



Georgia Preschool Association

The President's Corner

Diane Lamb

Fall 2016

Wow! It has been almost two years since I was elected president of the Georgia Preschool Association. These two years have gone by very quickly. I have enjoyed serving as your president and it still amazes me that a group this large can operate so efficiently with only volunteers plus an administrative assistant. I want to assure you that with Nancy Bulger as your president elect these efforts will continue. I do want to thank the entire Executive Board for all the support and guidance they have given me. Thank you Nancy Bulger, Cathy Mercier, Karen Coffeen, Helen Geesey, Louise Clifford, Janis Smith, Diane Snyder, Beth Hef-

ner, Tonie Sanders, Betsy Primm, Donna House, Kyle Taft, Krist Olterman, Terry Graham, Cassie Rasco, Barbara Gordon, Denise Luders and Wendy Millard.

It has truly been a pleasure serving as President of the GPA. I think our yearly GPA Conference at Cobb Galleria is one of the best I have ever attended. We always try to get presenters in every area that is of interest to the membership. I will continue serving on the Executive Board so I will still be involved with GPA. Let me ask you to get actively involved with GPA. We are always needing those on the Board that are interested in serving. We need

connections especially in south Georgia, west Georgia and the Savannah area. If you know of anyone or if you are interested please let me know.

One of the projects that we have worked on for the past two years has been sightwords.com. This is a project that we have sponsored that begins with two year olds learning listening skills and continuing on with various modules to teach reading. This program gives the potential for the real development of young readers. When children learn to read it opens so many doors for them. This is a free curriculum that has been used by educators all over

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the world. Thanks to Gajan Retnasaba, Betsy Primm and Donna House who actually got this project "off the ground".

I do want to remind you about our annual GPA Conference that will be held on March 3 and 4, 2017 at Cobb Galleria. You will be receiving more information about that in the coming months. We have many sessions planned that will be of interest to everyone. This is a great time for you to meet other professionals that are doing the same thing that you are doing. Take advantage and network with these folks. Sharing ideas is a great way of improving what you are

doing and helping others. Also, my school uses that time for team building. We spend two nights at the Embassy Suites and have dinner together after the workshops - lots of talking and lots of laughing.

It is important for us to remember that the task at hand is the education of young learners. When children begin preschool there is so much for them to encounter. They not only learn academics, but they also learn socialization skills that will be with them for a lifetime which helps in leading balanced lives. Preschool also begins the process of learning accountability. The earlier that children learn

to be accountable for their actions and efforts, the better prepared they are to face the realities for the 21st century.

Again, let me say thank you for allowing me to serve as your GPA president for the past two years. It has truly been an honor. GPA wouldn't be GPA without you. Thank you for being part of this organization. If I can ever assist you in any way feel free to contact me.

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Happy Fall Y'all.....Diane Lamb - GPA President

District News

District 4 Tonie Sanders

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The District 4 training event "It's All about the Basics" was held on August 13th at Saint Philip AME Church in Decatur. One hundred and seventy-five participants enjoyed workshops presented by Danny Darby and Cheryl Turner.

Each workshop was approved for 3 hours of intermediate level training by Bright from the Start. Both presenters included hands on ideas

and practical tips that could be included in the classroom right away. Many strategies were taught to help both seasoned and new teachers begin the year with some new "tips and tricks" in their tool bag to help students have a successful year.

Thank you to Georgia Preschool Association for sponsoring our event again this year and thank you

to all the participants.

Please mark your calendars for August 5, 2017 for our next training event. Suggestions submitted for workshop topics have included music and art. Please contact Tonie Sanders at:

tsanders@Georgiapreschool.org if you have any suggestions of topics and/or presenters.



On Saturday, November 5th, District 5 held a workshop entitled Parts Is Parts: Using Loose Parts in the Classroom. Forty five participants from all over the Atlanta area attended. They learned what loose parts are and had a chance to work with loose parts, "hands on." Here are some comments about the workshop:

- "These were easy ideas to

implement in the classroom ASAP"

- "This focused on the importance of imagination and creativity!"
 - "This workshop was "hands on" and I liked seeing all the actual varieties of options for loose parts."
 - "I wish we had more time!"
- "All of the ideas and pictures of children using loose parts was valuable!"

It was an day filled with good information, creativity and fun!



District 6 Diane Lamb

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I know everyone is ready for the approaching fall season. This means that most everyone has settled into the school routine and ready for learning. There are many fun fall activities that you can do now that really interest the children. Our Pre-K class has been studying about apples-counting, sorting, cooking and tasting. We don't have an apple orchard so the teachers cleverly hung the apples in trees that are at our school. They loved picking the apples. Our two year old classes are learning about farmers, planting, milking cows, etc. Our three year old classes have been studying construction. They have had fun hammering, gluing and constructing. Our Kindergarten class has been doing many things, but one in particular was about community helpers. They had visitors from the Post Office where we mailed a

letter to one of our student's grandparents in Chicago and they mailed a box of goodies back for the entire class! There were also visits from the Emergency Management Services, Police Department, Fire Department and the Sanitation Department - they liked the trash truck. Be sure to include the public services in your school and also if you have a Home Depot ask about a school field trip. They do a great job.

Since some of us are always looking for field trips in this area, I will share some with you: Twin Oaks Fun Farm in Forsyth (www.TwinOaksFunFarm.com), Yule Forest in Stockbridge (www.aboutyule.com); Opera House at Mercer in Macon. If you have some ideas you would like to share I would appreciate your input.

If you would mark your calendars District 6 will be sponsoring a workshop at Griffin First Baptist on July 19, 2017. You will be receiving more information about that as the time gets a little closer. I apologize for not having the workshop this past year, but due to an unforeseen family health issue I just didn't have the time to get it organized. Thankfully though my husband is doing well and we feel like we received a miracle. I appreciate your understanding.

If I can be of any assistance to you, please feel free to call on me at dianelamb@fbcgriffin.org or call me at 770 228-7880.



Collecting Ideas to Implement a Great Program

Not all of us realize how important we are in the lives of children. Did you know that the early childhood years are the most significant time not only for intellectual development but have the greatest potential for faith development? We can't afford to waste a moment of the time that we have with the young children in our care!

Hopefully we all work in an environment that is a positive work place, where our skills are valued and that we are encouraged to implement developmentally appropriate activities. A good source for the framework of your curriculum is the Georgia Early Learning Standards. Implementing those standards by creating or choosing fun, effective, hands-on activities is the task of the teacher. There are so many sources for ideas! Please keep in mind that the process of learning

through play outweighs the 'cuteness' factor in designing projects for children. As you attend training opportunities, tune in to the ones that emphasize intentional learning through play.

Sometimes it is hard to translate the desire to teach a certain concept or competency into a successful activity. That is where the experience and educational background of the teacher intersect with her creativity and access to new ideas. The successful teacher avoids worksheets and contrived crafts and chooses ones that sustain active involvement, provide language models, and allow children to interact with each other. Sometimes the simplest ones are the best.

For example, extend your activities about color and light by allowing students to use a flashlight and *prism*. Teach sizes (seriation) by having children line up in order of

height; point out that God loves the *smallest* as well as the *largest*.

Introduce the concept of *sound waves* by using instruments that *vibrate*. Teach new vocabulary like *anoint* by placing a dab of oil on each small hand with the words, 'God loves you.' Teach the concept of *same vs. different* by sorting apples; point out that our Creator uses lots of colors! Teach concepts from Physics like *gravity, slope, and motion* by rolling matchbox cars down a ramp. Be sure to introduce the vocabulary that goes with each fun activity. How much more fun and effective are these learning experiences than paper and pencil activities?

Please take advantage of the many training opportunities from GPA to add to your collection of effective teaching activities.

What is Quality Rated?

According to the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning:

Quality Rated is Georgia's system to determine, improve, and communicate the quality of programs that provide child care. Similar to rating systems for restaurants and hotels, Quality Rated assigns one, two or three stars to early education and school-age care programs that meet or exceed the minimum state requirements. By participating in Georgia's voluntary Quality Rated program, programs make a commitment to work continuously to improve the quality of care they pro-

vide to children and families.

Quality Rated gives parents and families greater confidence in their child care choice because independent, credentialed experts in early education have assessed whether programs follow best practices, such as:

- Employing qualified and well-trained teachers
- Providing a safe, healthy and caring environment
- Implementing individualized instruction

- Offering a curriculum that prepares children for kindergarten
- A focus on both active learning and social-emotional development
- Engaging families
- Providing a low teacher-student ratio

As stated above at the present time school participation in the process to be Quality Rated is voluntary. We congratulate our member schools who have achieved Quality rating for their schools

Pictures from District 7 Conference at St. Andrew UMC Preschool



The Georgia Preschool Training Committee has been working hard to continue to bring you the best quality conference we can provide each year! The 2017 Conference will not disappoint! Our Keynote speaker will be Mr. Al, who will get you charged up with "The Future in Our Hands." He will come back for two more sessions, so you will have plenty of time to enjoy his expertise as a valued educational entertainer. On Friday afternoon he will present "Building an Emotionally Intelligent Classroom," Then will close us out on Saturday and send us on our way with an enlightening presentation entitled, "All Stressed Out and Nowhere to Go."

Many topics will be presented in addition to Mr. Al including:

- Take Back the Classroom
- Helping Young Children Construct Mathematical Thinking
- Puppets as Partners
- The Magic of Toddlers
- Music Makes a Difference in Your Day
- Pinterest is NOT our Curriculum, but...
- Building Community Through Work & Play
- Dealing with Difficult People
- Georgia's Four Pillars: How we Get All Kids on a Path to Literacy
- Confess to Stress
- Mother Goose Alliance with Science
- Messy Learning: Hands on Art Activities for Infants and Toddlers
- Talking Tips: Loading Language into Lessons
- Rede"FINE"ing You
- Womens' Self Defense

And MUCH, MUCH MORE!

Save those Silent Auction donations - and your pennies to bid on them!

Bring your walking shoes and your smiling faces!

Come prepared to meet new faces, interact with lots of other folks who love doing the same thing you do, and learn lots to take back to your classroom!

We hope to see all of you at the 2017 Georgia Preschool Association Annual Conference on March 3 & 4, 2017 at the Cobb Galleria Centre in Atlanta!

Save the Date!

Georgia Preschool Association Annual Conference

March 3 and 4, 2017

Is Chocolate in Your Future?

Janis Smith

Many hands are needed to make GPA's Winter Conference successful. Some of the most important are our workshop hostesses who greet our presenters, help with anything they need and give out those all important stickers at the door.

With over 80 sessions we need many helping hands. You can sign up

for workshops you are planning to attend and get a reserved seat. We ask you to let us know what you thought of the speaker so that we know whether or not to invite them back. When you turn in your evaluation there is a CHOCOLATE reward!

If you would like to be a hostess, just let me know and I'll add your

name to the list!

See you in 2017!

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GPA Conference Silent Auction

Join us for the Georgia Preschool Association's Silent Auction by doing more than just participating. We would love to provide more items. You can help! You can invite your own area's businesses to do-

nate items or gift certificates or passes.

Items are also donated by Exhibit Hall vendors, so be sure to stop by when you are joining us for the conference.

It is fun to see the excitement of everyone when they are watching the bid sheets and making sure their name appeared in the final bid line. Your enthusiasm is contagious!

We can't wait to see you at the 2017 annual conference!



GPA Conference Exhibit Hall

Karen Coffeen

We are looking forward to another great conference on March 3rd and 4th! A part of that wonderful experience is the Exhibit Hall (don't we all love to shop?). We are inviting the exhibitors back from last year, some from previous years, and some new companies. We have easily accessible space again this year plus time between classes and at lunch for you to shop. We'll be bringing back our fun Bingo so that you can win a prize just for visiting the ven-

dors. A lot of the prizes are donated by the vendors, so you'll get a useful or a fun prize—it's your choice! You can fill out as many Bingo cards as you want—the more you fill out the better your chance of winning a prize.

We would also like your input. If you would like to be an exhibitor, know of someone else who would, or remember a company that has not been there for awhile; please contact me as soon as possible:

Karen Coffeen

kcoffeen@georgiapreschool.org or 770-590-0982.

You can also check the GPA website (www.georgiapreschool.org) for more conference and vendor information.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at the conference!

SIGHTWORDS.com

For info on training and purchasing printables
contact@sightwords.com 678.653.4811

Phonemic Awareness

Phonemic Awareness is the ability to think about and play with the sounds (phonemes) in words. It is a top predictor of a child's success — or failure — in learning to read.

The Phonemic Awareness curriculum at SightWords.com — for children 3 to 5 years old — is research-based, effective, and free. This is the tool parents and teachers need to give children a solid foundation in this crucial pre-reading skill.



110

carefully sequenced activities
covering the full scope of Phonological
and Phonemic Awareness skills

Every activity includes:

- All materials as free downloadable PDFs
- How-to video
- Instructions for one-on-one and small groups
- Cross-reference to GELDS and Kindergarten Performance Standards
- Guides for pacing and fast-tracking



Sponsored by the Georgia Preschool Association
with grant support from the Callaway Foundation



Visit sightwords.com/phonemic-awareness/ today!