

Georgia Professional Development System Information

All individuals applying for DECAL Scholars programs must register with the Georgia Professional Development System for Early Childhood Educators (GaPDS) as a part of the application process.

The GaPDS is separate from DECAL Scholars. It records and maintains your professional development information – your training and/or any credentials or degrees you earn, in one convenient location.

Registering is easy! You can sign up immediately, even if you have not earned a credential or degree, by entering any recent early childhood or related training you have received.

1. Gather your relevant training certificates, credentials, and/or transcript(s).
2. Go to <https://gapds.decalscholars.ga.gov>. Click the Login/Register button.
3. Click **Create new account for GaPDS**.
4. Select **I want to create and manage my Georgia Professional Development System Account** and click Continue.
5. Follow the directions, including selecting your employer, to create your confidential account. Be sure to record your username and password and secure them for future use. You will receive a confirmation email. Follow the instructions in the email to complete your account.
6. After completing and saving the Contact, Education, Employment, and Training sections, scroll to the bottom of the page and look for the message **Ready for Submission?** Click on **My Profile**.
7. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click on the **Continue to Submission** button.
8. Check the box next to **“I certify that the statements I have made to Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning . . .”** and click Submit. This will change your GaPDS status from Incomplete to Pending and you will be assigned a GaPDS Number.
9. Click the **Profile** link in the Reports box on the left side of the screen, print your GaPDS profile and submit with your DECAL Scholars application. Your GaPDS profile must reflect your name, your GaPDS number, the name of your current employer, and a Pending or Active status.
10. You will receive an email identifying what you need to submit to the GaPDS to verify the information you entered. **The documents are not shared with the DECAL Scholars programs.**

Two other tabs appear when you enter the system to view your profile: Other Career Data and Demographics. Completing the information under these tabs is voluntary; this data is used by Bright from the Start to determine additional supports and services needed across the state.

You can update your profile at any time by submitting documentation of state-approved trainings, credentials, degrees, conference attendance, etc. as you complete them.

The GaPDS is a tool that benefits the early care and education community in Georgia, and we encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity. Thank you for your continued dedication to your professional development and your commitment to improving the quality of care for young children.

If you have questions or need technical support, contact the GaPDS by phone at 404-334-6461 or email at gapds@decalscholars.ga.gov.