WHAT IS THE EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE AT THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION?

Louisiana is in a multi-year effort to unify its early childhood system and improve kindergarten readiness. To address a fragmented early childhood system, Louisiana’s legislature passed the Early Childhood Care and Education Act of 2012. This legislation seeks to have all children in publicly-funded birth to age five programs on track for success in school.

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) is charged with unifying publicly funded preschool, Head Start and child care programs into a statewide early childhood network and to empower families by ensuring easy access to high-quality early learning options for their children.

2013-2014
- First set of early childhood community network pilots launch

2014-2015
- Additional community network pilots launch, and policies unifying licensing, enrollment and funding are passed

2015-2016
- Learning year for statewide implementation of community networks

2016-2017
- Practice Performance Profiles released and LDOE pursues alignment of classroom supports and tax credits

NOV 2017
- Performance Profiles released for all publicly-funded sites

WHAT’S SUCCESS HAS THE EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE HAD IN LOUISIANA & NATIONALLY?

1. An Early Childhood Network in Every Community
   - Every parish has established an early childhood network that includes all publicly-funded child care, Head Start and Pre-K sites.
   - Networks account for every at-risk child, complete classroom observations and support enrollment.

2. Unified Rating System Connected to Licensure
   - Every site receives a Performance Profile rating based on classroom observations.

3. Coordinated Enrollment and Funding to Empower Family Choice
   - Networks are building local enrollment systems that match families with the best option in their community.

4. Teacher Preparation and Support
   - The Department has established expectations for aligned preparation and training that supports high-quality teacher-child interactions.

WHAT’S NEXT FOR THE EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVE?

In 2017-2018, the Department will:

- Issue a Performance Profile for every publicly-funded early childhood site for the first time ever through the new School or Center Finder Website.
- Provide targeted assistance to community networks as they build local coordinated enrollment systems, which support families in identifying the best program for their child.
- Support improved teacher-child interactions for all program types through increasing access to Tier I curriculum, quality training and coaching, and opportunities for teacher preparation.

WHO TO CONTACT?

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