Attendees: First Lady Sandra Deal, Commissioner Frank Berry (DBHDD), Dr. Ashley Willcott (OCA), Commissioner Brenda Fitzgerald (DPH), Commissioner Keith Horton (DHS), Corinna Magelund (Disability Services Ombudsman), Commissioner Avery Niles (DJJ), Commissioner Clyde Reese (DCH), Bonnie Holliday (State Charter School Commission), Erin Hames (Governor’s Office), Rick Dunn (GOCF), Martha Ann Todd (GOSA), Bobby Cagle (DFCS), Commissioner Amy Jacobs (DECAL), Eric John (CJCJ)

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

Others Attending: Ember Bishop (First Lady’s Office), Hayley Howell (GOCF), Andy Sunderland (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 January 16th, 2014 Executive Cabinet meeting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The minutes were approved. 	Approved
Discussion of Full Cabinet Meeting Agenda & Member Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Lady Deal stated that the agenda was to go over the Full Cabinet meeting agenda and contribute the status of work and projects. ➤ First Lady Deal encouraged Executive members to share what they have been doing since their last meeting. ➤ Department of Public Health Commissioner Brenda Fitzgerald discussed language skills and abilities of Georgia’s youth, including videos and other training materials to improve communication between parents and children that are offered via local WIC Clinics. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Commissioner Fitzgerald continued in discussing the 5 Messages about the importance of communication when it comes to health and nutrition, including talking with your child first thing in the day and sharing back-and-forth dialogue from an early age. ❖ First Lady Sandra Deal suggested that 	

maternity wards of hospitals offer new mothers material on improving their child's literacy development, similar to how the Cabinet encourages immunization in the same way.

- Dr. Ashley Willcott of the Office for the Child Advocate said that her office is about to receive final funding for their program to offer phones to individuals aging out of the foster care system, thanks to Verizon's sponsorship. The program will begin with 50 phones on October 1st of this year. The goal is to help the individuals from falling into homelessness, jail, or other desperate situations. The program will be on a six-month trial period. If the trial proves successful, then more funding will be offered to expand the program.
- Department of Juvenile Justice Commissioner Avery Niles stated that beginning October 1st of this year the Department of Juvenile Justice will be able to track the progress and status of prior juvenile offenders back into the community and school system. October also will see the beginning of the first Citizen's Academy by the Department of Juvenile Justice, which encourages community members to participate in the vital role that juvenile justice programs play in the community.
 - ❖ Commissioner Niles also updated the Cabinet on the work his department is doing regarding a letter-writing campaign for youths to write to nursing homes. The total number of cards so far is around 200.
 - ❖ Probation Officers are having an increased presence in the school system itself, which has contributed to almost \$10,000 in deferred savings.
- Department of Early Care and Learning Commissioner Amy Jacobs stated that her department recently awarded Early Education Empowerment Centers, which are four zones across the state in an attempt to increase access and quality of early education programs in communities.
- The Deputy Chief of Staff for the Governor's Office Erin Hames discussed the progress that the Division of Family and Children Services is making toward its reform. Ms. Hames stated that while the progress is difficult, the goal of DFCS is to be the country and world's greatest agency for child welfare.
- Division of Family and Children Services Director Bobby Cagle updated the Cabinet further on the

	<p>progress of his department, including weekly meetings to reflect on their progress. Their “2013 Child Death Report” was recently released, which marked a transformative event for DFCS, as the process was more transparent than it had ever been in the past. Mr. Cagle highlighted the cooperation with other agencies such as the Department of Public Health in their continued success.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Erin Hames mentioned that the media only reports on the bad news and rarely discusses the success stories and efforts for reform that DFCS is making. ➤ Department of Community Health Commissioner Clyde Reese stated that his department is working very closely with Director Bobby Cagle and DFCS case workers to see successful reforms take place. ➤ State Charter School Commission Executive Director Bonnie Holliday updated the Board on four new state charter schools across Georgia. Three additional schools are pending action this month. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Erin Hames noted how public opinion about charter schools has positively shifted dramatically over the years. ➤ Council of Juvenile Court Judges Executive Director Eric John wanted to bring attention to the passing of Truett Cathy, highlighting the good work he did in Georgia. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Erin Hames shared the same sentiment. ➤ Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Commissioner Frank Berry shared his experience with a Cobb County Accountability Court, including how Governor Nathan Deal addressed over 1,000 attendees to the event. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Eric John said that this particular Accountability Court is one of the largest in the nation. ➤ Department of Human Services Commissioner Keith Horton expressed his support for Director Cagle and the efforts of DFCS. 	
<p>Adjourn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Executive Cabinet was moved downstairs to the Governor’s Mansion Ballroom for the Full Cabinet Meeting ➤ The Executive Cabinet meeting concluded at 8:35 AM 	