



May 12, 2016



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

Teachers are the heart of our early childhood classrooms. Every day they care for, love on and educate our youngest learners - whether in a child care, Head Start or school classroom. They are professionals who work hard to help every child learn language, build skills and manage their emotions and behavior so that he or she can be successful in school and in life. Thus, it is critically important our teachers continue to help shape the statewide efforts to unify early childhood and prepare all children for kindergarten. We need your help to get teachers' input.

The Department has released a [survey](#) for early childhood teachers in Louisiana. To better understand what teachers are experiencing and how to best support them, the Department is asking all early childhood lead teachers in publicly-funded sites to complete a brief survey that measures levels of teacher satisfaction with the training and supports available to them.

- This survey is only for Lead Teachers in all early childhood publicly-funded programs.
- Individual results are confidential and will never be shared with programs or Community Networks.
- Results of the survey will be aggregated at the Community Network level and shared as an informational metric on the Community Network Practice Performance Profile.
- Surveys should be completed by Monday, May 30.

The Teacher Survey was disseminated through *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® email addresses to teachers, and to providers where *GOLD*® email addresses were not available. For questions, please contact Nasha Patel at nasha.patel@la.gov.

As a former teacher, I cannot say enough how much we appreciate our teachers. In fact, I wanted to recognize a Louisiana teacher who was featured on a national blog. Congratulations to Jefferson Davis teacher Lacey Hetzel Austin and coach Pam Miller who were featured because of their success in achieving excellence in Instructional Support on *CLASS*. [Read the interview](#) to learn more about how Ms. Austin structures her classroom to make the most of each day, and how she has used the *CLASS* tool to support improvement and growth for both herself and the children she teaches.

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

John

John White
Louisiana Department of Education
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teachers should be 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 ensure the following informational metrics have been entered in the *GOLD*® system for each classroom:

- [Teacher/Child ratios](#)
- Lead Teacher Degree
- Louisiana Teacher Certification
- PreK 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.

EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT - GUIDANCE AND VENDOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CATALOG

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.

In order to assist programs in selecting high-quality training and support, the Department has released the [Vendor PD Course Catalog](#). The catalog is designed to help programs make informed decisions regarding professional development for staff. The Vendor Professional Development Catalog will be updated routinely to include additional resources for early childhood programs as they become available.

For questions, please contact Jill Slack at jill.slack@la.gov.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS REVIEW - NEW CURRICULAR REVIEWS ADDED

New 3 and 4-year-old as well as infant/toddler [Curriculum Resource Reviews](#) have been posted on the Department website. The following reviews are currently posted:

- Amplify - Core Knowledge, ages 3 - 4 (tier 2)
- Frog Street PreK, ages 3 - 4 (tier 1)
- Kaplan - Learn Every Day, ages 0 - 2 (tier 1)
- Pearson - OWL, ages 3 - 4 (tier 1)
- Teaching Strategies - Creative Curriculum PreK, ages 3 - 4 (tier 1)
- Voyager - We Can, ages 3 - 4 (tier 1)

Additional reviews will be added in the upcoming weeks.

Vendors from tier 1 and tier 2 rated curriculum will be invited to participate in a session at the upcoming June Teacher Leader Summit. Vendors will highlight how their curriculum resources are aligned to the [Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards](#) and will be available to meet with participants.

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.

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

LA 4 BUDGET REVISIONS DUE

In order to comply with budget reductions from the special legislative session, the Department of Children and Family Services reduced TANF funding for the LA 4 program. The statewide reduction for LA 4 is \$2.9 million. The revised LA 4 allocation by LEA is provided [here](#). Revised allocation files have been loaded into eGMS and budget revisions will be required to reflect the reduced funding for each program. All FY 2015-2016 budget revisions for LA 4 must be submitted by **June 1, 2016**.

For questions regarding LA 4 budgets, contact Lindsey Bradford at lindsey.bradford@la.gov

CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY - LOUISIANA EARLY LEARNING CENTER LICENSING REGULATIONS

Early learning centers are required to develop and implement a written behavior management policy that describes the methods of guidance and behavior management that shall be used at the center. The behavior management policy must prohibit children from being subject to any of the following: physical or corporal punishment which includes but is not limited to yelling, slapping, spanking, yanking,

shaking, pinching, exposure to extreme temperatures or other measures producing physical pain, putting anything in the mouth of a child, requiring a child to exercise, or placing a child in an uncomfortable position.

Any violation of this policy must be reported to the Department's Licensing Division using the [critical incident report form](#) available on the Department's website. In addition, any violations must also be reported to Department of Children and Family Services at 1-855-4LA-KIDS (1-855-452-5437).

For questions, please contact Michelle DeMeulenaere at michelle.demeulenaere@la.gov.

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.

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 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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

COMMUNITY NETWORK BUDGET REVISIONS DUE

All remaining Early Childhood Community Network budget revisions for FY 2015-2016 must be **submitted by June 5, 2016**. All funds for FY 2015-2016 must be **expended by June 30, 2016**.

For questions regarding Community Network budgets, contact Lindsey Bradford at lindsey.bradford@la.gov

OTHER

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL - MAY 18 MEETING

The next Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council meeting will take place at **1:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 18**, in the **Claiborne Building, 1201 N. 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA**. The agenda for this meeting can be found [here](#).

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

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