

Jump Start Micro-Enterprise Credential: Overview of the Micro-Enterprise Credential

(Updated: July 2016)

The objective of the Micro-Enterprise Credential is to provide Louisiana students with the fundamental skills and knowledge they need to be effective small business employees and (one day) small business owners / entrepreneurs.

This binder of resources – the first Micro-Enterprise Credential binder – is a collaboration. BRAC has set the standards for the credential. A team of intrepid teachers taught the *beta* Micro-Enterprise Credential classes in the Spring of 2016 and then developed these upgraded resources over the summer. The Department of Education will work with teachers statewide to implement the Micro-Enterprise Credential.

The sections of this overview are:

- Inspiration of the Micro-Enterprise Credential
- Student Objectives
- Available Instructional Resources
- Implementation Goals

Thank you for volunteering to be a part of the first year of statewide Micro-Enterprise Credential implementation. *Please send any questions, recommendations, comments or concerns to JumpStart@la.gov*

Inspiration of the Micro-Enterprise Credential

The development of the Micro-Enterprise Credential was inspired by three observations:

- 1) employer feedback from businesses of all sizes indicates that far, far too often Louisiana high school graduates don't have the workplace behaviors and communication skills they need to be effective on the job;
- 2) data from the Louisiana Workforce Commission shows most Louisiana jobs are in small businesses, and that young people today are more likely to change jobs repeatedly than past generations;
- 3) the Jump Start program lacked a credential to prepare students to be effective small business employees, and (one day) successful small business owners / entrepreneurs.

BRAC brought these observation to the attention of the Jump Start Leadership Team, which was only too aware of the requests from employers to help students master employment "soft skills." Collaborating for almost a year, BRAC and the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) developed resources and mastery exercises to help students demonstrate the employability skills that would help them attain entry-level positions.

BRAC and the LDE agreed the Micro-Enterprise Credential had to be attainable by students of all academic backgrounds and career interests. Whether a student is interested in cosmetology or IT . . . plumbing or cooking . . . Louisiana youth are most likely to be employed by a Louisiana small business. That's why BRAC and LDE determined that the Micro-Enterprise Credential was going to help students of all capabilities understand and master the workplace behaviors and communications skills they need to be effective small business employees and successful adults.

BRAC wanted to make sure that high school graduates have the skills necessary to "earn while they learn." ***The Micro-Enterprise Credential will give students the workplace skills they need to succeed on the job, and the academic foundation they need to continue their education at an LCTCS campus.***

Finally, BRAC and the LDE developed a credential that is low-cost for schools to implement and gender-neutral, making the Micro-Enterprise graduation pathway an opportunity that all Louisiana high schools offer their students.

Student Objectives

The Micro-Enterprise Credential will help students achieve four critical objectives:

- 1) master critical workplace behaviors and communication skills – the Self-Assessment and Self-Assessment Presentation modules will help students practice and master key workplace “soft skills” that *all* employers believe are essential to students attaining entry-level employment and succeeding on the job;
- 2) learn how to access credit, and what different types of credit cost – the Credit Application module will help students learn about different types of business capital, how to apply for different types of loans, and the cost of different types of small business loans;
- 3) learn how to process critical small business forms and paperwork – the Company Registration module will give students a hands-on experience on how to register a start-up company with the Louisiana Secretary of State, using the student version of the *geauxBIZ* portal; and
- 4) learn essential financial concepts and terms, the “language of business” – scoring a passing score on the final Certification Exam will demonstrate that students have mastered financial concepts and terms essential to small business success. Students will learn the “language of business,” something that will help them no matter what type of employment they seek after high school.

BRAC has provided careful guidance to make sure the resources created for each of these objectives will help students master the essential concepts in each area.

The *beta* implementation teachers have reviewed and upgraded these resources. Each teacher who successfully completes Micro-Enterprise Credential training at the 2016 Super Summer Institute will then add their comments and suggestions as we upgrade these instructional resources based on their experiences helping students attain this credential during the 2016-2017 school year.

Available Instructional Resources

There are four sources of instructional resources teachers can use to help students earn the Micro-Enterprise Credential:

- 1) this binder contains all of the upgraded materials created as of July 2016. These materials can also be downloaded from the *All Things Jump Start* web portal: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/courses/all-things-jump-start>
- 2) Teacher Guides referenced in this manual that include answer keys can be downloaded from a password-protected Dropbox. Instructions on accessing the password-protected Dropbox will be provided separately;
- 3) during the 2016-2017 school year BRAC and the LDE will sponsor regional training opportunities where additional resources will be provided. All teachers who earn the Micro-Enterprise Credential at the SSI will automatically be notified of these training opportunities; and
- 4) Micro-Enterprise Credential teachers will create a professional learning community that develops additional teacher resources. Teachers will send these resources to JumpStart@la.gov. The “best in breed” resources will be posted on the *All Things Jump Start* web portal. You can print out these new resources and insert them in the final section of this binder, *Additional Resources*.

As the community of Micro-Enterprise Credential teachers grows, we are confident that the number, quality and effectiveness of available instructional resources will grow exponentially.

Implementation Goals

In Spring 2016 BRAC and the LDE collaborated with five high schools on the *beta* implementation of the Micro-Enterprise Credential:

Beta Implementation Schools	CTE Supervisors / Principals	Teachers
Ascension Parish School Board: Dutchtown High School East Ascension High School St. Amant High School	Ronda Matthews Carli Francois Traci McCorkle Mia Edwards	Emily Smith Monica Caillouet Rae Broussard
East Baton Rouge Public School System: Woodlawn High School	Martha Sealy Scott Stevens	David Wilburn (and colleagues)
St. Landry Parish School Board: Washington Career and Technical Center	Therese Ellender Tracy Beard	Dana Luna

BRAC and the LDE are both very grateful for these dedicated educators who helped develop the Micro-Enterprise Credential resources presented in this binder.

Our first implementation goal is that the teachers who earn the Micro-Enterprise Credential during 2016 SSI become a professional learning community that continues to evolve and upgrade our instructional resources.

While the instructional materials available in this binder are substantially upgraded from the original instructional materials, we have no doubt that we can create even better materials. 2016-2017 will be a year of continued learning. In 2016-2017 teachers will determine which resources help students master key concepts, and student certification results will tell us where we need additional resources to help students achieve more.

The goals we've established for the Micro-Enterprise Credential are summarized in the table below:

School Year	Teachers who have attained the Micro-Enterprise Credential	Complementary or Regional Core Credentials (includes Statewide Credentials in 2017-2018)
2016-2017	75	2,000
2017-2018	150	4,000