

News from GATES...

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports



THE GATES PORTAL

Slow Moving



by Dawn A. Randolph, MPA

January 30, 2017

Getting organized

The House and Senate committees spent last week getting their operations together. No bills were heard in committee and slowly legislators are beginning to introduce their legislative issues. Monday, January 30, 2017 will be the ninth day of the session. They are scheduled to be in four days this week and out on Friday. We expect another resolution to set the calendar for February some time early in the week.

State Budget Amended FY 2017

The Amended FY 2017 budget quickly moved out of the House by Thursday, January 26, 2017. The Governor's recommendations for the Amended budget covered the basics of K-12 education and Medicaid enrollment growth. Except for \$5 million dollars to provide emergency aid to those hit by severe storms in South Georgia, the House did not put many extra funds in the Amended budget.

During the budget subcommittee meetings new Executive Director Sean Casey introduced himself, his new staff and reviewed each program. Rep. Mary Margaret Oliver (D-Decatur) asked what the gap is in matching federal funds for vocational rehabilitation. Mr. Casey explained we are still leaving \$30-40 million behind each year. This year the Governor has recommended flat funding for most agencies, including GVRA. The only increase is in merit pay for state employees. Mr. Casey has focused on building his leadership team and visiting GVRA

In This Issue

[Slow Moving](#)

Special
Announcements



**GATES Board
of Directors
Meeting**

Feb. 3, 2017

9:30 AM

Creative
Enterprises

Lawrenceville, GA

**Georgia State
Use Council**

Mar. 23, 2017

offices and programs across the state.

In the Dept of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities the new Commissioner was introduced to all the House Subcommittee members. Commissioner Judy Fitzgerald has been in leadership at the agency since Frank Berry started as Commissioner. The Governor moved Mr. Berry over to head the Department of Community Health, Medicaid and State Health Benefit Plan, at the end of last year and promoted Mrs. Fitzgerald. The priorities are still to address the requirements of the DOJ settlement to move people with mental health conditions and developmental disabilities out of institutions, expand forensic services and build out more crisis stabilization in the community. The waivers for DD in last year's budget are being annualized, but no new waivers were recommended by the Governor. The rest of the BHDD budget is flat.

Legislation

At the moment there are no bills of interest introduced or moving. This week we expect bills to start being assigned to committees that will give committee chairs the opportunity to bring up for hearings.

[Back To Top](#)

Call for Information

THE PORTAL is a communication tool for GATES and GATES members. If you have stories about your organization, staff announcements, program descriptions, or other information you want to share with other GATES members, please send the info to Charles Hall, chall@asginfo.net



10 AM

Sloppy Floyd Building, West Tower, Conference Room 1816-A

200 Piedmont Ave.

Capitol Square
Atlanta, GA

Working Wonders Recognition Luncheon

Mar. 23, 2017

Noon

Sloppy Floyd Building, West Tower, Empire Room

200 Piedmont Ave.

Capitol Square
Atlanta, GA

THE PORTAL is a regular publication of GATES. If you have staff or others associated with your organization that you would like to receive THE PORTAL, please send their email address to:

*Charles Hall,
chall@asginfo.net*

GATES

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Supports

100 Edgewood Avenue
Suite 975
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone: 404-523-6674