

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, 2014-
April 30, 2015



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 2014-2015 program year totaled 195 down from last year's count of 245 representing a decrease in membership of 50 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, 10 parent representatives, 26 staff, and 21 friend Representatives. Georgia Head Start child enrollment totals approximately 24,277 representing 21,490 Head Start children and 2,787 Early Head Start children.

Key Initiatives for 2014-2015

Professional Development-

The Georgia Head Start Association's 2014 Annual Spring Training Conference was held at Epworth By The Sea in St. Simons, GA on May 14-16, 2014 and was attended by approximately 445 participants. The Conference Theme was "The Challenge of Change: Right Here! Right Now! Nefertiti Bruce of the Devereux Center for Resilient Children gave the keynote address during the Opening Session. Ronnie Pepper of Hendersonville, N.C. gave the keynote address during the Closing Session. A total of 39 presenters conducted workshops during the Conference with 56 workshops conducted and four Plenary sessions including "Empowering the Head Start Homeless Population" conducted by Columbus Copeland.

The 2014 Annual Fall Leadership Conference was held in Atlanta, GA, November 19-21, 2014 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Atlanta– Buckhead Hotel. The Conference Theme was "Embracing Change Now and For The Future. The Conference was attended by 131 participants. A total of 16 presenters conducted a total of 20 workshops and two Plenary sessions. Carlis Williams, Southeast Regional Administrator for Region IV Administration for Children and Families was present and gave opening remarks. A Pre-Conference Forum highlighting Group Distance Learning for Head Start Parents and Staff was held on Wednesday, November 19th from 9:45-10:45 am. and was conducted by Dr. Alan Goodwin of Tele-Connect in partnership with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. A panel of Head Start leaders, staff, and consultants was formed and all came together to discuss Head Start: The Next 50 Years. Dr. Charles Steele, Jr. - National President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference SCLC gave the Keynote address during the Opening Conference Session. Interim Commissioner Amy Jacobs and staff were present and provided updates from the Dept. of Early Care and Learning– DECAL. Former UN Ambassador Andrew Young, Jr. was present and gave the closing Keynote address during the Closing Session of the Conference.

Scholarships

The Association awarded two scholarships in observance of the Margo Sommors Scholarship program. Jacori D. Hines of Washington County is the recipient of the 2014 Student Scholarship and received a scholarship totaling \$1,500.00 to pursue her education at Georgia State University. Ariana Rodriguez of Ninth District Opportunity, Inc. is the recipient of the Parent Scholarship and received an award of \$1,500.00 to pursue her education at Georgia Gwinnett College.

Child Advocacy Fund Campaign

Dr. Bobby Griffin has been appointed as the GHSA Child Advocacy Fund Campaign Chairperson. 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, 2015, GHSA has received \$3,779.81 from Georgia Head Start/Early Head Start programs and Georgia programs contributed \$2,358.77 in child advocacy funds to the Reg. IV Head Start Association for a total of \$6,138.58. This amount represents an increase of \$2,099.83 from last year but there is still time for Agencies to contribute before the end of GHSA's 2015 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 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 Maria Russell 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. 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 \$500M in federal funds was made available in 2014 for the expansion of Early Head Start. Of these funds, DECAL received a total of \$3,6M to expand EHS to approximately 200 pre-K children in Georgia. With these funds, DECAL is also providing subsidy assistance to other EHS programs.

State Early Education Advisory Committee

GHSA continues to participate on the State Early Education Advisory committee. 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. New vision screening standards for children ages 0-3 have been published by the National Expert Panel (NEP). Laurie Irby of PBGA will present these new standards during the Spring Conference.

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 (NHSA)-

NHSA has drafted its 114th Congress Policy Agenda that aims to develop strategies in getting to know the new Congress, the 2016 Presidential Election, and agenda priorities for both the White House and Congress. The NHSA agenda discusses and influences two important pieces of legislation that could be up in 2015-16.

These include the return of sequestration in 2016 and Head Start Reauthorization with a fresh set of Program Performance Standards.

The Georgia Oral Health Coalition– The Coalition brings together a team of Oral Health professionals in Georgia. The Coalition is working to secure its 501c-3 non profit designation. Currently the group is working to promote the Campaign for Dental Health- I Like My Teeth campaign, the upcoming sealant program and Give Kids A Smile as well as monitoring changes to Georgia’s Community Water fluoridation.

Georgia Asthma Advisory Council– GHSA has been asked to participate as a member of the Council

New Partners

Georgia Autism Advisory Council– GHSA has been asked to participate as a member of the Council.

Georgia American Academy of Pediatrics– This new Collaboration is in conjunction with the Head Start National Center on Health and its provider the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). AAP has received funding from the Office of Head Start to address Toxic Stress in young children through Medical Home collaborations. The Georgia Chapter of AAP has received grant funding to support this initiative in Georgia and has formed a team of Head Start and AAP advocates to lead this effort. The team traveled to AAP Head Quarters in Chicago for training and strategizing on how to implement the project in Georgia. A Plenary Session will be featured during the Spring Conference that introduces the project. The project is scheduled to end in August 2015.

Financial

The GHSA financial audit for the period ending September 30, 2014 was conducted by Alexander Almand & Bangs, LLP Certified Public Accountants. The Statement of Financial Position reflected total liabilities and net assets for the Association of \$581,696.00, an increase of \$26,728.00 from last year's total \$554,968.00. During the audit no internal control deficiencies were identified that are considered to be material weakness.

Highlights

Early Head Start Expansion Grants were awarded to the Department of Early Care and Learning and several Georgia programs. The Federal Government allocated \$500M in funding for the expansion.

Georgia EHS/CC Partnership Awards:

CSRA EOA, Inc. \$900,000.00

Tallatoona CAP, Inc. \$1,500,000.00

Enrichment Services Program, Inc. \$1,300,000.00

Family Resource Agency, Inc. \$1,400,000.00

Clayton County CSA, Inc. \$1,100,000.00

Fort Valley State University \$5,600,000.00

Easter Seals North Georgia \$900,000.00

Highlights

The PANDA Project

The Children's Healthy Weight Research Group at UNC-Chapel Hill announced its Physical Activity and Diet Assessment of Child Care, a study of child care and Head Start center's efforts to support healthy child development. The Frank Porter Graham Center at UNC has received a grant from the Johnson Foundation whereby they hope to collect Study data regarding Nutrition and Physical fitness activities in Head Start programs in several states including Georgia.

A goal of the project is to collect data from 150 child care centers in Georgia, including Head Start centers. Surveys were sent to 304 child care centers (including 60 Head Start Centers). Of the 304 surveys, 111 centers of which 29 are Head Start were completed. The UNC PANDA Project teams plans to share study data during the Region IV Conference in 2016.

BRUSH! Funding

BRUSH is an oral health curriculum developed by the McMillen Health Education Center with grant funding available through the Renaissance Family Foundation to implement the curriculum. Two Georgia programs have sought individual funding from the Foundation. GHSA submitted a funding application to support the BRUSH curriculum implementation for Metro Atlanta. On March 16th, Kimberly Garland of the Renaissance Foundation notified GHSA that BRUSH funding in the amount of \$12,572.00 will be awarded to support three Georgia Head Start/EHS programs. The programs are: The Partnership for Community Action, Sheltering Arms, and McIntosh Trail. Funding will be used for training webinars, and curriculum materials. The funding will serve 190 staff, and approximately 2000 children in the three programs.

GHSA Election of Officers took place in March 2015. Officers are as follows.

Stephania Whitehurst, President

Paula Bacon, First Vice President

Susie Wilcher, Second Vice President

Kay Laws, Treasurer

Viola Flowers, Assistant Treasurer

Sally Campbell, Secretary

Angela Primus, Assistant Secretary

Lillian Barrs, Historian

Joyce Gardner, Assistant Historian

Ramona Codling, Parliamentarian

Marsha McAlister, Assistant Parliamentarian

Category E Association Sponsored Friends, Shirley Boyce

Region IV Director Representatives, Stephania Whitehurst and Ernestine Smith

Region IV Staff Representatives, Gwen Wright and Tevin Roberts

Region IV Friend Representatives, Bobby Griffin and Kimberly Rainey

Region IV Parent Representative, vacant