

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> Cognitive abilities alone are not sufficient for a child to be considered ready for school.

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



Detection and appropriate care for potential physical or mental disabilities



Evident early literacy and language skills



Emerging social and interpersonal skills



Possession of a general knowledge about the world



Awareness of feelings of both self and others

School readiness can be influenced by a child's development, family, community, schools, and the services to which they have access. Multiple studies of pre-k have shown that participation in pre-k can greatly improve school readiness skills and can offset some challenges children may face.

## Georgia's Commitment to School Readiness

Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) administers several programs to increase early readiness skills so students can enter kindergarten better prepared to learn, including:

### Georgia's Pre-K Program

**MORE THAN 2 MILLION** students have been served by Georgia's Pre-K Program since it began in 1992.<sup>3</sup>

Children in Georgia's Pre-K program showed significant growth across all learning domains, including:<sup>5</sup>



Math skills



Language and literacy skills



Social-emotional skills

Evaluations have found that children enrolled in Georgia's Pre-K program:<sup>4</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.

Dual language learners in Georgia's Pre-K program showed growth across all skills in English and most skills in Spanish.<sup>6</sup>

A key strength of Georgia's Pre-K Program is building foundational literacy skills for reading.<sup>7</sup>

### Summer Transition Programs

DECAL offers both Rising Kindergarten and Rising Pre-K Summer Transition programs as additional supports for students who may need them (e.g., children identified by teacher as needing additional academic support, dual language learners, etc.)<sup>8</sup>, including:

**394** classes at **255** program sites<sup>9</sup>



**5-week** intensive summer program



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



**Low student-to-teacher** ratio





## References for School Readiness in Georgia

Suggested citation: Voices for Georgia's Children. (2023). Fact Sheet: School Readiness in Georgia. Voices for Georgia's Children. <https://adobe.ly/3RheM6q>.

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- 4 Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. "Children's Outcomes and Classroom Quality from Pre-K through Kindergarten Findings from Year 2 of Georgia's Pre-K Longitudinal Study." Retrieved July 14, 2022. <https://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/GAPreKEvalLongitudinalYr2ExSum.pdf>.
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- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. "Longitudinal Study or Georgia's Pre-K Program: Pre-K Through 4th Grade." Retrieved August 2, 2023. <https://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/GAPreKEvalLongitudinal4thGradeExSum.pdf>.
- 8 Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. "Summer Transition Program –Rising Kindergarten Frequently Asked Questions." Retrieved August 10, 2023. [https://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/STP\\_FAQ.pdf](https://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/STP_FAQ.pdf).
- 9 Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, professional communication, July 2023.