Child Count Guidance for Lead Agencies

As established in Bulletin 140, community networks and sites are required to work together to submit a count of all publicly-funded classrooms and children on October 1 and February 1 of each academic year. Data collected during Child Count is critical and used by many different stakeholders.

In order to complete the annual Child Count, lead agencies will work with each childhood program partner in the community network to count and report publicly-funded children enrolled in their sites on October 1 and February 1 of each academic year.

This guidance document details three key steps to successfully completing Child Count:
Step 1: Understanding the Child Count Process
Step 2: Preparing the Community Network for Child Count
Step 3: Completing and Submitting the LDOE Child Count Template

Step 1: Understanding the Child Count Process
Prior to beginning the process to complete the October 1 or February 1 Child Count, it will be important for lead agencies to understand key rules and best practices for completing Child Count. This will ensure that children are counted accurately and consistently.

Publicly-Funded Children: Only children served through public funds should be included in the October 1 or February 1 Child Count. Use the below table to identify which public funding sources are available for each age group. For more detailed descriptions of these funding sources, reference the Overview of Early Childhood Funding Sources guidance document.

Early Childhood Funding Sources*	Infants	Ones	Twos	Threes	Fours
LA 4 – traditional, hybrid, or virtual program					X
Nonpublic School Early Childhood Development (NSECD) – may include virtual program				X	X
Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)	X	X	X	X	X
8(g) – may include virtual program					X
Title I	X	X	X	X	X
Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA Part B 619)				X	X
Early Head Start/Head Start- may include virtual program	X	X	X	X	X
Education Excellence Fund (EEF)				X	X
Local funding	X	X	X	X	X
Preschool Development Grant Birth-3 (PDG B-3)	X	X	X	X	
Reverse Mainstream					X

*Note: For the purpose of the October 1 and February 1 Child Count, public funding does NOT include the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or Food/Nutrition funding

Avoiding Duplicate Counts: The Early Childhood Child Count is intended to be an *unduplicated* count of every publicly-funded child birth through age four in the state. In order to ensure that children are only counted once, use the following best practices:
- Determine what funding source is the primary funding source for the majority of the child's instructional day, and count the child only once in that funding source.
- Only count publicly-funded children who are enrolled during the "regular" school day.
- Only count full-time children; do not count part-time children.
- Do not include the count of children enrolled in family child care or other home-based programs, unless they are participating in the Early Head Start partnership grant.
- The October 1 Child Count is a snapshot of enrollment on October 1.
- Enrollment numbers will fluctuate and change even between October 1 and the date you submit the count on October 31.

Children Receiving Special Education Services: The "IDEA ONLY" category in ages 3 and 4 is for IDEA-funded children receiving special education services who are enrolled full day in a center-, school-, or site-based program that cannot be counted in any other category. For this funding category:
- Only count children receiving special education services who are enrolled full day in a center-, school-, or site-based program.
- Do not count children receiving special education services in the home (including EarlySteps home-based children).
- Do not count children that are receiving funding primarily from another source (e.g. Title I, LA 4, etc.).

Defining Age Groups: According to Bulletin 140, a child's age cohort should be determined by the child's age on September 30 of the current school year, and not the age configuration of the classroom they are enrolled in.

Age Group	Children who have...	Child born between...
Infants	Not reached their first birthday before September 30, 2020	October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020
Ones	Reached their first birthday on or before September 30, 2020	October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019
Twos	Reached their second birthday on or before September 30, 2020	October 1, 2017 – September 30, 2018
Threes	Reached their third birthday on or before September 30, 2020	October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017
Fours	Reached their fourth birthday on or before September 30, 2020	October 1, 2015 – September 30, 2016

*Table updated annually to reflect correct dates.

COVID-19 Dual-Enrollment Considerations: As a result of school or Head Start closures or virtual/hybrid learning models, children may be dually enrolled in multiple early childhood programs. To avoid duplication of counts, lead agencies and sites should follow these two rules:
1. If a child is enrolled in a school-based pre-K program and a child care center through CCAP, the child should only be counted at their school-based pre-K site.
2. If a child is enrolled in a Head Start or Early Head Start program and a child care center through CCAP, the child should only be counted at their Head Start or Early Head Start site.

For more information on dual enrollment during COVID-19 and a graphic decision tree, see Appendix A.

Step 2: Preparing the Community Network for Child Count

The Department will provide annual guidance and data collection templates prior to October 1 and February 1 of each year. Before beginning the process, the lead agency should have a process that identifies every child by site, age, and funding source in the community network. It may be helpful for lead agencies to:

- Review community-wide procedures to ensure each program partner is prepared to identify publicly-funded children, complete data collection forms, and submit documentation to the lead agency.
- Provide program partners with guidance and templates for completing Child Count:
    - Child Count Guidance for Program Partners (for the current year)
    - Child Count Template for Program Partners (paper or digital)

Step 3: Completing and Submitting the LDOE Child Count Template for Lead Agencies

Lead agencies will complete the child count template found in the network FTP folder using the October 1 child count data obtained from sites. Step-by-step instructions for completing the template can be found in the Appendix to this document.

The LDOE Child Count Template for Lead Agencies must be saved into the Child Count FTP folder by October 31, 2020. The document should be called **October 2020_'NetworkName'_Child Count**

Additional Support and Resources

If you have questions or require additional support, please contact Sydney.Anderson@la.gov.

The Department has released other resources that may be helpful for you as you complete this process:
- Child Count Guidance for Program Partners
- Printable Child Count Template for Program Partners
- Digital Child Count Template for Program Partners

Appendix A: Determining the Primary Fund Source during COVID-19
Unique enrollment arrangements during COVID-19 may make the October 1, 2020 Child Count process more complicated.

Child Care Assistance Program is currently providing payments based on enrollment until October 31,2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Providers will count children who have active authorizations in their center. It is recommended that providers utilize their TOTS portal to verify active CCAP children.

Remember, children enrolled in school-based pre-K or Head Start hybrid or virtual learning environments who attend the Type III child care on their "non-school" days or to complete virtual instruction, should have their primary funding source coded as the school or Head Start program, and should be counted by the school or Head Start program.

Lead agencies should use the decision tree below to determine funding sources for virtual children.
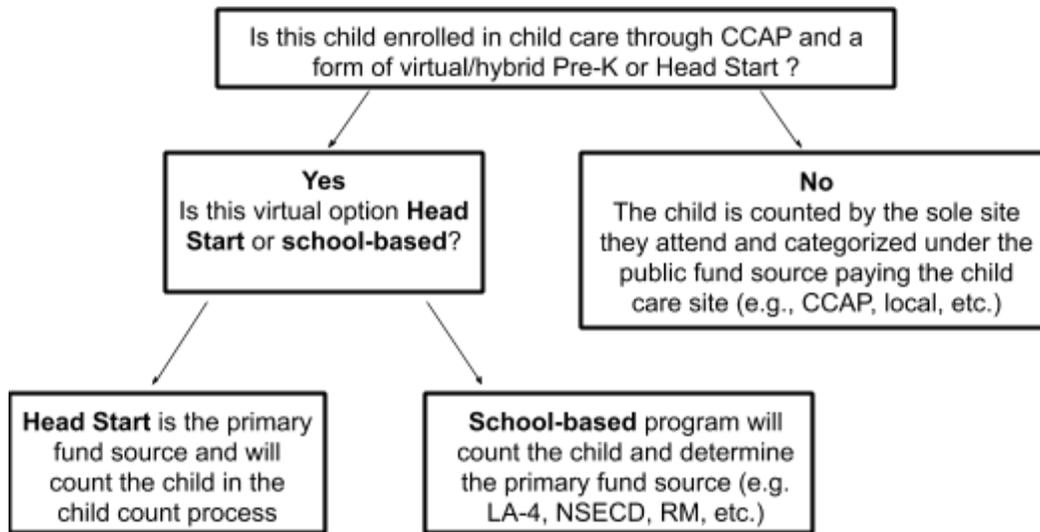
Scenario A: A child is attending Head Start two days per week and child care three days per week.

Solution:
- The Head Start is considered the primary source of funding for this child, and as such they should be counted by the Head Start for child count.
- CCAP will not be considered the primary funding source for the child in the October or February Child Count.

Scenario B: The child is attending a school-based virtual pre-K program five days per week and child care five days per week using CCAP.

Solution:
- The school-based virtual pre-K is considered the primary source of funding for this child, and as such they should be counted by the Head Start for child count.
- CCAP will not be considered the primary funding source for the child in the October or February Child Count.

Appendix B: Child Count Informational Letter Template to Share With Program Partners

The following is a sample letter template that you may use to communicate about October Child Count with program partners. You may directly copy and paste or edit the template to suit the needs of your lead agency.

Dear Early Childhood Program Provider,

The Louisiana Department of Education, Early Childhood requires your participation in the October 1, 2020 Child Count. We appreciate all the work that goes into the child count process. Together, we seek to understand how early childhood programs like this one can best support learning for young children and how to make it easier for families to find high-quality early childhood opportunities. As a publicly-funded early childhood program, your site will participate in the bi-annual Child Count (October 1 and February 1).

Materials needed to complete the Child Count:

- Child Count Template for Program Partners (digital or printable) to record the total number of children in publicly-funded seats at your site. Submit this to the lead agency, who will submit it to the Department.
- Child Count Guidance for Program Partners contains step-by-step instructions on the child count process

Please review these documents and ensure you have the resources necessary to accurately complete the child count. Please know the accuracy of the child count is vital as the state works to improve access to high-quality early learning opportunities throughout Louisiana. Please ONLY count children in your program attending through public funding sources.

The information collected from the Child Count will be used to understand enrollment trends, community needs, and network capacity within a community.

We thank you in advance for your work to support our youngest learners.

Appendix C: Overview of Child Count Template

The Child Count template is an Excel spreadsheet with one tab and 226 rows. If you need additional rows, insert them above row 226. The instructions for each column are provided below.

NOTE: There are many shaded cells in the workbook. DO NOT enter data in these cells. You will not need to calculate any totals. Do NOT enter totals in row 8. The spreadsheet calculates totals automatically.

If you choose to provide sites with a template to complete and return to you with their individual child count data, there are a few things you should check before entering this data into the LDOE Child Count Template for Lead Agencies:

- *Check to make sure the totals of children by age match the totals of children by fund source*
- *Ensure that the enrollment numbers match what you expect to see as the lead agency*

TAB TWO: October 1 Child Count – Child Count Data

Columns	Instructions
Column A – Site Type	Click on the cell under "Site Type" to select the site type from the drop-down menu
Column B – Site Name	Review site name or enter as needed
Column C – Site Code	Review site code or enter as needed
Note: This information can be copied from the CLASS® system as needed.	

Column in Template	Enter Number of Infants...
Column D – CCAP, General	without disabilities receiving child care assistance
Column E – CCAP, SPED	receiving child care assistance AND special education services
Column F – EHS, General	without disabilities and enrolled in Early Head Start
Column G – EHS, SPED	enrolled in Early Head Start AND receiving special education services
Column H – Local, General	without disabilities (meets at–risk definition) enrolled in locally-funded classrooms
Column I – Local, SPED	(meets at-risk definition) enrolled in locally-funded classrooms AND receiving special education services
Column J – PDG B-3, General	without disabilities and enrolled in PDG B-3
Column K – PDG B-3, Sped	enrolled in PDG B-3 AND receiving special education services
Column L – Total Infants	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*

Columns	Enter Number of Ones
Column M – CCAP, General	without disabilities receiving child care assistance
Column N – CCSP, SPED	receiving child care assistance AND special education services
Column O – EHS, General	without disabilities enrolled in Early Head Start
Column P – EHS, SPED	Enter number of one-year-olds enrolled in Early Head Start AND receiving special education services

Column Q – Local, General	without disabilities (meets at-risk definition) enrolled in locally-funded classrooms
Column R – Local, SPED	(meets at-risk definition) enrolled in locally-funded classrooms AND receiving special education services
Column S – PDG B-3, General	without disabilities and enrolled in PDG B-3
Column T – PDG B-3, Sped	enrolled in PDG B-3 AND receiving special education services
Column U – Total Ones	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*

Columns	Enter Number of Twos...
Column V – CCAP, General	without disabilities and receiving child care assistance
Column W– CCAP, SPED	receiving child care assistance AND special education services
Column X – EHS, General	without disabilities enrolled in Early Head Start
Column Y – EHS, SPED	enrolled in Early Head Start AND receiving special education services
Column Z – Local, General	without disabilities (meets at-risk definition) enrolled in locally-funded classrooms
Column AA – Local, SPED	(meets at-risk definition) enrolled in locally-funded classrooms AND receiving special education services
Column AB – PDG B-3, General	without disabilities and enrolled in PDG B-3
Column AC – PDG B-3, Sped	enrolled in PDG B-3 AND receiving special education services
Column AD – Total Twos	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*

Columns	Enter Number of Threes...
Column AE – CCAP, General	without disabilities receiving child care assistance
Column AF – CCAP, SPED	receiving child care assistance AND special education services
Column AG – HS, General	without disabilities enrolled in Head Start
Column AH – HS, SPED	enrolled in Early Head Start AND receiving special education services
Column AI– NSECD, General	without disabilities enrolled in NSECD
Column AJ – NSECD, SPED	enrolled in NSECD AND receiving special education services
Column AK – Local, General	(meets at-risk definition) enrolled in locally-funded classrooms AND receiving special education services
Column AL – Local, SPED	(meets at-risk definition) enrolled in locally-funded classrooms AND receiving special education services
Column AM– PDG B-3, General	without disabilities and enrolled in PDG B-3
Column AN – PDG B-3, Sped	enrolled in PDG B-3 AND receiving special education services
Column AO - IDEA only	receiving special education services in a center-, school-, or site-based program that are NOT in any other three-year-old category (e.g. CCAP, Head Start, LA 4, etc.)
Column AP – Total Threes	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*

Columns	Enter Number of Fours...
Column AQ – Fours, CCAP, General	without disabilities receiving child care assistance
Column AR – Fours, CCAP, SPED	receiving child care assistance AND special education services
Column AS – Fours, HS, General	without disabilities enrolled in Head Start
Column AT – Fours, HS, SPED	enrolled in Head Start AND receiving special education services
Column AU – Fours, LA 4, General	without disabilities enrolled in LA 4
Column AV – Fours, LA 4, SPED	enrolled in LA 4 AND receiving special education services
Column AW – Fours, 8(g), General	without disabilities enrolled in 8(g)
Column AX – Fours, 8(g), SPED	enrolled in 8(g) AND receiving special education services
Column AY – Fours, Title I, General	without disabilities enrolled in Title I
Column AZ – Fours, Title I, SPED	enrolled in Title I AND receiving special education services
Column BA – Fours, NSECD, General	without disabilities enrolled in NSECD
Column BB – Fours, NSECD, SPED	enrolled in NSECD AND receiving special education services
Column BC – Fours, EEF, General	without disabilities enrolled in EEF
Column BD – Fours, EEF, SPED	enrolled in EEF AND receiving special education services
Column BE – Fours, RM, General	without disabilities enrolled in a reverse-mainstream classroom with children who are receiving special education services
Column BF – Fours, RM, SPED	receiving special education services in a reverse-mainstream classroom
Column BG – Fours, Local, General	without disabilities (meets at-risk definition) enrolled in locally-funded classrooms
Column BH – Fours, Local, SPED	(meets at-risk definition) enrolled in locally-funded classrooms AND receiving special education services
Column BI – Fours, IDEA only	receiving special education services in a center-, school-, or site-based program that are NOT in any other four-year-old category (e.g. CCAP, Head Start, LA 4, etc.)
Column BJ – Total Fours	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*

Columns	Summary Publicly-Funded Counts by Age
Column BK – Infants Total	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*
Column BL – Ones Total	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*
Column BM – Twos Total	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*
Column BN – Threes Total	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*
Column BO – Fours Total	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*
Column BP – Total	*No action needed – This number will self-calculate*

TAB THREE: October 1 Child Count – Demographic Data

The demographic data captured in this section of the template provides us with valuable information about the specific needs of children in your community network and helps to inform our on-going efforts to deliver high-quality support and services for children and families.

Columns	Instructions
Column A – Site Type	Click on the cell under "Site Type" to select the site type from the drop-down menu
Column B – Site Name	Review site name and add as needed
Column C – Site Code	Review site code and add as needed
Note: This information has been pre-populated, but should as needed.	

Columns	Instructions for Infants
Column D – Infants , Homeless	Enter number who are homeless at a site or center
Column E – Infants, Foster	Enter number who are in foster care and at a site or center
Column F – Infants, ELL	Enter number who are ELL at a site or center
Column G – Infants, HIspanic/Latino	Enter number whose ethnicity is Hispanic/Latino at a site or center
Column H – Infants, American Indian or Alaska Native	Enter number who are American Indian or Alaska Native at a site or center
Column I – Infants, Asian	Enter number who are Asian at a site or center
Column J – Infants, Black or African American	Enter number who are Black or African American at a site or center
Column K – Infants, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Enter number who are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander at a site or center
Column L – Infants, White	Enter number who are white at a site or center
Column M – Infants, Two or More Races	Enter number who are two or more races at a site or center
Column N – Infants, Other or Unknown	Enter number whose race is not listed or is unknown

Columns	Instructions for Ones
Column O – Ones, Homeless	Enter number who are homeless at a site or center
Column P – Ones, Foster	Enter number who are in foster care and at a site or center
Column Q – Ones, ELL	Enter number who are ELL at a site or center
Column R – Ones, HIspanic/Latino	Enter number whose ethnicity is Hispanic/Latino at a site or center
Column S – Ones, American Indian or Alaska Native	Enter number who are American Indian or Alaska Native at a site or center
Column T – Ones, Asian	Enter number who are Asian at a site or center

Column U – Ones, Black or African American	Enter number who are Black or African American at a site or center
Column V – Ones, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Enter number who are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander at a site or center
Column W – Ones, White	Enter number who are white at a site or center
Column X – Ones, Two or More Races	Enter number who are two or more races at a site or center
Column Y – Ones, Other or Unknown	Enter number whose race is not listed or is unknown

Columns	Instructions for Twos
Column Z – Twos, Homeless	Enter number who are homeless at a site or center
Column AA – Twos, Foster	Enter number who are in foster care and at a site or center
Column AB – Twos, ELL	Enter number who are ELL at a site or center
Column AC – Twos, HIspanic/Latino	Enter number whose ethnicity is Hispanic/Latino at a site or center
Column AD – Twos, American Indian or Alaska Native	Enter number who are American Indian or Alaska Native at a site or center
Column AE – Twos, Asian	Enter number who are Asian at a site or center
Column AF – Twos, Black or African American	Enter number who are Black or African American at a site or center
Column AG – Twos, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Enter number who are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander at a site or center
Column AH – Twos, White	Enter number who are white at a site or center
Column AI – Twos, Two or More Races	Enter number who are two or more races at a site or center
Column AJ – Twos, Other or Unknown	Enter number whose race is not listed or is unknown

Columns	Instructions for Threes
Column AK – Threes, Homeless	Enter number who are homeless at a site or center
Column AL – Threes, Foster	Enter number who are in foster care and at a site or center
Column AM – Threes, ELL	Enter number who are ELL at a site or center
Column AN – Threes, HIspanic/Latino	Enter number whose ethnicity is Hispanic/Latino at a site or center
Column AO – Threes, American Indian or Alaska Native	Enter number who are American Indian or Alaska Native at a site or center

Column AP – Threes, Asian	Enter number who are Asian at a site or center
Column AQ – Threes, Black or African American	Enter number who are Black or African American at a site or center
Column AR – Threes, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Enter number who are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander at a site or center
Column AS – Threes, White	Enter number who are white at a site or center
Column AT – Threes, Two or More Races	Enter number who are two or more races at a site or center
Column AU – Threes, Other or Unknown	Enter number whose race is not listed or is unknown

Columns	Instructions for Fours
Column AV – Fours, Homeless	Enter number who are homeless at a site or center
Column AW – Fours, Foster	Enter number who are in foster care and at a site or center
Column AX – Fours, ELL	Enter number who are ELL at a site or center
Column AY – Fours, HIspanic/Latino	Enter number whose ethnicity is Hispanic/Latino at a site or center
Column AZ – Fours, American Indian or Alaska Native	Enter number who are American Indian or Alaska Native at a site or center
Column BA – Fours, Asian	Enter number who are Asian at a site or center
Column BB – Fours, Black or African American	Enter number who are Black or African American at a site or center
Column BC – Fours, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Enter number who are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander at a site or center
Column BD – Fours, White	Enter number who are white at a site or center
Column BE – Fours, Two or More Races	Enter number who are two or more races at a site or center
Column BF – Fours, Other or Unknown	Enter number whose race is not listed or is unknown

Columns	Instructions for Totals
Column BG:BQ – TOTALS By Demographic (Publicly-Funded ONLY)	DO NOT ENTER VALUES, THESE WILL UPDATE AUTOMATICALLY.