

# School Readiness in Georgia



Children entering kindergarten with school readiness skills are more likely to experience **academic success** and better **lifetime well-being** than their peers.<sup>1</sup>

## What is School Readiness?

A child's readiness for school includes:<sup>2</sup>



Detection and appropriate care for potential physical or mental disabilities



Emerging social and interpersonal skills



Evident early literacy and language skills



Possession of a general knowledge about the world

**School readiness is influenced by a child's development, family, community, schools, and the services they have access to.** Children from low-income families, whose parents did not graduate high school, or do not speak English at home are less likely to have readiness skills.<sup>3</sup> Children's environmental exposures, such as health, financial strain, conflict, and neighborhood safety, impact their future opportunities – including school readiness and grade promotion.<sup>4</sup> Multiple studies of pre-k programs, including Georgia's Pre-K, show that participation in pre-k can greatly improve school readiness skills, particularly in high-risk populations.<sup>5</sup>

## Georgia's Commitment to School Readiness

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, Bright from the Start (DECAL) runs several programs to increase early readiness skills so students can enter kindergarten ready to learn, including:

### Georgia's Pre-K Program

**More than 1.6 million** Georgia students have been served by Georgia's Pre-K program since it began in 1992.<sup>6</sup>

Evaluations have found that children enrolled in the Georgia Pre-K program:<sup>7</sup>

- ✓ Are more prepared for kindergarten compared to four-year-olds in other forms of care.
- ✓ Have increased cognitive development and improved educational outcomes in later grades.

Children in Georgia's Pre-K program showed significant growth across all learning domains, including:<sup>8</sup>



Math skills



Language and literacy skills



Social-emotional skills



**175** classes **at** **131** program sites

### Fast Facts<sup>11 12</sup>



**6-week** intensive summer program



Child's family must be **at or below 85% of the state median income**



A **transition coach** is in each class to help families



**Low student-to-teacher** ratio

Dual language learners in Georgia's Pre-K program showed growth across all skills in English and most skills in Spanish.<sup>9</sup>

## Sources for School Readiness in Georgia

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- 12 Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. "Summer Transition Program – Rising Pre-Kindergarten FAQ." Accessed November 23, 2020. [http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/documents/attachments/STP\\_PK\\_FAQ.pdf](http://www.dec.al.ga.gov/documents/attachments/STP_PK_FAQ.pdf)