



Early Childhood
IMPROVING SCHOOL READINESS

Early Childhood COVID-19 Updates

4.30.2020



Agenda

- **General**
- **Early Childhood Updates**
- **Care for Critical Services Personnel**
- **Workforce Updates**
- **Access and Accountability Updates**
- **Continuous Learning and Academic Resources**
- **Next Steps**
- **Previously Communicated Information**

UPDATED

Gubernatorial Proclamations

The Governor issued [Proclamation Number 33 JBE 2020](#) on March 22, 2020.

- All individuals within the state of Louisiana are under a general stay-at-home order and are directed to stay home unless performing an essential activity.
- All state office buildings are closed to the public. However, essential state functions shall continue.
- All gatherings of 10 people or more shall be postponed or cancelled.
- Nonessential businesses shall be closed to the public and members
- Early learning centers and child care facilities adhering to guidance issued by the LDOE and LDH may continue to operate.
- The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness is directed to ensure compliance with this order.
- These [provisions](#) are effective from 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2020 and **have been extended to Friday, May 15, 2020.**
- The Governor will announce on May 11 if the state is ready to begin phase one of reopening.

COVID-19 Resources for Early Childhood

The Department has prepared a host of resources and materials to support lead agencies, schools, and child care providers during this uncertain time.

COVID-19 Resources

- [COVID-19](#) landing page on www.LouisianaBelieves.com
- COVID-19 [FAQ](#) for early childhood
- [LDH guidance](#) for early learning centers
- Expansion of [CCAP for critical personnel](#)
- Local public health [contact map and directory](#)
- With any questions for LDOE regarding COVID-19, contact LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov



Early Childhood Updates

NEW Early Childhood Updates

Strong Start 2020

The Department is releasing ECE Strong Start Framework guidance in the next few weeks for communities, lead agencies, and centers to support community reopening following COVID-19.

- The ECE Strong Start Framework will ask communities and centers to begin considering preparing for the 2020-2021 school year, with a focus on the following categories:
 - Health, Safety, and Operations
 - Classroom Quality and Continuous Learning
 - Sustaining and Expanding Early Childhood Access
 - Retaining, Recruiting, and Supporting Workforce
 - Family Engagement and Support
 - Children with Diverse Needs
- This Framework will include specific guidance and requirements regarding reopening.
- This Framework will include opportunities for community-level funding to support aligned activities.

NEW Early Childhood Updates

Strong Start 2020, Guidance for Centers

Guidance on considerations for reopening centers will be included as part of the Strong Start Framework.

The Strong Start Framework will include guidance for centers with considerations, such as:

- Assessing staff and family readiness to return
- Reviewing examples of staffing structures for phasing-in reopening
- Establishing health and safety protocols with children, families, and during operations
- Accessing supplies to maintain health and safety
- Providing guidance on trauma-informed supports for children, families, and teachers
- Developing new communication structures with shifts in drop-off procedures and health concerns
- Collaborating with community partners to navigate new challenges post-COVID

NEW Early Childhood Updates

Head Start Guidance

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted Head Start grantees, and as such, the Office of Head Start has released [Additional Guidance for Grantees on Funding Applications](#).

The [Additional Guidance for Grantees on Funding Applications](#) document provides additional guidance for grantees regarding questions that may arise as they complete funding applications in response to the national emergency, including:

- CARES Supplemental Summer Programs funding;
- CARES One-Time Funding;
- FY 2020 Cost-of-Living-Adjustment and Quality Improvement (COLA/QI) applications; and
- other relevant guidance

For questions regarding Head Start, contact kahree.wahid@la.gov.

Care for Critical Services Personnel

Updated Care for Critical Services Personnel

Progress To Date

By working in partnership with CCR&Rs, LDH, and child care providers around the state, the Department has made progress toward establishing child care options for essential workers.

Emergency CCAP

Since expanding CCAP eligibility to accommodate essential workers:

- Over 2,800 critical personnel and over 4,000 children have been approved for emergency CCAP.
- Many Type I and II providers have converted to Type III to support these families.

New In-Home & FCC Providers

Since streamlining the process to become an in-home or FCC provider:

- Individuals have become newly certified as in-home or family child care providers, and more are in process
- LDOE & CCR&Rs are continuing to think about how to best support and encourage in-home providers

Respite Care Contracts

Since working with CCR&Rs to identify child care centers for respite care contracts:

- Twenty child care centers are currently contracting with the LDOE to provide respite care
- Each center is serving an average of fifteen children per day

Care for Critical Services Personnel

Map of Open Child Care Providers

The Department is maintaining a list of all open child care providers (Type I, II, and III centers, as well as family child care and in-home providers) on the Department's website.

The [parish-level list](#) of open child care providers includes:

- License number
- Facility/provider name
- Contact information and hours of operation
- License type (note: only Type III, in-home, and family child care providers are available to enroll kids through CCAP)
- Age range
- If a center's information is incorrect, please contact LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov

The Department also has a [flyer](#) that critical businesses can use to help staff find child care.



NEW Care for Critical Services Personnel Updates and Extensions

Earlier this week, [the Department announced](#) it would provide subsidized child care to essential critical infrastructure personnel for an additional 30 days.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Updates and Extensions:

- [Emergency CCAP applications](#) will continue to be accepted through May 31.
- [Emergency CCAP](#) authorizations will continue for an additional 30 days from approval.
- CCAP payments based on enrollment, not attendance, has been extended until May 31.
- Family co-payments for CCAP will be waived until May 31.

Workforce Updates

NEW Workforce Updates

LDOE LaCAP Relief Grants

To offset some of the financial burdens experienced by child care providers as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, the Department offered two grant opportunities for child care assistance providers.

Louisiana Child Care Assistance Provider (LaCAP) Relief Grants:

- **Emergency Child Care Relief Grant:** This grant provides support for providers to stay open or reopen after this period in an effort to support child care access for families in need of care.
- **Emergency Child Care Development Fund Response Grant:** Many child care assistance providers have remained open or reopened during the Governor's Stay At Home Order to provide child care for frontline workers, and are incurring additional costs as a result. This grant provides support to offset higher costs of operating during the pandemic.

Over 800 providers applied for the grants. Funding will be awarded next week.

If you have any questions about these grants, please email LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov

Access and Accountability Updates

NEW Access and Accountability Updates

Coordinated Enrollment Fall Planning for Pre-K

Many community networks are anticipating an increase in the demand/eligibility for pre-K programs this fall as a result of economic hardships experienced during the pandemic.

To prepare for a potential increase in demand and/or eligibility for pre-K this fall, lead agencies should consider the following:

1. Preparing to fill additional seats if additional pre-K seats are made available.
 - Capacity (e.g. space, staff, etc.) in the community network to serve more four year olds in pre-k.
 - Leveraging local funding to support a potential expansion in pre-K.
2. Creative approaches to coordinated enrollment such as:
 - Virtual pre-K roundup
 - Phone appointments with teachers and staff to complete enrollment applications
 - Using DirectMatch as a contact-free method of determining income eligibility. To gain access to the DirectMatch system, email lindsey.bradford@la.gov.

REMINDER Access and Accountability Updates

Academic Approval Renewing for 2020-2021

In an effort to assist publicly funded sites in starting the 2020-2021 school year in the best possible position, the Department wants to help expedite the Academic Assurance renewal process.

Academic Approval is required to receive or maintain a Type III child care license.

The [2020-2021 Academic Approval Assurances](#) can be submitted by **tomorrow, May 1** to ensure that a site's Academic Approval does not expire by the June 30 expiration date. The Department will work with sites closed due to COVID-19 that plan to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year to make sure that a site's Academic Approval does not expire.

These [assurances](#) should be signed and submitted electronically. Email questions or concerns to ECAssurances@la.gov.

Continuous Learning and Academic Resources

NEW Continuous Learning and Academic Resources

Supporting Learning at Home

The Department has expanded its at-home care and learning supports for families.

New supports include:

- [Guidance for Early Learning at Home](#): A guidance document that walks families step-by-step through the process of creating a productive daily schedule, including tips and sample schedules, along with age-appropriate, play-based learning activities to enhance that schedule.
- [Noggin Cares](#): The Department has partnered with Noggin, Nickelodeon's learning service for children age 2 and above, to offer a free, three-month subscription to families. The app is loaded with read-aloud e-books, learning games, songs, and other engaging content. It also provides ideas for off-screen family activities, and it provides special content to help young children cope during this time.

NEW Continuous Learning and Academic Resources

Continuous Learning for Early Learning Centers

Many early learning centers have supported children and families through continuous learning

- **Carousel Preschool in Jefferson parish** has developed weekly learning packets that include Creative Curriculum and Mighty Minute resources and lesson plans as well as materials like clay, construction paper, scissors, and other supplies that are available for pick up in the mailbox, or for delivery by school staff. There is also a center Facebook group where teachers and families can post and review lessons and activities, as well as connect as a community.
- **Wilcox Academy of Early Learning in Orleans parish** has teachers leading weekly 30 minute lessons for each classroom group using Frog Street curriculum. They are also incorporating family learning opportunities like scavenger hunts that extend learning. Teachers also use this opportunity to read requested books and sing favorite classroom songs, and connect with families on child development.

Continuous Learning

Supporting Learning at Home

Community networks are responding to the crisis by supporting educators to establish new communication norms with families and caregivers to support learning at home.

Many networks are assessing technology access for families in their communities and working to provide necessary devices and wireless hotspots to support digital learning, like [Google Hangouts](#) & [Classroom](#), Facebook Live, [YouTube](#), and [Zoom](#).

- Tangipahoa teachers are creating and sharing parent-friendly [lesson plans](#) each week complete with links, videos, and at-home activities. These lesson plans have been shared with all early learning centers.
- Using Frog Street Curriculum, Iberville Parish created a [YouTube channel](#) complete with lessons conducted by PK3 and PK4 teachers.

NEW Events

Teacher Leader Summit

The Louisiana Department of Education is shifting the 2020 Teacher Leader Summit from its in-person format to a series of interactive webinars for as many sessions as possible.

The 2020 Teacher Leader Summit: The Virtual Series will take place from May 28 to June 5. It will bring together a host of educators and content experts who are focused on creating meaningful growth for every student, every day. Educators will share their knowledge, learn new skills, and prepare for the 2020-2021 school year.

[Registration will open at 8 a.m. on April 30.](#)

Next Steps

Next Steps

Guidance and Communications

- Two upcoming webinars:
 - Lead agency and CCR&R webinar on supply distribution on Monday, May 4
 - Webinar on [Early Childhood Strong Start 2020](#) on Thursday, May 7 at 2:30 p.m.
- All guidance will be linked here, including these slides:
<https://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/covid-19>
- Email any questions to LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov
- Check the [ECE FAQ](#) and the [School System FAQ](#), which are updated frequently
- **Please email any closures as soon as possible to the support inbox.**

Previously Communicated Information

Closures

Closures

Decision-making

Early learning centers make individual decisions about whether or not to close their businesses

- Louisiana Department of Health has recommended the first step in determining to close an early childhood center is to consult [the Office of Public Health Regional Contacts](#).
- When center closures are necessary, notify LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov and note the center name, license number, location, and details of the closure.
- When planning to reopen, notify LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov and note the center name, license number, location, and date of reopening.
- Review the [LDOE's webpage on COVID-19](#).
- Communicate clearly to staff and families regarding your plan for handling tuition and payroll during any closure.

Licensing Updates

Licensing Updates

March, April, and May license renewals will be extended.

Licenses will be extended for 90 days for providers whose licenses expire in March, April, and May 2020.

- March renewals will be extended to June.
- April renewals will be extended to July.
- May renewals will be extended to August.

Annual inspections will be postponed or delayed with a focus on complaints and incidents. Delays of annual inspections by the Office of State Fire Marshal and the Office of Public Health will not negatively affect license renewals.

License Renewals

Please complete Jot Form for March, April, and May license renewal.

The CAFÉ Provider Portal is currently down. In order to process your March, April, or May renewal application, please complete the form that was emailed to you.

Please included the following with the Renewal Application form:

- Current approval from Office of Public Health,
- Current approval from Office of State Fire Marshal,
- Current approval from City Fire (if applicable),
- Current General Liability Insurance
- LDOE Office of Early Childhood Academic Approval (if Type III center)

If you have any questions, contact your Licensing Consultant at 225-342-9905 or ldelicensing@la.gov.

Licensing Updates

Change Requests

Change requests to accommodate out of school children or additional children.

- Early learning centers **do not** need to submit a change request in CAFE.
- Early learning centers can make change requests to their [Licensing Consultant](#) via email for the following:
 - Age range
 - Hours of operation
 - License Type
 - Increase in Capacity

Licensing Updates

Allowances to adjust for staffing

Additional allowances to provide flexibility regarding staffing.

The Department will:

- Extend time for approval for license renewals from the Office of State Fire Marshal and Office of Public Health from 90 days of the date of the license expiration to 120 days from the date of the license expiration.
- Decrease the staff age requirement from 18 years or older to include 16 and 17 year olds to be included in the child-to-staff ratio if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member.
- Waive continuing education requirements (i.e. clock hours) and proof of documentation requirements.

Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC)

Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBC) Fees Waived

The CCCBC staff will continue to process background checks and provide updates of fingerprint services as the situation requires.

BESE has temporarily waived the following:

- The LDOE \$15.00 CCCBC admin fee
- The LDOE \$15.00 out of state fee
- The DCFS \$25.00 fee

Importantly, those individuals that have previously been determined ineligible or for whom you receive notice of ineligibility are prohibited from being on the premises.

CCCBC questions should be sent directly to valerie.black@la.gov.

Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBC)

Fingerprint Locations

There are only a few fingerprint locations that remain open and most have reduced their hours. Please check this [list](#) and contact the location ahead of time. The Department's staff will be diligently processing CCCBC applications.

- If a fingerprint location has closed in your area, please notify valerie.black@la.gov.

Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBC)

Responses to Questions on CCCBC documentation

- Prior to starting work a new employee must apply and be fingerprinted for a CCCBC.
- For volunteers, the child care provider should apply for a CCCBC for the volunteer through the CCCBC System. If there are any hurdles in applying for the CCCBC contact valerie.black@la.gov.

Care for Critical Services Personnel

Care for Critical Services Personnel

Louisiana's Approach

The LDOE is working with CCR&Rs and providers around the state to support the child care needs of essential workers who must continue working during the COVID-19 outbreak.

- 1. Emergency CCAP expansion:** Effective March 23, 2020, families of “essential critical infrastructure workers” working in response to the COVID-19 outbreak are eligible for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Families who cannot afford care will be prioritized. For more information, please click [here](#).
- 2. Certifying new family home and in-home providers:** The LDOE has expedited the approval of new in-home and family child care providers certified to care for children of essential workers through CCAP. For more information, please click [here](#).
- 3. CCR&R contracts for respite care:** The LDOE is working with CCR&Rs around the state to establish hospital/child care center partnerships in cases where a large number of hospital staff require child care.

LDOE Opening CCAP Eligibility to Critical Personnel Amid COVID-19 Outbreak

Families of essential critical infrastructure employees will be made eligible for 30 days. The LDOE will reevaluate eligibility at that time.

- **There are limited federal funds available to support these personnel, and CDC guidelines recommend social distancing for all families.**
 - Families who can keep their children at home should
 - Families who can afford to pay for their own care should
- Families must complete an [application](#) and submit it to:

Email: LDOECOVID19support@la.gov

Fax: 225-376-6049

If email is not available, application can be mailed:

CCAP Household Eligibility

P.O. Box 260037

Baton Rouge, LA 70826

NEW Care.com Partnership

Agenda For Children, the [Child Care Resource & Referral Agency](#) for the southeast region of the state, has established a statewide partnership with Care.com for home-based providers and families.

- For the next three months, Care.com is offering its **premium membership at no cost** to Louisiana home-based child care providers and essential workers who are seeking child care.
- Care.com's premium membership allows families to connect with home-based child care providers directly.
- Families seeking care will still be required to pay out-of-pocket for the provider, but the premium service makes it easier for families to find and connect with providers.

To learn more or to sign-up for the premium membership, visit www.Care.com/Louisiana.

CCAP Update

Family and In-Home Provider Increase

Family and in-home child care providers can now be qualified to receive the same subsidy amount as Type III early learning centers for all children funded through CCAP. All providers will be funded at the same rate through April with the possibility of extension if feasible and necessary.

Providers are paid a daily rate for their services, based on the number and age of CCAP-eligible children children they care for. If the provider's rate is higher than the state rate, families must pay the difference.

Provider Type	Age 3 and up	Age 1-2 (Toddler)	Age 0 (Infant)	Special Needs Age 3 and up	Special Needs Age 1-2 (Toddlers)	Special Needs Age 0 (Infant)
Type III Center	\$22.00	\$23.75	\$25.00	\$27.72	\$29.93	\$31.50
Family Child Care Provider	\$22.00	\$23.75	\$25.00	\$27.72	\$29.93	\$31.50
In-Home Child Care	\$22.00	\$23.75	\$25.00	\$27.72	\$29.93	\$31.50

Becoming registered and certified for CCAP

2 Easy Steps

Step 1 (Registration): Complete and submit the following to ldelicensing@la.gov:

- Signed CCAP Provider agreement for [Family Child Care Providers](#) or [In-Home Providers](#)
- Copy of a valid driver's license or government issued photo ID AND copy of social security card
- [Pre-service Orientation](#) Certificate AND completed [Emergency Plan](#)
- CCCBC – State whether you are eligible, provisional, or in progress. If you do not have a CCCBC you can apply at <https://cccbldoe.la.gov/> and many fees are waived.
- CPR & Pediatric First Aid Certificate. Certificate can be obtained [online](#) (\$14.95)

Step 2 (Certification): Complete and submit the following to providercertification@la.gov:

- [Provider rate agreement](#) - Verification of rates charged (notice to parents such as newsletter, memo, etc)
- [Completed W-9](#), [completed direct deposit form](#) AND voided imprinted check
- Residence verification of physical address

More information is provided [here](#).

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Payments and eligibility

The Department will pay for enrollment versus attendance, and provide flexibility for families regarding redetermination periods and reporting requirements.

The Department will:

- As of March 16, pay all authorized children the full weekly amount regardless of the number of days or hours they attended.
- Waive CCAP copayments for families
- Extend family redeterminations for 3 months
- Extend reporting deadlines for eligibility determinations

A CCAP child's inability to attend a center during this time WILL NOT adversely affect their eligibility. They will continue to be eligible through their redetermination period.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Response to Questions Related to Report of Changes

The following changes can be made for children funded through CCAP:

- Change authorization from part time to full time
- Add CCAP authorization for sibling
- Change to a different CCAP authorized center for a child authorized for CCAP

Families should take **one** of the following steps:

- complete a [CCAP 10 Report of Changes form](#)
- email LDECCAP@la.gov with the request to change the authorization
- call 1-877-453-2721 with the request to change the authorization

Child care centers and providers can begin serving these children as full time immediately, but you will not be reimbursed until the parent changes the authorization.

Families can continue to apply for CCAP through [CAFE](#), and applications are being expedited.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Example of zero copayment

If the family has a copay of \$2, \$3, \$8, or \$10, it will be waived. They will receive the maximum rate for the age of their child according to the 2019 State Maximum Levels chart. An example of how the payment will change for a family that has a \$3 copay is below:

	Daily Rate and Standard Copay	Daily Rate and *NEW* Copay Waived
Provider Charge for Toddlers	\$31.00	\$31.00
State Max CCAP Rate for Toddlers	\$23.75	\$23.75
Required Copay for Family	\$3.00	\$0.00
Total CCAP Payment to Provider	\$20.75	\$23.75
Total Family Payment to Provider	\$10.25	\$7.25

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Responses to Questions on Payments for Closures

The Department will continue CCAP payments for enrolled CCAP children in the event that a center closes as a result of COVID 19.

In the event of a center closure, CCAP payments will continue in order to support centers to pay staff.

Payments will be based on enrollment, meaning centers will be paid for CCAP authorized children the full weekly amount regardless of the number of days or hours they attended.

This means that full-time children will be paid for 22 days or units monthly, and part-time will be paid for 20 hours weekly.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

TOTS machines

If a lead agency closes a building where TOTS machines are located, they must inform LDOE by email at LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov.

- The LDOE will keep the [TOTS locations](#) list updated in the event Heads of Household are looking for a TOTS location.
- If a family is not able to access a location in their area, the Provider must keep manual attendance records until the TOTS location is open again.
- Contact the Provider Help Desk (225-342-1879 or 225-342-7414) or Call Center (1-877-453-2721) for individual questions.

The use of TOTS finger imaging is strongly encouraged to continue to the extent possible but not required.

LDOE Opening CCAP Eligibility to Critical Personnel Amid COVID-19 Outbreak

Effective 3/23/2020, children of “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers” working with COVID-19 are eligible on a case-by-case basis for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).

Essential critical infrastructure workers belong to the following industries:

- HealthCare/Public Health
- Law Enforcement, Public Safety, First Responders
- Food and Agriculture
- Energy (electrical industry, petroleum, natural and propane gas workers)
- Waste and Wastewater
- Transportation and Logistics
- Public Works
- Communications and Information Technology
- Other Community-Based Government
- Critical Manufacturing
- Hazardous Materials
- Financial Services
- Chemical
- Defense Industrial Base

You can find the link to the this expedited application [here](#).

Respite Care

Questions and Answers

Q: What is a respite care center?

A: Centers providing respite care are funded via short-term emergency contracts through local [Child Care Resource & Referral organizations](#) or directly with the State to provide services ONLY to children of [Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers](#). Centers are being contracted with based on need/demand of hospitals in the area, quality and capacity of center, and ability to report required information.

Q: If my center is still open, but I choose to provide services only to the children of Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers that are either already enrolled at my center or are new attendees, am I considered a respite care center?

A: No, unless you are contracted either through your local CCR&R or directly with the State to provide respite care services only, you are not a respite care center as defined by the State (see question above). However, you may choose to accept, enroll, or provide services to children at your center according to the needs of your local community. Families can be qualified for [emergency CCAP](#), so you can receive funding to serve them.

Child Care Support Organizations

Child Care Support Organizations

Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs

Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program Providers may choose to move classes to a virtual (rather than in-person) format. Please email LDOECOVID19support@la.gov if your program moves to online instruction.

If your program chooses to pause instruction, please communicate this to LDOECOVID19support@la.gov

Continue to send tuition invoices on regular timelines.

Job-embedded coaching should be suspended until April 13, 2020.

Child Care Support Organizations

Mental Health Consultation

[TIKES Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation](#) is providing MHC services via telephone or a telehealth web-based platform for any individual affiliated with Type III centers, family child care providers, individuals working in respite child care centers, and other individuals that have children in their care. Please complete the request form at <https://tinyurl.com/TulaneTIKES> and a consultant will contact you as soon as possible.

They are able to assist individuals, whether or not they have received consultation previously, with issues related to:

- Child behavior and social-emotional concerns
- Supporting children during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Self-care
- Stress and coping
- Director, Teacher, and Parent Concerns
- Other concerns as needed

Academic Resources

Academic Resources

Standards and Development

In the event of school or center closure, families may find the following resources helpful in facilitating learning at home.

- [Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning & Development Standards \(ELDS\)](#) describe the particular skills and abilities that children need to develop to be successful and provide ideas for fostering their development.
- [The National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#) offers research-based resources, tips and ideas for families—from child development to reading, writing, music, math, and more!

Academic Resources

Text Services

Several programs are available to offer tips and resources for families that support early learning through text messages.

- [Bright by Text](#) provides quality information and trusted resources to families of children prenatal to age eight partnering with LPB. Text: LPB to 274448
- [Vroom](#) offers free, easy-to-use learning tips for children 5 and under delivered daily directly to your phone. Sign up for free at <https://www.vroom.org/>.
- [Ready4K](#) is an evidence-based family engagement curriculum delivered via text messages. Text: Readby4th to 70138

** Message & data rates apply.*

Academic Resources

Online Learning

Frog Street's partner, Education technology provider Age of Learning, is offering families at schools and centers affected by closure free at-home access to research-proven learning resources.

- [ABCmouse.com[®] Early Learning Academy](https://www.ABCmouse.com/EarlyLearningAcademy) is a comprehensive, research-validated curriculum for children 2-8. Visit www.ABCmouse.com/redeem and redeem your access code.
- [ReadingIQ[®]](https://www.ReadingIQ.com) is a digital library and literacy platform for children 2-12 designed by reading experts to improve literacy skills. Visit www.ReadingIQ.com/redeem and redeem your access code.

Families can use the redeem code: **SCHOOL3673** to sign up. Questions can be sent to support@aofl.com

Academic Resources

Online Learning

Teaching Strategies, creator of [The Creative Curriculum](#)® and [GOLD](#)®, has developed a free toolkit for supporting families impacted by COVID-19.

The [Healthy at Home](#) toolkit offers a free selection of resources from *The Creative Curriculum*® and *ReadyRosie*™ providing families with information and resources for supporting the children in their care.

Academic Resources

Online Learning

Teachstone, creator of CLASS[®], has resources for early childhood educators and families to promote interactions and support child learning during COVID-19.

With the current coronavirus (COVID-19) situation, all of us are figuring out how to adjust our daily routines and help prevent the spread of the virus. Interactions matter now more than ever for educators, parents, children, and communities.

[Teachstone's Coronavirus Resources for Educators and Parents](#) page features blog posts, webinars, and downloadable resources available for families and educators. Use these resources to learn about the importance of interactions, plan activities for children, and incorporate CLASS[®] concepts into your daily routines.

[The CLASS[®] at Home](#) is another great resource for families explaining what domain interactions look like at home and the importance of each.

Academic Resources

Online Learning

In partnership with **Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB)**, the Department will provide distance and home learning tools for educators, students, and caregivers. This will include:

- **An online hub for distance learning supports** set to launch by March 18. It will include:
 - Department-reviewed lessons and resources for math, ELA, social studies, science and early childhood, including links to Tier 1 [curriculum resources](#).
 - Increased access to Tier 1 curriculum digital content, including virtual lessons.
 - Resources to teach young children about COVID-19.
- **Broadcasted educational programming** through LPB and YouTube Channels, which will launch within the next two weeks.

The Department will announce the availability of these resources through all upcoming planning calls and newsletters.

Academic Resources

Special Education

School closure. When the school closure causes educational services for all students to pause within a school or school system, then the school/school system is generally not required to provide services to children with disabilities during the closure. This includes children with disabilities ages 3, 4, and 5 who have an IEP.

After an extended closure, school systems are responsible for reviewing how the closure impacted the delivery of special education and related services on each child. If the child lost progress, teams will need to reassess services and determine whether the child requires compensatory education.

US Department of Education [Q&A](#) on special education has additional information, including information on Early Steps / IDEA Part C for infants and toddlers, and Distance Education.

Academic Resources

Special Education

Early Intervention and Home Visiting. Services will continue with added consideration to the health and safety of families and early interventionists to include:

- a telephone screening process for home visits to support limiting visitors in child care centers; and
- alternate locations for services and teletherapy if onsite services are not an option.

If a child cannot undergo evaluation using teletherapy or alternate locations, an interim IFSP can be developed using presumptive eligibility, then re-determined, or eligibility determination can be postponed with parent consent and documentation.

Part C to Part B Transition Conferences. Family Service Coordinators will continue to schedule transition conferences and provide notification to the LEA contact(s) for the school system. If the LEA representative is unavailable, all documentation will be shared.

Academic Resources

Family Guidance during Emergencies

Closures will result in changes in routine and some anxiety for children. Share these resources with families to support their conversations with young children.

[Parent and Caretaker guide for helping families cope with COVID 19](#)

[Just For Kids: A Comic Exploring The New Coronavirus](#)

[Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) - A Parent Resource \(English Resource\)](#)

[Talking to Children About COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) - A Parent Resource \(Spanish Resource\)](#)

Academic Resources

CLASS[®] Professional Development Resources

Teachstone is offering free courses with learning resources from the myTeachstone CLASS[®] professional development platform to support educators in a variety of roles.

- **Teachers** - See exemplar videos of real classroom footage featuring high-quality interactions from each CLASS[®] domain.
- **Coaches** - Find tools to support distance coaching and digital learning. Feel free to share access to these resources with teachers.
- **Parents** - Watch exceptional classroom interactions and reflect on how you might try out some of what you're seeing at home.

To Access the Content: Go to <https://dashboard.teachstone.com/>, click the Activate a Product Key button, and enter: **5LMQ6ZQV23FNM56S**

Academic Resources

Tier 1 Curriculum Vendors

The LDOE Continuous Education Toolkit contains [Academic Resources](#) to support learning using high-quality instructional tools. This document is updated weekly.

Recent updates to the [Academic Resources](#) document include or will include soon:

- [Frog Street for Young Learners](#) offers access to over 250 electronic books, activities, and songs from their curriculum. Access to these collections is **FREE** during school closures due to COVID-19.
- All Teaching Strategies GOLD® teachers now have access to The Creative Curriculum®, [Digital Curriculum Resources](#) at no additional cost through June 30. More information can be found in Teaching Strategies' [press release](#) and [YouTube video](#).
- Teaching Strategies is supporting parents and families at home by offering access to their newest digital product, [ParentPal™](#), at no cost through June 30, 2020. [ParentPal™](#) promotes active, engagement and developmentally appropriate milestone progress from birth through age 3.

Continuous Learning

Supporting Learning at Home

To support continuous learning at home for early childhood, it is necessary that educators engage families and caregivers and so they can facilitate interactions and learning at home.

Many early childhood lead agencies have encouraged family and caregiver engagement to ensure that learning continues at home. In many cases:

- Community networks have worked to strengthen engagement with families by using platforms like [ClassDojo](#), [Remind](#), [Google Hangouts](#) & [Classroom](#), and Apple FaceTime.
- Teachers are providing the curricular materials, both paper and online, to parents, so that children can continue learning at home.
- In turn, families and caregivers are working in partnership with educators to use the instructional resources and materials to facilitate learning at home.

Continuous Learning

Supporting ECE Teachers

In a unique effort to be responsive to teachers who are at home with their own families, some networks have formed committees as an informal PLC to identify high-quality, family-friendly activities/materials.

Some networks are creating teacher committees who plan the weekly curriculum-based learning assignments and schedules.

- [Tangipahoa](#) and [Livingston](#) are two examples of networks who showed success with early childhood committees focused on planning weekly activities and materials for literacy, math, science, and phonemic awareness.

Other networks are utilizing instructional coaches to assist in planning and preparing lessons, materials, and schedules.

- [Desoto's](#) MMCI coordinator is planning lessons and activities for lead teachers to utilize and communicate to families each week.

Continuous Learning

Head Start Activities

Some Head Start and Early Head Start grantees have reported prioritizing their supports to ensure that families have the basic necessities and the emotional resources needed during this uncertain time.

Head Start grantees have reported supporting families with a strong focus on health, safety, and wellness.

- [United Way of Acadiana Early Head Start](#) has established a meal prep program to help feed families, distributing breakfast, snack, and lunch grab-and-go frozen meals for the week, as well as a weekly lesson materials packet, a 'Coronavirus Newsletter,' and information on local health resources and services.
- Other Head Starts have reported collecting donations of supplies, foods, clothes, and diapers, and surveying and distributing to families in need, as well as working to connect families with community resources that they may need.

Access and Accountability Updates

Accountability

Local and Third Party Observations

The Department is suspending all local and third party CLASS observations until April 13.

Out of an abundance of caution, the Department is suspending CLASS® observations from taking place in schools and centers until school systems reopen on April 13, 2020.

BESE has approved a [Bulletin 140](#) waiver to extend the deadline for the spring observation period until May 31, 2020.

If observations are unable to occur in centers and schools by this deadline, the Department will work with programs and lead agencies to determine how to calculate performance ratings.

Accountability Update

Performance Ratings after COVID-19

Bulletin 140 policy provides BESE with flexibility in how performance ratings are issued after an emergency or disaster.

- Section 523 of [Bulletin 140](#) provides flexibility in how Performance Ratings are issued for “severe impact sites,” including those impacted by extended closures and reductions in group size and attendance.
- Based on Bulletin 140 policy, all sites **can opt into** receiving a 2019-2020 Performance Rating, in order to be eligible for CCAP Bonus Payments and School Readiness Tax Credits in 2021.
 - The Department will compare each site’s Performance Score based on 2019-2020 observations with the 2018-2019 Performance Score, and **will use the higher of the two**.
- **Next Steps:** The Early Childhood Team will be reaching out with more information for lead agencies and sites in the coming weeks. No action needs to be taken by sites or lead agencies at this time.

LA 4 and NSECD Payments and Reporting

- During school closures, LA-4 and NSECD payments will continue based on enrollment.
- Please submit NSECD and LA-4 invoices by the 10th of each month to ensure prompt payment.
- LA-4 and NSECD attendance tracking should mark the school closures in the same manner used for normal school closures for weather, holiday, etc.
- If your teams are unable to submit invoices for LA-4 and NSECD due to COVID19 hardships, please email lindsey.bradford@la.gov .

Super App Update

LA 4, NSECD, and PDG Seat Allocations

Each lead agency that submitted a Coordinated Funding Request for LA 4, NSECD, or PDG birth through three-year-old seats was notified of funding/seat allocations.

- This will include the allocation of a total of 17,094 LA 4 seats, 1,404 NSECD seats, and 625 PDG birth through three-year-old seats.
- Due to the large number of PDG seats requested (nearly 5,000) for birth through three year olds, the Department anticipates being able to **fund only ~13% of PDG seat requests.**
- Networks that are not awarded PDG seats this year should **continue to cultivate partnerships** with programs in anticipation of an increase in seat allocations next year.
- Legislative discussions will continue on the need for additional seats, and increased funding of \$25M has been proposed by the Governor.

Workforce

Department of Labor

Employee Paid Leave Rights

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) requires certain employers with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons. This may not apply to small businesses with less than 50 employees.

Generally, [the Act](#) provides that employees of covered employers are eligible for COVID-related absence:

- *Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of **paid sick leave** at the employee's regular rate of pay where the employee is unable to work because of quarantine and/or COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis; or*
- *Two weeks (up to 80 hours) of **paid sick leave** at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay because the employee is unable to work because of a bona fide need to care for an individual subject to quarantine, or to care for a child (under 18 years of age) whose school or child care provider is closed or unavailable for reasons related to COVID-19, and/or the employee is experiencing a substantially similar condition; and*
- *Up to an additional 10 weeks of **paid expanded family and medical leave** at two-thirds the employee's regular rate of pay where an employee, who has been employed for at least 30 calendar days, is unable to work due to a bona fide need for leave to care for a child whose school or child care is closed or unavailable due to COVID-19.*

CARES Act

Unemployment Benefits

Employees whose employment has been impacted by COVID-19 may be eligible for Unemployment Benefits, including expanded supports through the CARES Act.

Unemployment Benefits

Unemployment funding is available for those who have lost work or have reduced hours as a result of COVID-19.

CARES and Unemployment Insurance

An additional \$600/week in temporary Pandemic Unemployment compensation will be added to an individual's weekly benefit amount. Pandemic Unemployment also covers those not eligible for existing state programs, including self-employed individuals.

Business Interruption Documentation

Federal, state, local, and private funding will likely continue to roll out, and your record-keeping may be important to filing claims or supporting employees' claims.

Businesses are recommended to document the following, though this should not be considered a complete list:

Business closure: Document if/when your business closed, and communications to staff and families related to pay, tuition, rent or mortgage, etc.

Financial loss & Bad debt: Capture any losses (unused food, lost tuition, refunds made to families, etc.).

Employee-specific data: Document details of individual employment decisions made by you and/or your employees, and copy any support provided for unemployment claims.

Record the date, and financial impact of any decisions that you are making.

CARES Act

Supports for Early Learning Centers

The \$2T CARES Act includes relief and assistance for child care businesses, families, and communities, with EIDL funds available now.

[SBA funding for Emergency Economic Injury Disaster Grants \(EIDL\)](#)

Loan applicants may request that SBA provide an advance on the loan of up to \$10,000, distributed within three days. First come, first serve. **Per SBA, if you previously applied for the EIDL and did not request the \$10,000 advance, you should reapply.**

[Learn about CARES funding for the Child Care Marketplace](#)

Funding is being added to other federal sources to support respite care, Head Start, and expanded CCAP eligibility, as well as small business supports.

[List of CARES funding supports available to centers](#)

A list that reflects funding opportunities as of March 26, 2020.

CARES Act

Payroll Protection Program (PPP)

The PPP is a relief package that will offer two months funding for payroll, rent, and/or utilities. The application period opens Friday, April 3, and is available on a first-come, first serve basis.

[Payroll Protection Program](#) is a loan designed to provide a direct incentive for small businesses to keep their workers on the payroll.

- SBA will forgive loans if all employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest, or utilities.
- The Paycheck Protection Program will be available through June 30, 2020.
- Gather documentation to apply. A [sample application](#) is available and is subject to change before April 3.
- Apply through any existing SBA 7(a) lender or through any federally insured depository institution, federally insured credit union, and Farm Credit System institution that is participating.

State Funding

Louisiana Loan Portfolio Guaranty Program

The Louisiana Loan Portfolio Guaranty Program (LGPG) will offer loans of up to \$100,000 to Louisiana small businesses of fewer than 100 employees that are impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

A total loan pool of \$50 million will be quickly disbursed to eligible small businesses across Louisiana. The LGPG, is a partnership of:

- Louisiana Economic Development, which will provide a loan guaranty fund;
- Louisiana Bankers Association, whose membership will provide the loans;
- Louisiana Public Facilities Authority, which will administer the program.

Interested businesses may find loan details at OpportunityLouisiana.com/covid19.

A list of participating bankers will be posted at the site by Friday, April 3 as banks complete their participation agreements.

SBA Supports

USDA Resources for Rural Communities

Centers in rural communities, as defined by the USDA and its Federal partners, can access programs that provide immediate and long-term assistance to those affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

[These programs](#) can support recovery efforts for rural residents, businesses and communities through:

- technical, training, and management assistance;
- financial assistance; and
- state and local assistance.

This resource matrix organizes funding opportunities identified in the CARES Act and other federal resources that can help support rural America.

Opportunities are categorized by customer and assistance type.

Legal and Regulatory Flexibilities

Legal and Regulatory Flexibilities

- BESE has approved an additional round of waivers: [BESE Emergency Waiver Memo](#) (updated April 3)
- Additional regulation may be requested as necessary.

Food Services

Food Services

Questions and Answers

Q: Can children from public and private schools get meals from child care centers?

A: At this time, centers can only serve enrolled children and cannot serve children above their licensed capacity.

Q: If a center does not participate in CACFP, are they allowed to pick up food at local public schools for the children at their center?

A: Schools operating open feeding sites serve all children age 18 and under. Centers should contact the local school system to determine schools that are operating open feeding sites and work with the site on food delivery arrangements.

Q: Can school systems bring food to our centers or let us pick food up?

A: Centers should contact their local school systems to make meal service arrangements.

Food Services

Various food service options are available for early learning centers and children.

New waivers increase CACFP flexibility, allowing child care programs to opt into waivers on:

- Meal Service Time Flexibility
- Non-Congregate Feeding
- Delivery of Meals (only if you intend to deliver meals)
- Meal Pattern Flexibility (on a meal by meal basis)

For institutions operating CACFP only use this [form](#). For more information on federal CACFP guidance, visit [the CACFP COVID-19 resources page](#).

In addition, the [School Meal Sites Interactive Map](#) and [schoolmealfinder.hoonuit.com](#) provides the most current listing of schools providing meals for children 18 years of age and younger during the closure.

For questions related to food and nutrition programs, contact childnutritionprograms@la.gov.

Events