



March 31, 2016



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

Families are children's first teachers. Young children benefit when programs involve families in their learning and development. To better understand the perspective of Louisiana families, the Department of Education, in partnership with United Way of Southeast Louisiana is releasing a statewide [Early Childhood Family Survey](#). Together we seek to understand how early childhood programs support learning for young children and how to make it easier for families to find high-quality early childhood opportunities.

All families with children in early childhood programs are encouraged to complete a [brief online survey](#). In addition, a sample of publicly-funded programs will receive paper surveys to distribute to select families.

We ask for your help in spreading the word about the survey. Please encourage your families to respond by April 30. To assist you, we have prepared a [one page letter for families](#).

Please let families know that their responses will be very important as the state works to improve access to high-quality early learning opportunities. Survey responses will be kept private, and the survey collects no personally identifiable information about children and families. Also note that the information collected will be used to understand and report family satisfaction at a community level. Responses will not be linked to individual teachers, children, or families, or reported at the program level.

We thank you in advance for your support of this important survey. For more information email Nasha Patel at nasha.patel@la.gov.

As always, thank you for all you do for our children,

John

John White
Louisiana Department of Education
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

TEACHING AND LEARNING

SAVE THE DATES - JUNE TEACHER LEADER SUMMIT

Please save the date for the Teacher Leader Summit in New Orleans at the Morial Convention Center. Early Childhood session will take place on June 1-2, 2016. An Early Childhood track will feature interactive sessions focusing on improvement efforts at the class, program and/or community level.

Registration information has been sent to Lead Agencies. Slots will be limited, so networks should to work together to determine how those slots should be distributed. Additional details related to the Teacher Leader Summit will be included in future editions of the Early Childhood Connection Newsletter. For questions contact Ivy Starns at ivy.starns@la.gov.

FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

SAVE THE DATES - EARLY CHILDHOOD ROUNDTABLE SESSIONS AND WEBINAR

In April, the Department will host [discussions](#) across the state on the future of our early childhood rating and improvement system. We will discuss what has been learned so far, what to expect for next year and what supports will be provided to help prepare all Louisiana children for kindergarten.

The sessions will cover the following topics:

- Initial statewide results from CLASS observations in the Learning Year
- Expectations for programs and community networks for 2016-2017
- System of supports to help improve interactions and instruction in early childhood classrooms

There will be a webinar and in-person sessions.

Roundtable Webinar on April 13:

Link: <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/ec/>

Time: April 13, 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.

If you need to call in for audio, please call: [1-800-832-0736](tel:1-800-832-0736); Room: [3423602](tel:3423602)

In-Person Roundtable Session Schedule:

Date	Time	Location
April 14	11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Bossier Parish School Board Bossier Instructional Center 2719 Airline Dr. Bossier City, LA
April 15	11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Claiborne Conference Center 1201 N 3rd St. Baton Rouge, LA
April 19	11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Children's Coalition Offices 1363 Louisville Ave. Monroe, LA
April 20	10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Parkview Baptist Church 6301 Camphor St. Metairie, LA
April 26	10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Rapides Parish School Board Gladys Higdon Instructional Ctr. 502 Beauregard St. Alexandria, LA
April 26	2:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.	Lafayette Parish School Board Vermilion Conference Center 326 Gautier Rd. Lafayette, LA

For questions, contact Nasha Patel at nasha.patel@la.gov.

PROVIDER PORTAL - CAFE UPDATES

The Department is launching the Provider Portal of the Common Access Front End (CAFÉ) system. The CAFÉ Provider Portal will allow you to conduct business with the Department on a self-serve basis by giving you the ability to access and manage your provider information online, including licensing and provider certification. The link can be found [here](#).

Licensing - CAFÉ will allow you to:

- Apply and pay fees (via credit card) online;
- Upload documents (ex. state central registry (SCR) disclosure forms, criminal background clearances (CBC));
- Communicate with notifications and reminders regarding your site;
- Report changes (ex. director/administrator, contact information, etc.);
- View submitted forms; and
- Check application status.

You must contact Michelle DeMeulenaere at 225-342-9905, 60 days prior to license expiration date to receive your Unique ID number that is an exclusive number to this system to link your account to make any changes, renewals, or updates in the system. Instructions for using CAFÉ for licensing can be found [here](#).

Provider Certification - CAFÉ will allow you to:

- Apply online as a new provider, or depending on your provider type, submit your midpoint and renewal applications; and
- Upload documents (Ex. verifications, training certifications, documentation of identity, fire marshal inspection, etc.).

Instructions for using CAFÉ for provider certification can be found [here](#).

Licensing and Provider Certification will host a webinar on CAFÉ on April 20th from 11:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Please use the following link: <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/licensing1/>.

CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

STATE CENTRAL REGISTRY DISCLOSURE FORMS FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF - BULLETIN 137: LOUISIANA EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER LICENSING REGULATIONS

Centers must obtain a state central registry disclosure form (SCR-1) or a current determination from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) indicating that the individual does not pose a risk to children for all volunteers and staff prior to an individual being present in or providing services to the center.

The center must have copies the valid form on file. The SCR-1 form can be found [here](#).

It is the responsibility of the center to contact the Licensing Division within 24 hours for any staff member that has a valid finding. Under no circumstance may the staff person with the finding be left alone and unsupervised with a child. The center must submit a written statement to the Licensing Division acknowledging that the staff person with the justified finding will not be left alone or unsupervised with a child or children pending the disposition by DCFS that the staff person does not pose a risk to children. More information can be found in Chapter 17 of the Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations, which can be found [here](#).

For questions contact Andrea Burl at Andrea.Burl@la.gov.

SUMMER CAMPS - BULLETIN 137, LOUISIANA EARLY LEARNING CENTER LICENSING REGULATIONS

According to Bulletin 137, organizations that enroll children 4 years and younger will not be defined as a camp and must be licensed.

Camps are defined as any place or center operated by any institution, society, agency, corporation, person or persons, or any other group that serves only children ages 5 and older and operates only when schools are not in session for the summer months or school holidays.

For questions contact Andrea Burl at Andrea.Burl@la.gov.

LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

SPRING GOLD™ UPDATES

Cohort 3 networks should plan to attend the final series of technical assistance visits with Teaching Strategies® staff. These sessions will provide information on accessing and analyzing reports, closing out the 2015-2016 year, and instructions on getting ready for 2016 - 2017. A "Save the Date" flyer will be sent to Lead Agencies highlighting these sessions which are scheduled for April 25 through May 6.

Programs from Cohorts 1, 2, and 3 are encouraged to take advantage of *Advanced GOLD™ Training*. This professional development opportunity includes an on-site visit with a Teaching Strategies® consultant. Sessions are free of charge for interested programs (other than costs of stipends, etc.) and are tailored to support teachers, supervisors/directors and others in using GOLD™ to its maximum potential. Sessions are limited. For more information, contact Ivy Starns at ivy.starns@la.gov.

WEEKLY EARLY CHILDHOOD LEAD AGENCY OFFICE HOURS

The Early Childhood team is offering weekly Office Hours for Lead Agencies. This will be a reoccurring opportunity for Lead Agencies to call in with any questions they may have about their current work and receive additional clarification.

Weekly Time: Tuesdays, 3 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Call In: 1-800-832-0736; PIN: 9174840

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