

Share:  Like



[Tweet](#)



[Join Email List](#)

Powered by
Constant Contact



June 9, 2016



IN THIS ISSUE:

- [Superintendent's Message](#)
- [Teaching and Learning](#)
- [Funding and Enrollment](#)
- [Child Safety and Welfare](#)
- [Other](#)

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

Last week, nearly 500 of our state's finest early childhood leaders and educators gathered in New Orleans for our Teacher Leader Summit, an annual celebration of our work to unify early childhood in Louisiana. Participants from child care, Head Start, and pre-K programs had the opportunity to learn something new, try out helpful tools and resources, collaborate with peers, and leave feeling inspired about what's possible in their programs in the upcoming year.

At the summit, we focused on interaction and instruction in early childhood classrooms. For the first time, our sessions were based on thousands of observations from Louisiana classrooms. Thanks to the efforts of community networks across the state, more than 98 percent of toddler and pre-K classrooms in publicly-funded early childhood programs were observed using the CLASS system of measures - both in the fall and in the spring. And 100 percent of our sites were observed by the third party observers. All together this represents more than one million minutes spent in Louisiana classrooms, better understanding what our children are experiencing. Now our challenge is to use this valuable information to continually improve on those experiences.

If you joined us in New Orleans, [share your feedback](#) on the summit so we can continue to improve it for next year.

If you were unable to attend the session, click [here](#) to watch the video of the opening session, including a tribute to some of our state's most outstanding educators, and an [address by Superintendent White](#). You can also [download](#) and share materials from the summit.

As we wrap up a successful learning year with extraordinary statewide participation, we also need to begin preparing for 2016-2017. Please note an important message below related to Academic Approval. All publicly-funded early learning centers, including Head Start programs, will need to sign and submit assurances in order to participate next year. Please contact ECAssurances@la.gov if there are any questions.

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

John

John White
Louisiana Department of Education
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

TEACHING AND LEARNING

2015-2016 APPEALS PROCESS FOR CLASS OBSERVATIONS

Communities and sites have the opportunity to complete an [Appeals Form](#) to appeal any of the following:

- Local CLASS Observation Scores;
- Third Party CLASS Observation Scores;
- Use of 1's in a CLASS observation for any classroom where a local observation was not conducted.

Appeals can be submitted if there are extenuating circumstances or serious concerns about how an observation was completed. Submitting an appeal form does **not** guarantee approval.

Site Leaders may complete an appeal form, but the form **must be submitted to the Department by the local Lead Agency**.

The 2015-2016 Appeals Process will run from June 6 - July 6, 2016. A recorded webinar providing information on the appeals process can be found [here](#).

COMMUNITY NETWORK PROGRAM PARTNER ASSURANCES FOR 2016-2017 ACADEMIC APPROVAL

Early learning centers with a Type III license must sign [Program Partner Assurances](#) in order to receive Academic Approval for 2016-2017. This week, the Department is sending instructions for signing and returning Program Partner Assurances to all child care centers with a Type III license. This information is being sent to the email address for each center that is on file with the Division of Licensing. Center directors will sign and return the Program Partner Assurances to the Department by Monday, June 20, in order to receive the center's Academic Approval Certificate for 2016-2017.

Please contact ECAssurances@la.gov if there are any questions.

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 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 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.

UPCOMING FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT CLASSROOMS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Department is working on plans to identify communities and programs serving children who have an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP), and want to implement a support system for their staff. This will be a voluntary pilot project.

Programs will choose one of three support systems aligned with the CLASS tool for their teachers, and will apply to the state through their Community Network's Lead Agency. The Department will provide administrative allocations for Lead Agencies and stipends to coaches/instructors and teachers who complete the project. More information will be announced in future editions of the Early Childhood Connection Newsletter.

For more information, email Ivy Starns at ivy.starns@la.gov.

FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

PROVIDER PORTAL - CAFE UPDATES AND WEBINAR

The Department has launched the Provider Portal of the Common Access Front End (CAFÉ) system. The CAFÉ Provider Portal allows 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 allows 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, which 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 allows 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](#).

CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES AS A CHILD CARE PROVIDER

In the event a hurricane or other disaster causes widespread evacuation and extensive property damage, action may be needed to ensure the safety of all individuals cared for by licensed providers. If a disaster occurs and you are an **affected parish**, it is necessary to suspend your license **without notice** until your facility is verified as safe.

If a disaster occurs, you should check the Department's [website](#) to determine if your facility is located in an affected parish, and for additional information regarding the reinstatement of your license. Following an emergency, **licensed providers should complete the [Reopening Request Form](#) within 7 calendar days** of the disaster and fax it to the Division of Licensing at 225-342-2498. If you do not have access to a fax machine please call 225-342-9905.

If you have questions, please contact Michelle DeMeulenaere at michelle.demeulenaere@la.gov.

REMINDER ABOUT WARM WEATHER AND CHILDREN IN VEHICLES

Warm weather is here and temperatures inside vehicles rise quickly. Licensed early learning centers are required to conduct visual passenger checks of all vehicles used to transport children to ensure that no child is left in the vehicle. A staff person must physically walk through the vehicle and inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats, and in all enclosed spaces and recesses in the vehicle's interior.

This requirement for a visual inspection of vehicles applies to all vehicles used to transport children whether the vehicles are provided by you or by contractual arrangement or are parent provided. Click [here](#) to review the regulations.

For questions, e-mail Michelle DeMeulenaere at michelle.demeulenaere@la.gov.

OTHER

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL - JULY 14 MEETING

The next Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council meeting will take place on **Thursday, July 14, at 1 p.m.** The meeting will be held in the **Claiborne Building, 1201 N. 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA.**

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

SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEWSLETTER

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

LDOE Contacts

[John White](#)
State Superintendent of Education
(toll-free) 877.453.2721
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

LDOE Links

[LDOE Website](#)
[Contact Us](#)