

Early Childhood
IMPROVING SCHOOL READINESS

COORDINATED
ENROLLMENT
SELF-ASSESSMENT
RESULTS:

Summer 2015

KEY UPDATES ON UNIFYING EARLY CHILDHOOD IN LOUISIANA

In June 2015, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) passed [Bulletin 140: Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Network](#), which establishes a statewide quality rating and improvement system that defines expectations for coordinated observations and coordinated enrollment. Every community across the state is participating in the 2015–2016 Learning Year and will receive a practice performance rating and profile. This policy marks progress in implementing Act 3 (2012), which charged BESE with unifying the multiple publicly-funded early childhood programs to create a high-quality statewide system. Communities across Louisiana volunteered to pilot approaches to implementation, and the Department used the lessons learned from these innovative leaders to plan for the statewide system established by Bulletin 140.



HOW COORDINATED ENROLLMENT HELPS CHILDREN

Improving access is central to ensuring all children enter kindergarten ready to succeed. However, enrollment processes can be very complicated for families. Enrollment challenges may include:

- Families do not have a primary contact to learn about all early childhood programs in the community.
- Families have to go to too many places to determine if they are eligible for a program and apply.
- Families may be on a waitlist for one provider while another in the community has empty seats.

No single provider (schools, Head Start, or child care) can serve all families and prepare all children. Therefore, each community has to work together. Coordinated enrollment results in the most number of children being served as:

- Families know of all available seats,
- Families have an easy way to know what they are eligible for and apply, and
- Families do not occupy more than one seat, thus ensuring maximum use of available slots

LEGISLATION SEEKS TO IMPROVE COORDINATION

[Bulletin 140](#) continues the work of Act 717 (2014) by requiring a second assessment of the extent to which early childhood providers coordinate their enrollment efforts.

As defined by Act 717 (2014), coordination involves four key areas:

1. **Coordinated Information Campaign:** Inform families about the availability of publicly-funded early childhood care and education programs serving children four years of age or younger;
2. **Coordinated Eligibility Determination:** Coordinate enrollment, eligibility criteria, and waiting lists to ensure that families are referred to other available publicly-funded early childhood programs should they be ineligible for or unable to access their primary choice;
3. **Coordinated Application:** Collect family preferences regarding enrollment choices for publicly-funded early childhood care and education programs; **AND**
4. **Matching Based on Preference:** Enroll at-risk children, using available public funds, based upon stated family preferences. (e.g., a family ranks their preference of sites and communities match the family to their highest ranked preference available)

Communities that do not meet the coordinated enrollment requirements established in Bulletin 140 will be subject to intervention by BESE. BESE may appoint enrollment coordinators for communities who are not working to establish a coordinated system according to the timeline and extent required in Bulletin 140.

	COORDINATED INFORMATION CAMPAIGN	COORDINATED ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION	COORDINATED APPLICATION	MATCHING BASED ON PREFERENCE
Cohorts 1 & 2	Implement all in 2015–2016 for 2016–2017 enrollment			
Cohort 3	Implement in 2015–2016 for 2016–2017 enrollment			Implement in 2016–2017 for 2017–2018 enrollment

RESULTS AND KEY LEARNINGS

In July 2015, every community in Louisiana convened their publicly-funded early childhood providers for the second year to complete a brief self-assessment across the four areas of coordinated enrollment.

1) More communities achieve full coordination. The number of communities fully coordinating triples with 10 Community Networks having developed a fully coordinated enrollment system. Five of these communities are cohort 2 pilots who were able to achieve full coordination in their first year. The result of their efforts is that families had a much easier time understanding the enrollment process and applying to programs.

Cohort 1 Pilots: Ascension, Cameron, Jackson, Ouachita/City of Monroe, West Baton Rouge

Cohort 2 Pilots: Allen, Jeff Davis, Morehouse*, Sabine, Winn

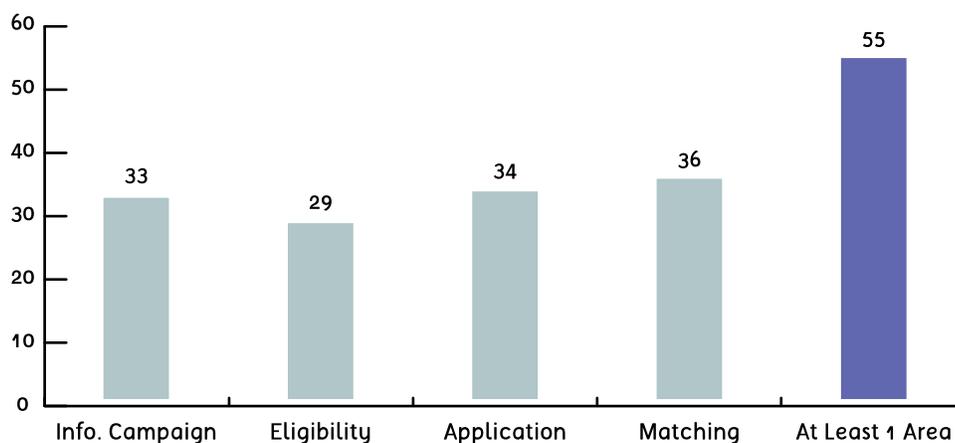
* The MORE network of Morehouse made enormous strides to achieve full coordination. For more information about how they accomplished the full model of Coordinated Enrollment, see the case study at the end of the report.

BEST PRACTICE: “In Sabine, we know that none of our programs can serve all of our children – coordinated enrollment supports our community to serve more children. We collaborated as a network to create a single unified application for preschool, Head Start, and child care, and worked closely across providers to refer families on the waiting list to the available seats at our child care. By coordinating enrollment, families are now better informed about all of the options in Sabine parish, and more children are able to access seats.”

~ Melyssa Snelling, Sabine Parish Community Network

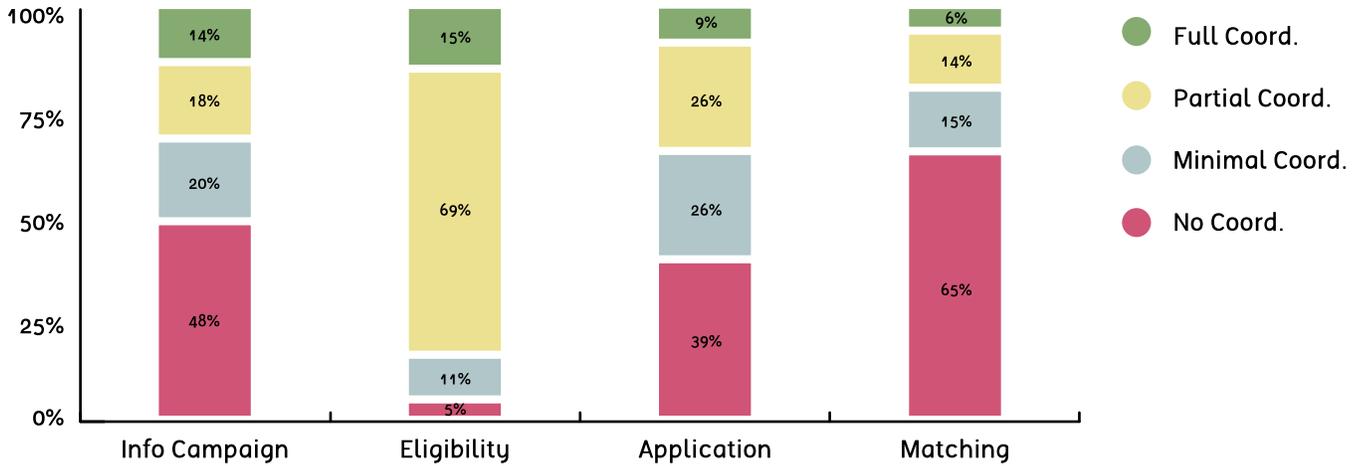
2) Nearly 90% of Communities show improvement in coordination. The self-assessment results demonstrate that more than 85% of communities have improved their coordination in at least one area since the 2014 self-assessment.

2015 NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES IMPROVING

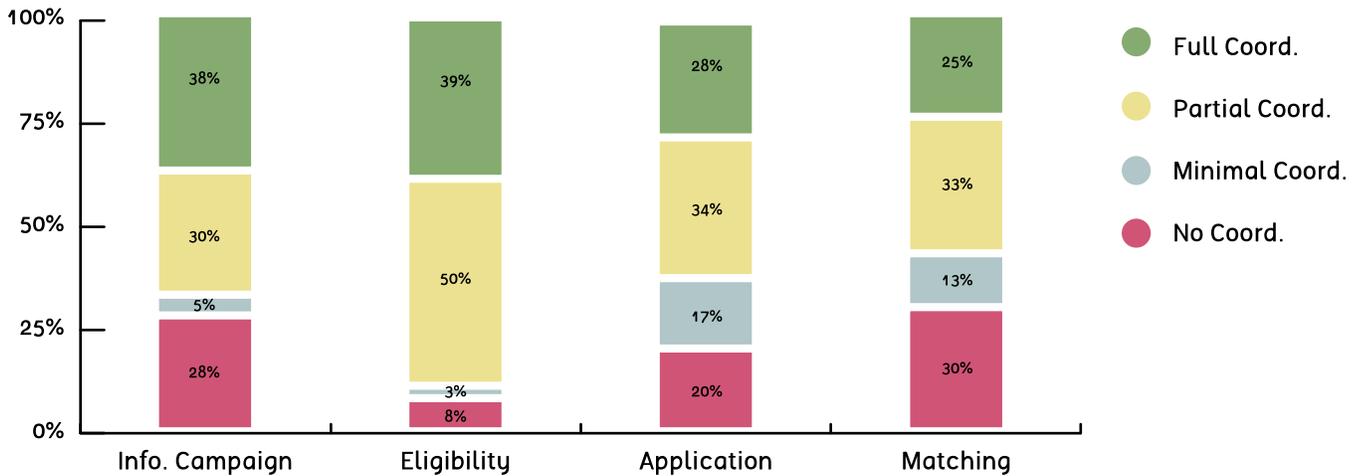


Coordination across each area is at different levels statewide, but more than half the state is at least partially coordinating across the four areas, an improvement from no to minimal coordination last year. Additionally, the plurality of communities has improved from no coordination in three areas (information campaigns, applications, and matching) to partial coordination.

2014 PERCENT OF COMMUNITIES AT EACH LEVEL



2015 PERCENT OF COMMUNITIES AT EACH LEVEL



BEST PRACTICE: “Planning for coordinated enrollment is helping our community improve how we serve families. At our early childhood roundups this year, each parent that walked in was able to visit booths from all of the programs in St. Martin – Head Start, PreK, and child care. Families were able to apply that day using one unified application, with the help of representatives from each provider. Our community is now working together to improve the process for families. Next year, we plan to recruit other agencies to participate and share information about safety and health as well.”

~ Nicole Angelle, St. Martin Parish Community Network

BEST PRACTICE: “An important priority for EBR was to ensure that as many families as possible were able to access early childhood seats. We created a community-wide waitlist, with all programs providing the application of any child they were unable to serve. All programs had access to the community waitlist, which was organized by zip code, and could reach out to families to let them know about their availability. Also, any time a family was unable to enroll at a specific site, they were provided a flyer, updated monthly, with programs that still had available seats in our community. As we continue to improve the coordination of our process, we are looking to move to an online system for next year.”

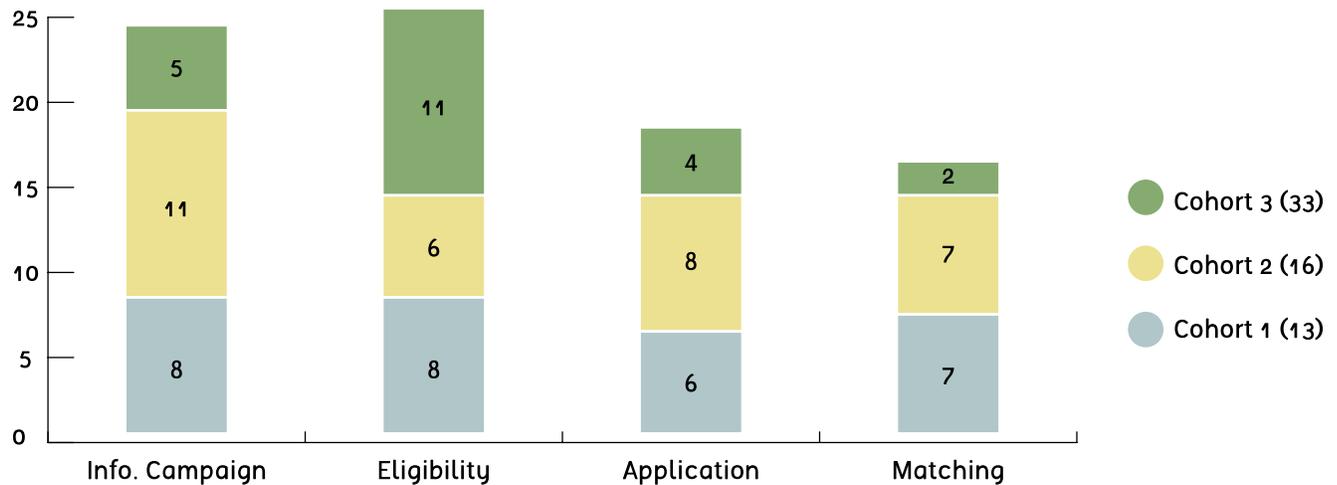
~ Leigh Griffin, East Baton Rouge Parish/Baker Community Network

3) Learning Year provides time and support for communities to continue

development. Each community has different needs they must plan for as they unify their local early childhood system and coordinate enrollment for families. The state will continue to rely on local leaders designing a coordinated system that meets the needs of their community and puts families first. The 2015-16 Learning Year provided in Bulletin 140 gives communities the time needed to develop and refine their enrollment systems.

Bulletin 140 specifies that cohorts 1 and 2 are expected to achieve implementation of coordinated enrollment this year, enrolling children through a fully coordinated process for the 2016-17 school year. Nearly half of cohort 1 and 2 pilots are already fully coordinated in a given area. Cohort 3 is expected to make progress this year and achieve full implementation of coordinated enrollment next year, enrolling children through a fully coordinated process for the 2017-18 school year. Several cohort 3 pilots have already achieved full coordination in a given area. The state will work closely with cohort 3 this year to develop their enrollment systems.

NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES FULLY COORDINATING



BEST PRACTICE: "We are excited to be a part of this work, and are looking forward to receiving assistance and guidance to improve coordinated enrollment practices in Natchitoches Parish. Representatives from Head Start, child care centers, and public schools have already begun working together to better inform families about all of the programs across our parish. We believe that with support from the Department of Education, our community network can achieve the goals of coordinated enrollment, and ensure that our early childhood programs are serving the unique needs of our community and our children."

~ Cassandra Cole, Natchitoches Parish Community Network

WHAT TO EXPECT IN 2015-2016

Every community needs to further develop their coordinated enrollment system, using their self-assessment as a baseline of what they need to focus on this year.

- Cohorts 1 and 2 will submit a coordinated enrollment plan in November 2015.
- Cohort 3 will receive in-person guidance and assistance before the submission of their coordinated enrollment plan in January 2016.



CASE STUDY: MORE NETWORK IN MOREHOUSE PARISH

The early childhood leaders in Morehouse Parish, a Cohort 2 Community Network Pilot, came together as a team to develop and implement the full model of coordinated enrollment in their first year as a pilot. A number of factors contributed to their decision to launch a fully coordinated system ahead of schedule: strong participation from their core leadership team, a pre-existing trust among partners, and the prior experience of their Lead Agency, Children's Coalition of Northeast Louisiana, with coordinated enrollment. The true key to their success was the willingness of everyone to commit to the task at hand, to closely examine traditional enrollment practices and determine where improvements could be made to better serve their families and their community.

“The Morehouse Parish Early Childhood Community has a collaborative history. Full coordination of the MORE Network was not easy, but trusting relationships and a willingness to work together made it possible.”

~ Maureen Gallagher, Children's Coalition for Northeast Louisiana

1. **Coordinated Information Campaign:** The MORE Network used several methods to inform families about the availability of publicly-funded early childhood care and education programs:

- **PR Campaign:** The community used a PR firm to design their logo, backpack flyers, advertisements, and billboards to inform the community about their network and about their early childhood roundup
- **Early Childhood Roundup:** The community conducted an early childhood roundup for families to learn more about their options and apply in one place

“The coordinated information campaign helped to raise awareness in our community about the importance of early childhood for all children. By posting billboards, circulating flyers, and running advertisements, more families were informed about all of the early childhood options in Morehouse Parish.”

~ Lois Jordan, Prep Center

2. **Coordinated Eligibility Determination:** The MORE Network worked closely to carefully identify the pieces of information needed for eligibility across all their programs. They were able to consolidate the pieces necessary for eligibility into one page that every family completed.

“As an educator, this process has allowed me to network with other early childhood entities to align practices and support for all early childhood centers. As a parent, it has magnified the importance of providing equitable access to high-quality centers for all children regardless of background. In turn, we are creating positive classroom cultures for all students. Doing so is essential for creating classrooms that will prepare all children for college or career later down the road.”

~ Crystal Washington, Morehouse Parish

3. **Coordinated Application:** On their coordinated application, the MORE Network provided families with a simple list of all options for families to rank the programs they wanted to apply for, once their eligibility was determined. The Network created and used one, paper-based, unified application for all programs, which includes specific questions needed for Head Start. Every program received the applications for which they were ranked number one and Head Start received a copy of the application if they were ranked at all by a family.

“Publicity from the coordinated information campaign let families know about my center and the availability of early childhood seats. At the end of the coordinated enrollment process in Morehouse, my center was completely filled.”

~ Ganesha Alford, Little One's Day Care

4. **Matching Based on Preference:** The MORE Network met together with all of their paper applications, and matched children to the available seats based on family preferences. Each program notified the family of their acceptance in the program, and conducted registration to collect final information that was not necessary for qualifying for the program, including health records.

“In Morehouse Parish, MCIO Head Start, Morehouse Parish School System and area child care centers collaborated to create a Coordinated Enrollment Application that would benefit all agencies. After completing the Coordinated Enrollment process we met to match students with the school of their first choice. This year was a learning experience for us and there were a few glitches but we have worked to iron those out and look forward to the upcoming school year. The greatest part has been networking with other professionals in the field of education to serve the parents and children of our community. As a federally funded program, our goal is to maintain Head Start mandates and adhere to the requirements of the State and both were accomplished.”

~ Sandra Stewart, MCIO Head Start

By coming together to collaborate on an enrollment process that worked for all partners, Morehouse was able to enroll children under the full model of Coordinated Enrollment for the 2015–2016 school year. They will continue to meet and discuss ways to refine their system, to ensure they are maximizing their resources and serving as many children as they are able.



2015 COORDINATED ENROLLMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS



Coverage Area	Preparation for Coordination	Coordinated Information Campaign	Coordinated Eligibility Determination	Coordinated Application	Matching Based on Preferences	
Statewide Average	●	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖	↗
Cohort 1 Pilot Average	●	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖	↗
Cohort 2 Pilot Average	●	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖	↗
Cohort 3 Pilot Average	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖	↗
3 Acadia	⊖	○	⊖	⊖	⊖	↗
2 Allen	●	●	●	●	●	↗
1 Ascension	●	●	●	●	●	↗
3 Assumption	●	●	●	●	⊖	↗
3 Avoyelles	●	●	●	⊖	⊖	↗
3 Beaufort	●	⊖	⊖	●	●	↗
2 Bienville	●	⊖	⊖	●	⊖	↗
2 Bossier	●	●	⊖	⊖	⊖	↗
1 Caddo	●	⊖	●	⊖	⊖	↗
1 Calcasieu	●	●	●	⊖	●	↗
3 Caldwell	●	⊖	●	⊖	●	↗
1 Cameron	●	●	●	●	●	↗
3 Catahoula/Tensas	⊖	○	●	○	○	↗
3 Central	⊖	○	⊖	○	○	↗
3 City of Bogalusa	●	●	●	○	⊖	↗
3 Concordia	●	○	⊖	○	○	↗
3 De Soto	⊖	○	●	⊖	○	↗
2 East Baton Rouge/Baker	●	●	⊖	⊖	⊖	↗
3 East Carroll	⊖	○	○	⊖	○	↗
3 Evangeline	⊖	○	⊖	○	○	↗
3 Franklin	⊖	○	○	○	○	
3 Grant	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖	↗
3 Iberia	○	○	⊖	○	○	↗
1 Iberville	●	●	⊖	●	●	↗
1 Jackson	●	●	●	●	●	↗
2 Jefferson	●	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖	↗
2 Jefferson Davis	●	●	●	●	●	↗
1 Lafayette	●	⊖	⊖	⊖	⊖	
3 Lafourche	⊖	○	⊖	⊖	○	
3 LaSalle	●	⊖	⊖	●	⊖	↗

Coverage Area	Preparation for Coordination	Coordinated Information Campaign	Coordinated Eligibility Determination	Coordinated Application	Matching Based on Preferences	
1 Lincoln	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	↗
3 Livingston	◐	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	↗
3 Madison	◐	○	○	⊘	○	↗
2 Morehouse	●	●	●	●	●	↗
3 Natchitoches	●	●	⊘	⊘	○	↗
1 Orleans	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	↗
1 Ouachita/City of Monroe	●	●	●	●	●	↗
3 Plaquemines	○	○	○	○	○	
1 Point Coupee	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	
1 Rapides	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	↗
3 Red River	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	↗
3 Richland	●	○	⊘	○	○	↗
2 Sabine	●	●	●	●	●	↗
3 St. Bernard	●	⊘	●	⊘	⊘	↗
2 St. Charles	●	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	↗
3 St. Helena/East Feliciana	○	⊘	●	⊘	⊘	↗
2 St. James	●	●	⊘	●	⊘	↗
2 St. John	●	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	↗
3 St. Landry	◐	⊘	⊘	⊘	○	↗
2 St. Martin	●	●	⊘	●	●	↗
3 St. Mary	●	⊘	●	⊘	⊘	↗
1 St. Tammany	●	●	●	⊘	⊘	↗
2 Tangipahoa	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	↗
3 Terrebonne	○	○	⊘	⊘	○	↗
1 Union	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	↗
3 Vermilion	◐	○	⊘	○	○	↗
2 Vernon	●	⊘	●	⊘	●	↗
3 Washington	●	○	○	○	○	
3 Webster/Claiborne	○	○	⊘	○	○	
1 West Baton Rouge	●	●	●	●	●	↗
3 West Carroll	○	○	●	○	○	
2 West Feliciana	●	⊘	⊘	⊘	⊘	↗
2 Winn	●	●	●	●	●	↗
3 Zachary	●	●	●	●	⊘	↗

NOTE: All data was self-reported by the communities.