

Parent Leadership Month: Commission Presentation Guide

Here is a one-page handout you can print and distribute to the Commissioners. It summarizes the key points and provides the local context they need to understand why this initiative is a priority for the state.

Parent Leadership Month: Strengthening Georgia's Families

February 2026

Overview

Parent Leadership Month honors parents who lead with their **lived experience** to create a safer, stronger, and more prosperous Georgia for every child. It recognizes parents as the **primary architects** of their children's success.

Why Parent Leadership Matters

- **Strategic Prevention:** Parent partnership is a critical and effective way to build family strengths and **prevent child abuse and neglect**.
- **The "Parent Lens":** Authentic partnership occurs when parents inform policies and programs that support the growth of **protective factors** in communities.
- **Systemic Success:** Meaningful engagement is a critical driver for improving **literacy rates, student attendance, and graduation outcomes**.

Georgia's Commitment in 2026

The State of Georgia has integrated parent leadership into several key initiatives:

- **2Gen Academy:** Parent leadership is the cornerstone of the Governor's Two-Generation approach to family prosperity.
- **Agency Partnerships:** "Lived Experts" now partner with **DECAL**, the **Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)**, and **Public Health** to embed protective factors into community systems.
- **Advocacy in Action:** Parent leaders bridge the gap between state stakeholders and the families they serve.

The "HERO" Theme

National Parent Leadership Month, supported by the **Children's Trust Fund Alliance**, encourages acknowledging parents as **HEROs: Healthy Empowering Response to Opportunity**.

"Parent partnership is successfully achieved when parents are partners in the planning, implementation, oversight, and evaluation of policies, practices, and programs that affect families."

Impact Summary: What Parent Leadership Means for Our Local Leaders

For the County Commission: Building a Safer, Stronger Community

- **Cost-Effective Prevention:** Parent leadership is a primary child abuse prevention strategy. By empowering parents, the county can reduce the long-term social and financial costs associated with child welfare interventions.
- **Strengthening Families, Strengthening the Economy:** According to the 2026 Proclamation, parent leadership is the cornerstone of the **Governor's 2Gen Academy**, which focuses on two-generation family prosperity.
- **Community Insight:** Partnering with "Lived Experts" gives the Commission a direct line to the community's needs, allowing for better-informed policies on public health, housing, and social services.

For the Board of Education: Driving Academic Excellence

- **Improved Student Outcomes:** Authentic parent engagement is a critical driver for improving **literacy rates, student attendance, and graduation outcomes**.
- **Lived Expertise in Schools:** The 2026 Proclamation highlights successful partnerships with the **Richmond County School System** and **Georgia CAN**, where parent leaders advocate for educational excellence.
- **Better School Climate:** When parents are partners in decision-making, schools see improved staff morale, greater teacher retention, and more support from the broader community.

For Local Leaders: A Framework for Authentic Partnership

- **The "Parent Voice":** Meaningful leadership occurs when parents have a "seat at the table" to help shape the direction of programs and services.
- **The HERO Framework:** Using the **CTF Alliance HERO theme** (**H**ealthy **E**mpowering **R**esponse to **O**pportunity), local leaders can shift from providing solutions *to* families to seeking solutions *with* them.
- **Systemic Integration:** Local leaders are encouraged to embed parent leaders within systems like **DECAL**, the **Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)**, and **Public Health (SAPHL)** to ensure services are effective and responsive.