

The mission of the Georgia Head Start Association is to provide education, leadership and advocacy that supports Head Start programs' efforts in delivering high quality comprehensive services to Georgia's children, families and communities.



GEORGIA HEAD START ASSOCIATION

Annual Report

May 1, 2013-
April 30, 2014



Georgia Head Start Association, Inc.

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The Georgia Head Start Association, (GHSA), is a not-for-profit 501 (c) 3 organization whose mission is to provide education, leadership and advocacy that supports Head Start programs' efforts in delivering high quality comprehensive services to Georgia's children, families and communities. The Association's vision is to be a positive voice, a powerful advocate and promoter of quality programs for children, families and communities in Georgia as they prepare for life-long success.

Georgia Head Start and Early Head Start programs provide comprehensive early childhood and family development services to children from birth to five-years-old, pregnant women and families. Our programs have a long tradition of delivering comprehensive and high quality services designed to foster healthy development for low-income children and their families. Head Start agencies provide a range of individualized services in the areas of education and early childhood development; medical, dental, and mental health; nutrition; parent involvement and family support. In addition, the entire range of Head Start services is responsive and appropriate to each child's and family's developmental, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage and experience.

All Head Start and Early Head Start programs must adhere to federal Program Performance Standards. These standards, which are the most rigorous and comprehensive early childhood program standards in the country, define the services that programs are to provide to the children and families they serve and are designed to ensure that the Head Start goals and objectives are implemented successfully and that all agencies maintain the highest possible quality in the provision of Head Start services.

GHSA individual membership for the 2013-2014 program year totaled 245 down from last year's count of 294 representing an decrease in membership of 49 members. All thirty-one Head Start/Early Head Start agencies are represented this year. The GHSA Board is comprised of these agencies which includes 31 Head Start Directors, 7 parent representatives, 25 staff, and 19 friend Representatives. Georgia Head Start child enrollment totals approximately 23,618 representing 21,026 Head Start children and 2,592 Early Head Start children.

Key Initiatives for 2013-2014

Professional Development-

The Georgia Head Start Association's Annual Spring Training Conference– 2013 “Pathways” Conference, "Ready Get Set Go"- Pathways to School Readiness" was held at Epworth By The Sea in St. Simons, GA on May 15-17, 2013 and was attended by approximately 406 participants. The conference opening session included remarks by Association officers and Head Start staff. Kimberly Johnson, Children’s Author gave the Opening Keynote address on the topic, How To Stay DRIVEN– Charting a Bolder Course. Nita Thompson, Ex. Director of the Mississippi Head Start Association gave the Closing Keynote address. A total of 44 presenters conducted workshops during the Conference and 56 workshops and two Plenary sessions highlighted the Conference. During the Conference 27 of 31 Head Start Programs were represented. Commissioner Bobby Cagle of DECAL was present and provided updates from the Dept. of Early Care and Learning– DECAL.

The Annual Fall Leadership conference of the Association was held in Decatur, GA, October 30, 2013– November 1, 2013 at the Courtyard by Marriott located at 130 Clairemont Avenue, Decatur, GA. The theme for the Conference was “Supporting Healthy Living Through Component Integration”. The Conference was attended by 108 participants representing 22 out of 31 Head Start programs. A Pre-Conference Forum was held on Wednesday, October 30, 2013. The Forum was sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families and the Foundation Centers of Atlanta. A total of 17 presenters conducted a total of 12 workshops and five Plenary sessions. DeKalb County School Superintendent, Michael Thurman gave the Conference Opening Keynote Address. DeKalb County Commissioner, Larry Johnson gave the Closing Keynote address. Commissioner Bobby Cagle of DECAL was present and provided updates from the Dept. of Early Care and Learning– DECAL. Carlis Williams of the Region IV Office of Head Start was also present and participated in the Pre-Conference Forum and Opening session. Governor Nathan Deal issued A Proclamation to the Association in honor of Head Start Awareness Month. The DeKalb County Commissioners also issued a Proclamation. Both Proclamations were read during the Opening session of the Conference. A display of “Empty Seats” was showcased during the Conference. The “Empty Seats” were a demonstration of the number of children that lost Head Start Services during Sequestration budget cuts to Head Start representing a 5% cut in Head Start federal funding.

Scholarships

The Association awarded two scholarships in observance of the Margo Sommors Scholarship program. Lakia Smith of the Southwest Georgia Community Action Council was the recipient of the Parent Scholarship and received an award of \$1,500.00 to pursue her education at Valdosta State University. Makayla Ann Angel of the Ninth District Opportunity, Inc. was the recipient of the Student Scholarship and received an award of \$1,500.00 to pursue her education at Brenau University.

Signed Professional Development Plan

The GHSA Professional Development Committee has spearheaded a Statewide Professional Development Plan in collaboration with the Region IV Office of Head Start and the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. The Plan allows teaching staff credential requirements to be reviewed collaboratively and on a statewide Head Start level. The plan aims to ensure more accurate and succinct reporting statewide, regionally and nationally. The plan has been signed by Nichelle Boyd-Ernst of the Region IV Office of Head Start, Belva Weathersby, former President of the Georgia Head Start Association, Janice Haker, Head Start State Collaboration Director, and Sally Campbell, Chair of the Professional Development Committee for the Georgia Head Start Association.

State Head Start Collaboration Office - Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning

Janice M. Haker, State Head Start Collaboration Director, completed Georgia Head Start Needs Assessment for 2013-2014— a summary of the priority areas completed by Head Start, Early Head Start and Migrant Seasonal grantees in Georgia. The purpose of the Needs Assessment is to facilitate a strategic plan for Head Start in Georgia that will best serve and support the interests of Head Start. The shared goal is to promote grantee's success in serving children and families. Priority areas in the Needs Assessment includes: (1) Health care (2) Homelessness; (3) Welfare/child welfare; (4) child care; (5) Family literacy; (6) Services for children with Disabilities; (7) Community Services; (8a) Education (school readiness, Head Start/Pre-K Partnerships; (8b) Transition and alignment with Pre-K; (9) Professional Development; and (10) Early Childhood Systems Development. The Needs Assessment indicates a total of 31 Head Start grantees in Georgia (representing 11 HS programs, 3 EHS, 21 both HS/EHS, 1 migrant). There are no American Indian/Alaskan Native HS programs in Georgia. The reports references 28,100 children served in Georgia Head Start programs with 20% of these children being served in the 13 Metro Atlanta counties. Thirty One out of 31 grantees responded to the Needs Assessment survey representing 100% responding.

Child Advocacy Fund Campaign

Bert Thomas serves under the Issues and Advocacy Committee as Champion for the Child Advocacy Fund. The Child Advocacy Fund specifically supports GHSA's federal legislative activities to improve Head Start services for Georgia's Children and Families. As of April 30, 2014, GHSA has received \$3,149.50 from Georgia Head Start/Early Head Start agencies and RIV Head Start Association has received a total of \$889.25 contributed towards Child Advocacy this year for at total of \$4,038.75. This amount represents a decrease of \$1,361.44 from last year but there is still time for Agencies to contribute before the end of GHSA's 2013 fiscal year.

Partnerships

GHSA continues to seize opportunities to work with other organizations serving children and families and is appreciative of strong working relationships with a number of entities. There are far too many collaborative partnerships to name. GHSA is appreciative of the support provided by the following organizations and looks forward for continued opportunities to work together in the future.

Region IV Office of Head Start (OHS): GHSA continues to work cooperatively with Region IV OHS staff on a routine basis. GHSA benefits from the positive working relationship that results in positive outcomes for Georgia's children and families. OHS staff is responsive to grantee needs and GHSA grantees are responsive to requests for information from the OHS Regional Office. GHSA is invited periodically by ACF to participate in workgroups of an advisory capacity. Nichelle Boyd-Ernst replaced Judith Dean as the Georgia program contact. Nichelle attends GHSA Board meetings and provides regular updates from the Office of Head Start in Atlanta.

ICF International: ICF International, Inc., under contract with the Office of Head Start, has been most helpful to GHSA and individual grantees in Georgia this year. ICF has been working with Georgia Head Start grantees primarily through the State ECE T/TA network. Allison Setterlind, Manager with Joquetta Taylor and Norma Amadeo-Hood has visited a number of grantees to discuss various issues, CLASS and School Readiness being major ones. ICF has worked with GHSA and the RO to identify priority areas and ensure that Georgia grantees have received needed technical assistance relating to early childhood Issues and assist with GHSA Annual Training Conferences.

Region IV Head Start Association (RIVHSA): GHSA actively participates with the RIV Head Start Association. GHSA serves on the RIVHSA Board and supports RIVHSA conferences and training events. Myra Ingram, Executive Officers attends GHSA Board meetings and provides Region IV updates.

State Head Start Collaboration Office/Bright from the Start (Janice Haker, Director). Ms. Haker participates with GHSA in all activities. The Collaboration office provides \$15,000.00 in significant support for conferences and training events hosted by GHSA this year. This support enables the Association to plan quality events. The Collaboration Director has worked closely with GHSA in facilitating strategic planning sessions and activities throughout the year. Georgia Head Start and the State Collaboration Director have worked diligently in partnership with Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning to bring the benefits of blended classrooms to Head Start. GHSA received \$4,300.00 in funding from the Collaboration office to assist with improving Head Start and Early Head Start work in the Homelessness and Welfare Priority areas for 2013. The State Collaborative Office also participated in the alignment of all Head Start programs in Georgia with Pre-K standards, the state's K-12 standards, and the Head Start program performance standards. This ensures that the level of care and education are optimally implemented so that each child will have the best chance for success. DECAL received over \$52M in federal dollars for the Race To The Top Early Childhood Initiative and is submitting a funding proposal to secure federal funds for Early Head Start expansion. Approximately \$500 in federal funds is available for the expansion of Early Head Start.

State Early Education Advisory Committee

GHSA continues to participate on the State Early Education Advisory committee Chaired by Bobby Cagle, Commissioner of Georgia Bright From the Start. Participants include numerous DHR staff, DOE, GHSA and other early learning groups in the states.

Other Partners

GHSA participates as a member of the **Strengthening Families Georgia (SFG)** taskforce along with 50 other national, state, local and public/private organizations dedicated to embedding five research-based Protective Factors into services and supports for children and families. Research supports that when these Protective Factors are well-established in a family, the likelihood of child abuse and neglect diminishes. The Factors help build family strengths and an environment that promotes positive child and youth development.

SFG is funded by the Governor's Office for Children and Families (GOFC) through the Federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention Grant Program. The Georgia Association on Young Children (GAYC) administers SFG and chairs partnership meetings.

Prevent Blindness Georgia (PBGA) is the state affiliate of Prevent Blindness America (PBA), the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization. In 2009, PBA was chosen to lead a national project for the Maternal and Child Health Bureau to promote and ensure a continuum of eye care for young children within the healthcare delivery system. PBA was selected because of its experience in children's vision and in developing networks and coalitions that would promote this mission and develop a model that can be used on a national level for young children's vision. GHSA provided a Head Start Collaboration Letter to support PBGA in their efforts to secure funding from the Center for Disease Control to Build Capacity for Children's Vision Programming in State Public Health Departments.

Georgia Community Action Association– The GCAA’s mission is to serve as the professional organization for the development and implementation of strategies to provide GCAA members the tools to be effective community action agencies in solving the problems of poverty within the State of Georgia. GHSA is a program partner and collaborator with The GCAA.

Georgia’s Vision for Public Education– Georgia Head Start is participating in the Vision Summit a project sponsored by the Georgia School Boards Association and the Georgia School Superintendents Association. The Project announced the start of its new campaign, Spark! Igniting Education in Georgia. A key part of the Spark! Campaign aims to ignite a spark in Georgia public school students by highlighting positive stories and how students can capitalize on them as the base for a successful future. The Georgia Vision Project has focused on strengthening Georgia’s education system for the last four years and hope to engage the community and parents in sparking dialogue. The Spark! Project will generate enthusiasm and educate Georgia communities about the public school system’s academic achievements. The Project wants to see students, parents, educators and community leaders join together to make a difference. The Project also includes an early learning component for children ages 0-8 including Head Start. The Head Start State Collaboration Director and the Executive Officer of GHSA has been participating on the Steering Committee.

National Head Start Association-

The Georgia Head Start Association has restored its affiliation with the National Head Start Association effective November 2013. GHSA’s member ID with NHSA is 12237.

Financial

The last final audit was for the period ending September 30, 2013 and was conducted by Martin, Harps, Syphoe & Co., Certified Public Accountants. The Statement of Financial Position reflected total liabilities and net assets for the Association of \$554,968.00, a decrease of \$3,321.00 from last year's figure of \$558,289.00. The overall audit was good. The auditors recommended that GHSA adopt three policies: 1.Conflict of Interest, 2.Whistle Blower, 3. Document Retention and the Association has adopted all three.

Highlights

Strong Start for America’s Children Act– The Act is legislation to support a new federally funded, state-sponsored pre-kindergarten funding stream aimed at sustaining, universal, voluntary access to low and middle-income four year olds. Eligible local entities– including Head Start programs will apply to States to access these sub-grants. Local entities must provide detailed plans as to how they will implement the high-quality pre-K system. The act stands to eliminate the traditional Head Start programs for 4 year olds while sustaining the existence of Early Head Start for the 0 to age 3 population.

GHSA Elections took place in 2013 as follows: Officers are as follows.

Elaine K. Brown, President

Blanche Lamb, First Vice President

Sally Campbell, Second Vice President

Kay Laws, Treasurer

Kathleen Bennett, Assistant Treasurer

Beth Padgett, Secretary

Tarsha Hall, Assistant Secretary

Terrell Haliburton, Historian

Lillian Barrs, Assistant Historian

Larry Gidron, Sr. Parliamentarian

Gwen Wright, Assistant Parliamentarian

Category E Association Sponsored Friends, Shirley Boyce

Region IV Director Representatives, Elaine K. Brown and Ernestine Smith

Region IV Staff Representatives, Gwen Wright and Tevin Roberts

Region IV Friend Representatives, Shirley Boyce and Larry Gidron

Region IV Parent Representative, vacant

Juanita Yancey, Executive Officer

Other High Lights-

Oral Health Project-

Carol Smith was assigned to the State of Georgia as the State's Oral Health Project Director as the result of a partnership between The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Office of Head Start (OHS) to operate the National Center on Health (NCH). The Oral Health Program is the oral health component of NCH and includes the dental home initiative and will continue to assist Head Start grantees in finding dental homes for Early Head Start and Head Start children and families. GHSA has been asked to offer a letter of support for the Oral Health Project in securing an oral health grant from the CDC. The Dept of Health has received the funding and is in the process of selecting Georgia Head Start programs for participation in the Project.

Sequestration and Government Shutdown-

President Obama issued a sequestration order on March 1, 2013. As a result, Head Start and Early Head Start grantee funding were reduced by approximately 5 percent. Head Start grantees were advised by the Office of Head Start (OHS) through ACF-PI-HS-13-01 to begin planning how they will alter their programs to operate at the reduced levels. Sequestration budgets cuts have been restored to Head Start and \$500M in federal funding is now available for the expansion of Early Childhood Partnerships. The Government Shutdown in October 2013 impacted Head Start programs in North Georgia and other States across the country. As a result the Arnold Foundation provided \$10M in funding to assist programs that were impacted.

Atlanta Hawks Basketball-

The Georgia Head Start Association and the Atlanta Hawks partnered in a fundraising effort for the Association. Tickets purchased to the Hawks season opening game Friday, November 1, 2013 through the Georgia Head Start Association were discounted and each ticket sold resulted in \$5.00 in proceeds for the Association. Fifteen tickets were sold through the Association resulting in proceeds of \$75.00 for the Association. These funds were received by the Association.

Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB)

October 2013, GHSA received approximately 1800 children's book from GPB as a result of its annual fundraising and membership drive. Books were distributed on a first come first serve basis. Six Head Start grantees in Georgia received books as of April 2014. These were The Ninth District Opportunity, Tallatoona CAP, Concerted Services, Southwest Georgia Community Actions Council, McInTosh Trail, ECDC, Burke County BOE. The Association members and the Executive Officer volunteered to help raise funds for GPB radio. The Partnership For Community Action Head Start staff volunteered to raise funds for GPB TV.

