



April 28, 2016



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**SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE**

Dear Colleagues,

As part of the [Early Childhood Roundtables](#), Department staff have been touring the state, discussing how to provide meaningful information or ratings on classroom quality to families and programs. Doing so empowers families to choose the best option for their children and enables programs to better support teachers. In these discussions, a common theme emerges among providers: programs need to understand where to improve, and where to find practical resources and tools to make improvement.

In fact, to ensure children are ready to enter school prepared for success, teachers in all early childhood settings need strong and coordinated curriculum, assessments, and professional development. This week the Department has released [guidance](#) to help school districts, Head Start, non-public schools, child care centers, and community networks advance the quality and continuity of these areas across early childhood and early elementary settings.

To further support all early childhood programs - child care, Head Start, and school-based pre-K - in selecting strong curriculum, the Department is conducting a review of early childhood curricula and will [post reviews](#) throughout the spring and summer. Programs using a curriculum rated as Tier I and Tier II are placed under state contract, which means that orders can be placed either [directly](#) with the publishing company or online through the [book depository](#). In addition, the Department will launch an initiative specially designed to help child care directors purchase and implement high quality curriculum in their centers. More information about this initiative will be announced later this spring.

For questions, please contact Jill Slack at [jill.slack@la.gov](mailto:jill.slack@la.gov).

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

**John**

John White  
Louisiana Department of Education  
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

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**TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**JUNE TEACHER LEADER SUMMIT - OPEN REGISTRATION**

Registration is now open for the 2016 Teacher Leader Summit to be held at the Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. An Early Childhood track with sessions designed specifically for early childhood teachers, supervisors and coaches is scheduled for June 1-2. The summit will offer approximately 30 unique early childhood sessions for participants to choose from. All sessions are approved by Pathways for programs needing licensing clock hours (total of 7.5 hours for the entire summit).

The Department will cover all registration costs and will provide lunch on June 2. All other costs, such as travel, lodging, other meals, etc. are the responsibility of participants or their programs. Slots for the Summit are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

If you are interested in attending, please log onto Coursewhere and follow these steps:

1. Go to Coursewhere and click "Register": <https://www.solutionwhere.com/ldoe/cw/showconference.asp?4382>
2. If you have an account, log in. If you do not have an account, click "create account".
3. Within the team name box, scroll down and select "**Early Childhood**".
4. Enter the team password/code: **early315** (no spaces and all lower case letters).

For questions, please contact Ivy Starns at [ivy.starns@la.gov](mailto:ivy.starns@la.gov).

## LOUISIANA EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY SURVEY - RESPONSES DUE APRIL 30

To better understand the perspective of Louisiana families, the Department has partnered with the United Way of Southeast Louisiana to conduct a statewide [Early Childhood Family Survey](#) that is being administered by Louisiana State University. The survey is being conducted in two ways:

- **Paper:** Paper surveys were distributed to a randomly selected sample of publicly-funded sites across the state. These surveys have been mailed to the selected programs. Families will mail the surveys back to LSU in the provided self-addressed, stamped envelopes.
- **Online:** Families in publicly-funded centers that did not receive the paper survey can complete the survey online. A [one page letter for families](#) has been provided and can be printed and distributed to families of publicly-funded children.

We are asking families to submit their survey responses by **April 30, 2016**.

Thank you for your support and assistance with the Louisiana Early Childhood Family Survey! For questions, please contact Nasha Patel at [Nasha.Patel@la.gov](mailto:Nasha.Patel@la.gov).

## PREPARATION FOR COMPLETING THIRD CHECKPOINT IN GOLD® - DUE MAY 31

As a reminder, teachers should begin finalizing their third *GOLD*® Checkpoints in order to meet the May 31 deadline. Teaching Strategies® offers an array of resources on this process including *Quick Start Guides* for Teachers and Administrators available to anyone with an account through the "Help?" feature of the Teaching Strategies® website. More information about the checkpoint process can be found [here](#).

## UPDATING OTHER CLASSROOM INFORMATION IN GOLD® - DUE MAY 31

Administrators and teachers should also ensure the following informational metrics have been entered in the *GOLD*® system for each classroom:

- [Teacher: Child Ratios](#)
- Lead Teacher Degree
- Louisiana Teacher Certification
- Pre-K or Infant/Toddler Curriculum

Teachers must additionally ensure children with IEPs or IFSPs, including speech, are marked as having IEPs or IFSPs in the *GOLD*® system. All information must be entered by May 31.

Administrators can review the status of finalized Checkpoints for their classes by accessing the "*Assessment Status Report*" (located under the Checkpoint tab in the *GOLD*® system). For questions and additional assistance, please contact Ivy Starns at [ivy.starns@la.gov](mailto:ivy.starns@la.gov).

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT FOR 2016-2017

To ensure children are ready to enter school prepared for success, teachers in all early childhood settings need strong and coordinated curriculum, assessments, and professional development. The Department has released [guidance](#) to help districts and community networks advance the quality and continuity of these areas across early childhood and early elementary settings.

To further support all early childhood programs - child care, Head Start, and school-based pre-K - in selecting strong curriculum, the Department is conducting a review of early childhood curricula and will [post reviews](#) throughout the spring and summer.

For questions, please contact Jill Slack at [jill.slack@la.gov](mailto:jill.slack@la.gov).

## QUALITY START UPDATES

As a reminder, providers with star awards expiring in 2016 will receive revised star award letters and certificates extending their award period. Providers do not need to reapply for star ratings. School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC) and bonus payments will be based on your current star rating through June 30, 2017.

For questions, please contact Mary Jo Smith at [MaryJo.T.Smith@la.gov](mailto:MaryJo.T.Smith@la.gov).

## SCHOOL READINESS TAX CREDITS (SRTC)

In February, Quality Start provided the Louisiana Department of Revenue (LDR) with a list of providers and staff that qualify for the SRTC. Any questions related to provider or staff qualifications for the SRTC can be sent to [dss.qualitystart@la.gov](mailto:dss.qualitystart@la.gov).

Questions related to SRTC funds should be directed to the Louisiana Department of Revenue. The LDR website can be accessed [here](#), or you can call 225-219-0102 or 225-219-7642.

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## FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

### CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM EXTENSION

To strengthen our partnership with families and providers, the Department has extended several child care assistance cases from May 2016 to September 2016. Affected families were recently notified their child care assistance cases have been extended, and they will not need to reapply.

This change will result in fewer families being terminated from the program in the middle of the school year.

My redetermination should have been in....	Now my redetermination will be in.....
May 2016	October 2016
June 2016	November 2016
July 2016	December 2016
August 2016	January 2017
September 2016	February 2017

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) [website](#) has many resources for families applying for CCAP or those currently receiving child care assistance.

- Eligibility [survey](#)
- Application [checklist](#) which lists everything needed to complete the CCAP application
- CCAP [application](#)
- Change [report](#) for listing any changes to existing cases
- Household designee [form](#) for the TOTS process
- [Locations](#) for TOTS finger scanning

CCAP Household Eligibility - Contact information:

- Telephone: 1-877-453-2721
- Fax: 225-342-3906
- Email: [LDEccap@la.gov](mailto:LDEccap@la.gov)

Website: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/early-childhood/child-care-assistance-program>

## PROVIDER PORTAL - CAFÉ UPDATES AND WEBINAR

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) );
- 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](#).

A webinar providing information on CAFÉ has been recorded and can be accessed [here](#).

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## CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

### SAFETY BOX NEWSLETTER

All centers must post a copy of the current "Safety Box" newsletter, issued by the Louisiana Office of the Attorney General, within their center. Centers must also immediately remove any items listed as recalled from the early learning center premises. You may click [here](#) to register to receive the newsletter and to obtain past copies.

For questions, please contact Michelle DeMeulenaere at [michelle.demeulenaere@la.gov](mailto:michelle.demeulenaere@la.gov).

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## LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

### SPRING CLASS DEADLINE - MAY 15

Lead Agencies are required by Bulletin 140 to submit spring CLASS observation scores for all classrooms in publicly-funded sites by Sunday, May 15. Note there will be an appeals process for extenuating circumstances which may be used to exclude scores from classrooms and sites from the Practice Performance Ratings. For questions, please contact Nasha Patel at [Nasha.Patel@la.gov](mailto:Nasha.Patel@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 recurring opportunity for Lead Agencies to call in with any questions they may have about their current work and receive additional clarification.

**Weekly Time:** Tuesdays, 3:00-4:00 p.m.

**Call In:** 1-800-832-0736; PIN: 9174840

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## OTHER

## EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL - SAVE THE DATE

The next Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council meeting will take place at **1 p.m., Wednesday, May 18**, in the **Claiborne Building, 1201 N. 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA**.

This meeting is open to the public and can be livestreamed. Please click [here](#) for directions on accessing livestreamed meetings.

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## SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEWSLETTER

If someone you know wishes to subscribe to this newsletter, please click [here](#) to subscribe.

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### LDOE Contacts

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### LDOE Links

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