

2019-2020

COORDINATED FUNDING REQUEST GUIDE



Early Childhood
IMPROVING SCHOOL READINESS



CONTENTS

I. OVERVIEW	3
Louisiana’s Effort to Unify Early Childhood	3
Coordinated Funding Request.....	3
Instructions for Completing the Coordinated Funding Request	3
Public Comment	4
II. LA 4 PROGRAM OVERVIEW (FOUR-YEAR-OLD SEATS)	5
CECIL J. PICARD LA 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM Overview	5
LA 4 Provider Eligibility Requirements for 2019–2020:	5
III. NSECD OVERVIEW (FOUR-YEAR-OLD SEATS)	6
NSECD PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA for 2019–2020	6
NSECD STAFF REQUIREMENTS:	7
IV. PREK EXPANSION GRANT OVERVIEW (FOUR-YEAR-OLD SEATS)	8
PreK Expansion Grant Overview	8
PreK Expansion Grant – Opportunity to Apply.....	8
V. ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES USED TO SUPPORT ACCESS	9
CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW	9
HEAD START	9
8(g) LOUISIANA’S QUALITY EDUCATION SUPPORT FUND OVERVIEW	10
TITLE I PART A OVERVIEW	10
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA) PROGRAMS.....	10
APPENDIX A	11
DIVERSE DELIVERY – QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION WHEN ESTABLISHING A PARTNERSHIP	11
APPENDIX B	11
REQUIRED PROGRAM ASSURANCES (submitted after allocations are final.)	11

I. OVERVIEW

LOUISIANA'S EFFORT TO UNIFY EARLY CHILDHOOD

Louisiana is in a multi-year effort to unify its early childhood system and improve kindergarten readiness. To address a fragmented early childhood system that prepares only 54% of children for kindergarten, Louisiana passed a law (Act 3, 2012) to unify preschool, Head Start and child care programs into a statewide early childhood network. Louisiana also seeks to bring early childhood programs together within communities to coordinate enrollment processes that are driven by family choices. By empowering families with choice and ensuring easy access to high-quality options, the state seeks to start every child on track for success.

COORDINATED FUNDING REQUEST

Section 709 of [Bulletin 140](#) requires that each Lead Agency submit a Coordinated Funding Request on behalf of their Community Network to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE). The purpose of the Coordinated

Funding Request is to request seats for **LA 4, NSECD, and PreK Expansion Grant for the 2019–2020 school year**. The Coordinated Funding Request is limited to the funding sources for which the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) has oversight, and should reflect the choices of families within the community. These programs serve at-risk children only, and have eligibility requirements for children and families. To guide Lead Agencies and Community Networks through completing the Coordinated Funding Request Template, the LDE has created this guide, which describes each funding source and the opportunity to apply for seats.

Note that the Coordinated Funding Request does not guarantee funding for any program. Due to limited funding, all requests may not be granted. There are many ways to fund early childhood education outside of the funds allocated through BESE and the LDE.

For a list of Lead Agencies, click here: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/early-childhood-community-network-lead-agency-list.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

Please review the entire guide and instructions before completing the Coordinated Funding Request.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE COORDINATED FUNDING REQUEST

Within the Coordinated Funding Request, Lead Agencies are able to request that current seats be continued and that new seats be added. Lead Agencies can also rank sites for each funding source in order of preference to receive funding, given that not all requests may be filled. Rankings are not required, but will be helpful for the state to understand the community's preferences for locating seats.

- Each Lead Agency will submit **ONE** Coordinated Funding Request per Community Network
- LA 4 must be requested at the LEA level
- NSECD and existing PreK Expansion Grant seats must be requested at the site level
- The Coordinated Funding Request should be used to request:
 - » Continued funding for current seats
 - » Additional funding for new seats
- Community Networks should consider the following when completing the Coordinated Funding Request:
 - » **Parent Choice:** Where do families want to enroll their children?
 - » **Demand:** Are families in particular geographic areas currently underserved?
 - » **Quality Measures:** Has the Community Network want established criteria for ranking requests (e.g., use of ratings from Performance Profiles ratings or just satisfactory participation in the Community Network)?
 - » **Capacity:** Can the site serve the number of children for which it is requesting seats?
- Lead Agencies are required to ensure that there is an opportunity for public comment on the Coordinated Funding Request before submission

Coordinated Funding Requests are due in Lead Agency FTP folders by December 1, 2018.

Each site should only request the number of seats it can serve. Sites should NOT duplicate requests for seats through multiple funds (for example, requesting funding for the same 20 seats through NSECD and PreK Expansion Grant).

When completing the Coordinated Funding Request you will need to input the following:

1. LEA/Site Name and code:
 - You will use the LEA for LA 4, including ones offered through diverse delivery and charter schools
 - Seats being placed in a Type 1 or Type 3 Charter must be included in the School District's request.
 - Seats being placed in a Type 2 or Type 5 Charter must be requested at the site level.
 - You will use the site for NSECD and PreK Expansion Grant seats
 - » You will use the site/center where the classrooms will be offered
2. 2018–2019 Seats:
 - For LA 4, NSECD, and PreK Expansion Grant, you will use the number of seats currently filled by each LEA or at each site, as applicable.
3. 2018–2019 Applications:
 - For all programs, you will enter the number of

applications received for the 2018–2019 seats.

4. 2019–2020 Request
 - For all programs, you will enter the number of requested seats through the funding source. This can increase, stay the same, or decrease.
 - Funding is not available for new PreK Expansion Grant seats in 2019–2020.
 - » Existing PreK Expansion Grant seats being placed in schools must now be requested as LA 4 seats where indicated.
 - » Existing PreK Expansion Grant seats being placed in child care or Head Start centers ONLY must be requested in the PreK Expansion Grant section as indicated.
5. Optional: Ranking
 - The ranking column is an optional place for Community Networks to indicate preferences within a funding stream. This is not required, but can be helpful to the decision process.

The remaining cells in the Coordinated Funding Request self-calculate. You will **NOT** need to complete these.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chapter 709, Part B of Bulletin 140 states that “The lead agency shall provide an opportunity for each publicly-funded program in the community network and the general public in the coverage area of the community network to comment on the proposed funding request prior to submission to the department and shall include documentation of this process in the funding request.”

Providing opportunity for public comment can take several forms, including but not limited to:

- Conducting a public hearing, community town hall, or school board meeting that allows for public comment to be submitted
- Distributing the Coordinated Funding Request and allowing for written comment to be submitted, mailed, emailed, faxed, or delivered
- Posting the Coordinated Funding Request in a public location or on a website and allowing for written comment to be submitted, mailed, emailed, faxed, or delivered

Any publicly-funded program may request that the LDE review an enrollment decision or funding request of its Lead Agency. Programs must email the request to earlychildhood@la.gov no later than 30 calendar days after the due date for funding requests (requests for review must be received by January 1, 2019).

Any program or individual may submit a written complaint to the LDE regarding the action or inaction of the Lead Agency in its Community Network. Complaints must be submitted to earlychildhood@la.gov within 30 calendar days of the action or inaction of the Lead Agency upon which the complaint is based (complaints must be received by January 1, 2019).

II. LA 4 PROGRAM OVERVIEW (FOUR-YEAR-OLD SEATS)

CECIL J. PICARD LA 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Louisiana's largest preschool program, the Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program provides more than 16,000 economically disadvantaged children with early childhood education during a six-hour-a-day program. This program is offered in most of Louisiana's parishes as well as several charter schools and one tribal school. LA 4 can also be offered through diverse delivery partnerships with Type III child care centers. See Appendix A for Diverse Delivery Considerations.

Local education agencies (LEAs) apply for seats for LA 4 through the Coordinated Funding Request. Requests should reflect family demand for seats. Seats are awarded based on the number of children they anticipate serving during the school year and the availability of funds. Four year olds of families who meet the income requirements are eligible to attend the program, although children from families with higher incomes are also eligible, using locally provided funds or paying tuition. Seats are funded in the amount of \$4,580 per child for the 6-hour instructional day for the 10 month school year.

If 95% of LA 4 seats are not filled by October 1, seats may be reallocated to other LEAs.

LA 4 STAFF REQUIREMENTS: More information can be found in the [LA 4 Guidelines](#).

LA 4 PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR 2019-2020:

LA 4 seats are allocated at the LEA level for placement into eligible sites. These sites must meet the following requirements for 2018-2019 participation:

1. School based sites must agree to implement a high quality, developmentally appropriate prekindergarten program and meet all the PreK Program requirements as set forth by the Office of Early Childhood.
2. "Type 3" Child Care Centers must:
 - a. Be a Type III licensed child care center.
 - b. Agree to implement a high-quality, developmentally appropriate, prekindergarten program and meet all the PreK Program requirements as set forth by the Office of Early Childhood.

All lead teachers must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- A valid and current Louisiana teaching certificate in PK-3, Nursery School, Kindergarten, Early Interventionist Birth-5, or Noncategorical Preschool Handicapped;
- A Practitioner License in PreK-3;
- A valid and current Louisiana teaching certificate in Elementary Education and an Out-of-Field Authorization to Teach (OFAT) in PK-3, Nursery School, Kindergarten, Early Interventionist Birth-5, or Noncategorical Preschool Handicapped; or
- An uncertified teacher with a baccalaureate degree and a Temporary Authority to Teach (TAT), Temporary Employment Permit (TEP), or an Out-of-State Certificate in PK-3, Nursery School, Kindergarten, Early Interventionist Birth-5, or Noncategorical Preschool Handicapped.

All paraprofessionals/teacher assistants must meet LEA specific requirements for employment and one of the following requirements:

- Meet the definition of "highly qualified," which may include passing of the ParaPro test or attainment of the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, which can be earned with a CDA, technical diploma or certificate of technical studies in an early childhood related field, an associate's degree in an early childhood related field, or bachelor's degree or higher. Additional information regarding the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate can be found in the [FAQs](#);
- Possess a high school diploma or equivalent; or
- Have extended experiences of assuming responsibility and care for a group of preschool age children (children younger than five years of age).

There are additional assurances that each grantee must agree to once they are approved for LA 4, including the **use of a Tier I curriculum**. Preliminary assurances are included in the appendix, but do not need to be completed at this time.

III. NSECD OVERVIEW (FOUR-YEAR-OLD SEATS)

Established in 2001 in the Governor's Office of Community Programs, the NSECD Program implemented a goal of reimbursing preschool tuition for enrolled children from low-income families. During the 2012 legislative session, the NSECD programmatic and fiscal oversight was restructured under Act 3. The program continues to operate through the Louisiana Department of Education and is funded through state general funds.

Providers apply for NSECD seats through the Coordinated Funding Request. Requests should reflect family demand for seats. Eligible providers for NSECD are nonpublic schools and eligible Type III child care centers. Seat allocations are awarded based on several factors including the number of children they anticipate having the capacity to serve during the school year and community need. Four year olds of families who meet the income requirements are eligible to attend the program. Seats are funded in the amount of \$4,580 per child for the 6-hour instructional day.

Provider monthly reimbursement is contingent on the children attending 74% of the scheduled school calendar days in a month. Unfilled seats may be reallocated.

NSECD PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR 2019-2020

Provider eligibility is as follows:

1. Nonpublic Schools. For a nonpublic school to be eligible to participate as a Provider of the NSECD Program, the nonpublic school shall meet all requirements below:
 - a. Be BESE approved and in compliance with requirements set forth in Louisiana State Department of Education [Bulletin 741](#).
 - b. Be certified by the Louisiana Department of Education as Brumfield-Dodd compliant.
 - c. Agree to implement a high quality, developmentally appropriate prekindergarten program and meet all the general operation requirements as set forth by the Office of Early Childhood.
 - d. Have administered Pre-K, Kindergarten, and/or 1st grade instruction for a full school year during the previous school year, and be able to present Louisiana governmental documentation to this effect.
2. Type III Child Care Centers may be eligible to participate as Providers of the NSECD Program. The applicant must:
 - a. Be a Type III licensed child care center.
 - b. Agree to implement a high-quality, developmentally appropriate, prekindergarten program and meet all the general operation requirements as set forth by the Office of Early Childhood.
 - c. Have administered a 4-year-old educational program for a full year during the previous school year, and be able to present Louisiana governmental documentation to this effect.

NSECD STAFF REQUIREMENTS:

All lead teachers must meet at least one of the following requirements with the understanding that there are specific timelines in place for all lead teachers to meet the requirements of the top tier requirement as listed in Item A:

- A. A valid and current Louisiana teaching certificate in PK-3, Nursery School, Kindergarten, Early Interventionist Birth-5, or Noncategorical Preschool Handicapped;
- B. A valid and current Louisiana teaching certificate in Elementary Education (must pursue PK-3 add-on certification endorsement);
- C. A Practitioner License in PreK-3; or
- D. An *uncertified* teacher must have, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree and current passing scores on the Praxis I. An ACT composite score of 22, an SAT combined verbal and math score of 1030, or a Master's degree may be used in lieu of the Praxis I.

All teacher assistants must meet the following requirements:

- A. Possess a high school diploma or equivalent; AND Have either a currently valid:
 - » Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, which can be earned with a CDA, technical diploma or certificate of technical studies in an early childhood related field, AA in an early childhood related field, or bachelor's degree or higher. Additional information regarding the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate can be found in the [FAQs](#);
 - » Associate degree in an Early Childhood related field; or
 - » Bachelor's degree in the area of Child and Family Studies, Early Childhood Education or Elementary Education, or an Early Childhood related field.

NOTE: Incumbent staff may be currently enrolled in either a Child Development Associate credential program, accredited associate degree program in Early Childhood Education, accredited bachelor's degree program in Early Childhood Education or Elementary Education,

- B. Have extended experiences of assuming responsibility and care for a group of preschool age children (children younger than five years of age).

IV. PREK EXPANSION GRANT OVERVIEW (FOUR-YEAR-OLD SEATS)

PREK EXPANSION GRANT OVERVIEW

Using the Community Network pilot model as the centerpiece, Louisiana applied for \$32 million over 4 years to expand high-quality preschool programs in high-need communities through a unique parent choice model. Among a competitive field, Louisiana was selected to receive funding which not only validated the pilot model but provided Louisiana children with:

- **Quality Pre-K Seats through Choice:** Families of 4,600 at-risk children over 4 years were able to choose a new, high-quality option in diverse settings; and
- **Improved Seats:** Families of 6,000 at-risk children over 4 years benefited from quality improvements for existing seats. This means children will have 1) a credentialed teacher who is receiving coaching and professional development and 2) access to comprehensive services.

PREK EXPANSION GRANT – OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY

2017–2018 was the last official year of the 4-year grant. The Department is maximizing its efforts to find sustainable funding for existing school and child care-based seats. There will be no new PreK Expansion Grant seats offered in 2019–2020.

- Current Lead Agency PreK Expansion subgrantees must apply to maintain their existing seats in schools and child care and Head Start centers.
 - » These existing seats will be funded at the quality rate of \$5,185. No new seats or improvement funds will be available in 2019–2020.
 - » Coaching and comprehensive services will not be a requirement in 2019–2020.
- Applications are included as part of the Coordinated Funding Request
- Applications will be evaluated on the following:
 - » Success as a Community Network in meeting [Bulletin 140](#) expectations
 - » Family demand for seats
 - » At-Risk Status of the Community based on the [Early Childhood Risk and Reach in Louisiana Report](#) released by LSU/Tulane
- A minimum of one classroom (20 seats) must be requested for the Community Network to be considered for funding
- Classrooms must meet the quality requirements of LA 4 and NSECD, including:
 - » Certified Lead Teacher and qualified paraprofessional
 - » Use of an appropriate, standards-based curriculum aligned to [Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards](#)
 - » A child to staff ratio of 10:1 and a maximum number of 20 children per class

There are additional pre-K program assurances that each grantee must agree to once they are approved for Pre-K expansion grant, including the use of a Tier I curriculum. Preliminary assurances are included in the appendix, but do not need to be completed at this time.

U. ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES USED TO SUPPORT ACCESS

While these funding sources are not requested through the Coordinated Funding Request, they are available to programs and communities to support their efforts to maximize access for their at-risk children.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) provides low-income, working households with access to quality, affordable child care that allows them to continue working and contributes to the healthy, emotional and social development of the child. In addition to helping low-income, working households, the Child Care Assistance Program also serves households who are participating in the Strategies to Empower People (STEP) program that meet the education and training requirements, foster children, children requiring special needs care, and families experiencing homelessness.

Child Care Assistance can be used to fund qualified children in any Type III early learning site, family child care provider, in-home provider, school child care site, and it can also be used to fund before and after care.

Child Care Assistance qualifications can be found at: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/child-care-providers/ccap-application-process-flowchart.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

Households are required to pay a co-pay based on a sliding scale. The amount of assistance is based on a variety of factors.

Currently, due to the overwhelming demand of Louisiana's working parents and a shortage of funds to meet that demand, the CCAP Program has implemented a wait list effective July 1, 2017. Households will only be placed on the wait list once they submit a complete application and are determined eligible. The wait list will be statewide, and applications will be prioritized by the date received by the Department.

Exceptions to the wait list apply for families currently receiving child care assistance, children who are experiencing homelessness, children of families participating in STEP or Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships, children in foster care, or children requiring special needs care. The aforementioned, if also income eligible, will be eligible and will not be placed on the wait list at any point.

More information about CCAP can be found at:

<http://www.louisianabelieves.com/early-childhood/child-care-assistance-program>

HEAD START

Head Start is a Federal program that promotes the school readiness of children ages birth to five from low-income families through comprehensive preschool programming.

Many Head Start programs also provide Early Head Start, which serves infants, toddlers, and pregnant women who have incomes below the federal poverty level. Head Start and Early Head Start programs serve children with identified disabilities, and eligible families with incomes over the poverty guidelines.

Flexibility is also offered within the Program Standards as it relates to serving younger children. Programs must prioritize serving younger children if high-quality, full day preschool is available for four-year olds in their area. Programs are still allowed and still can serve and enroll four year olds, but if there is another program in which the child could be served, then a program must allow more for three year olds to enroll so that the most vulnerable children are being served for the longest period of time.

More information about Head Start in Louisiana can be found at <http://www.louisianaheadstart.org/>

8(G) LOUISIANA'S QUALITY EDUCATION SUPPORT FUND OVERVIEW

Since its inception, the 8(g) fund has assisted schools and districts statewide, enabling them to provide better educational opportunities for all of Louisiana's children. The 8(g) Block Grant Program, administered by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, provides funding for specific focus areas, including pre-kindergarten programs for at-risk four-year-olds (High-Quality Early Childhood). Public school districts can use these funds to offer Pre-K programs to children eligible by income or developmentally unprepared status. Like LA 4 and NSECD, pre-kindergarten programs funded via the 8(g) focus area provide six hours of early childhood education daily to at-risk four-year-olds, following specific requirements to ensure the provision of high-quality services, including certified teachers, an adult-to-child ratio of 1 to 10, and the use of a research-based, developmentally appropriate pre-kindergarten curriculum. For more information, contact Kimberly Tripeaux at Kimberly.Tripeaux@la.gov.

TITLE I PART A OVERVIEW

Title I Part A funds, which are allocated directly to LEAs, can be used to fund high-quality preschool programs and support children birth to five. If a Title I school is operating a schoolwide Title I preschool program, all preschool age children residing in the attendance area of the school are considered eligible for that program. For a districtwide Title I program, children most at-risk of failing to meet the state's academic achievement standards must be prioritized for service. For more information, consult the USED's non-regulatory guidance linked here: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/preschoolguidance2012.pdf>.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT (IDEA) PROGRAMS

IDEA, Part B, 619 provides funding to support children with disabilities aged 3 through 5, inclusive; and to 2-year-old children with disabilities who will turn 3 during the school year so they can be provided a free appropriate public education, including special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education. IDEA, Part B, 619 funds may only be used to provide services to children ages 3 to 5, who have been identified as "children with disabilities" in accordance with IDEA, Part B 619 federal requirements. LEAs may use funds to pay for the excess cost of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities. IDEA, Part B, 619 does not specifically delineate allowable costs that may be charged to the program. Thus, LEAs have flexibility to spend funds to address their unique needs and program designs. LEAs must ensure, however, that all costs are consistent with the purposes of IDEA, Part B, 619. For more information, consult the program specific guidance linked here: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teacher-toolbox-resources/program-specific-guidance-for-leas.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.

APPENDIX A

DIVERSE DELIVERY – QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION WHEN ESTABLISHING A PARTNERSHIP

1. Who will provide compensation for the teacher and who will provide compensation for the paraprofessional?
2. Who is responsible for hiring for each position?
3. What if any transportation agreements will you establish?
4. What if any meal agreements will you establish?
5. How will you ensure licensing requirements are met, including criminal background checks and field trip requirements?
6. How will the district ensure the teacher is receiving professional development with the other teachers in the district?

Additional information can be found in the Diverse Delivery Resource Guide.

APPENDIX B

REQUIRED PROGRAM ASSURANCES (submitted after allocations are final.)

____ LA 4/NSECD Assurances

2018-2019 PREK PROGRAM ASSURANCES

As an authorized representative of the applicant listed, I certify that the following statements are true:

- I acknowledge that pursuant to R.S. 17:407.26 and R.S. 17:407.23, the Department of Education (the Department) is authorized to regulate the Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program (LA 4), the Nonpublic Schools Early Childhood Development Program (NSECD), and the PreK Expansion Grant.
- I agree to:
 - Participate fully in the Early Childhood Care and Education Community Network as provided in Chapter 3 of Bulletin 140,
 - Participate fully in the Early Childhood Care and Education Accountability System as provided in Chapter 5 of Bulletin 140, and
 - Participate fully in the Community Network's Coordinated Enrollment Process as provided in Chapter 7 of Bulletin 140.

Attendance and Reimbursement

- I understand that funds are available to serve children who meet age and income eligibility requirements
- I assure that individual children are not counted or claimed for reimbursement for full day care by more than one program (example: the same child cannot be counted as both NSECD and LA 4 and/or full-time CCAP),
- I acknowledge that in order to be counted as present, a child must be present a minimum of four (4) hours of the six-hour instructional period and that children must also attend school for at least 74% of the month,
- I will maintain documentation of student eligibility (e.g., pay stubs, letter from employer, or recent proof of eligibility for means-tested services such as SNAP/Food Stamps),
- I will not deny access, participation or funding to children on the basis of race, color, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); gender (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and Title II of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1976); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) in education programs,
- I understand that all funds received may only be used for funding the allowable activities, materials, staffing, family engagement, and any other expenditures related to providing pre-K services during the 6-hour instructional day as allowed by funding source,
- I understand that pre-K funds cannot be used to fund before and after school programs, summer programs, or to supplant other program funding,
- I understand that the allocation may be amended if the number of awarded slots is not filled or if the number of slots is exceeded, provided funds are available.

Curriculum and Assessment

I agree to:

- Select and provide access to a high-quality Tier I pre-K curriculum which is aligned to the Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards and promotes kindergarten readiness, or an alternative curriculum with prior approval from the Department,

INITIAL HERE _____

1

- Provide the Tier 1 curriculum and materials to teachers and principals with adequate time to prepare for the upcoming school year,
- Eliminate from classrooms any materials that are not aligned to Louisiana’s Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards,
- Ensure principals and/or directors can articulate 1) the name, tier, and approach of the chosen curriculum; 2) the next steps they will take to ensure a quality implementation,
- Ensure that all publicly-funded children receive completed assessments in October, February, and May using GOLD® or another state-approved assessment tool that is developmentally appropriate, valid, reliable, and culturally sensitive. Publicly-funded sites shall obtain approval from the Department prior to using child assessment tools different from the assessment tool provided by the Department.

Program Performance

I agree to provide high-quality, developmentally appropriate programs to at-risk, four-year-old children eligible to enter public school kindergarten in the following year pursuant to R.S. 17:151.3, which will include:

- An instructional setting that includes learning centers outfitted with appropriate materials and equipment that support whole, small and self-selected groupings,
- Effective learning experiences that build on what children already know and can do that help them reach challenging and achievable goals,
- Differentiated instruction to meet the academic, social/emotional, linguistic, and other developmental needs of children,
- Lead teachers who meet all certification criteria as required by program type,
- Qualified teacher assistants,
- All staff must have appropriate criminal background checks and comply with all hiring procedures required by the program prior to the first day of work,
- All classrooms must be adequately staffed in the event of staff absence,
- An orientation provided for all administrators and staff before commencing the program,
- A student-to-lead teacher ratio of no more than twenty-to-one and a student-to-adult staff member ratio of no more than ten-to-one, pursuant to R.S. 17: 407.26,
- A schedule that contains a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities with a minimum of 63,720 instructional minutes during the calendar year,
- A minimum of eighteen hours of ongoing professional development relevant to early childhood is provided to both the lead teacher and teacher assistant, and based on data (child and program assessments), the instructional needs of children, and is tailored to support staff improvement,
- A professional development plan that addresses each teacher’s specific needs throughout the year and includes objectives and strategies, and coaching for lead and assistant teachers,
- Following health and safety regulations as defined by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE),
- Vision and hearing screening for each child within 90 calendar days of entrance into the program,

- Ensuring that all students entering school for the first time have received all immunizations against vaccine-preventable diseases according to a schedule approved by the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), Office of Public Health (OPH), and
- Appropriate nutritious meals and snacks for every child.

Family Engagement

I agree to provide:

- Parent conferences (at least two per year),
- Opportunities for families to volunteer or participate in program activities,
- Written information about the program including policies related to abuse/neglect, non-discrimination, complaint/grievance procedures, behavior management, etc. provided to families upon admission,
- An orientation process that may include a tour, opportunities to meet administrators and staff, and review written material such as curricula and special events, which should occur no later than 20 working days after the program commences,
- Linkages to services such as G.E.D., adult literacy training, and referrals for medical, housing/utilities assistance, etc.,
- Family engagement activities that involve parents/caregivers in their child's education.
- Additionally I agree that when it is requested that children are to be dressed in uniforms, they are not denied enrollment because of a family's inability to purchase such, and
- Families are not be required to financially support extracurricular activities or fundraisers unless they choose to do so at their cost.

Quality Assurance

As an authorized representative of the applicant listed, I certify that the following statements are true:

- I agree to adhere to policies and regulations to ensure that the health and safety requirements of all children are met, including those with disabilities and specifically identified health needs,
- I assure that any LA 4, NSECD, or PreK Expansion Grant Program located in a child care center will only be placed in those centers that have a valid and current Type 3 license, and meets all other program-specific criteria,
- I will participate in any required improvement planning process approved by BESE and implemented by the Department;
- I assure that any child who is identified as eligible or who is suspected to be eligible for special education and/or related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) through Louisiana Bulletin 1706 and Louisiana's IEP Handbook for Students with Disabilities, will not be denied access or removed from the program without following the appropriate referral and Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Services Plan process. (See Louisiana's IEP Handbook for Students with Disabilities and Bulletin 1706, Subpart A, Regulations for Students with Disabilities Act,) and
- I agree to address any areas of noncompliance or deficiencies related to this program within required timelines.

INITIAL HERE _____

3

Data Management

As an authorized representative of the applicant listed, I certify that the following statements are true:

- I agree to submit any additional information and/or documentation requested by the funding program prior to final approval by BESE,
- I agree to report data documenting the effectiveness of the program and the progress toward attaining program goals, and I understand that program must also submit a report detailing exactly how the allocated funds are spent,
- I agree to submit all required information records/reports, programmatic and fiscal, as required by the Department and BESE,
- I agree to maintain documentation of program implementation and effectiveness and submit any reports, data, or other pertinent information as requested by the Department and BESE and R.S. 17:3913 and 3996(B)(34),
- I permit the Department, the Legislative Auditor, and all other required personnel to have access to the records and financial statements as necessary according to regulations issued by the Office of Management and Subpart F of the Uniform Grant Guidance (2 CFR, Subpart F),
- I assure that funds for the program will be expended according to all regulations as required by each funding source, and
- I agree to maintain all records, and other documents for at least (3) federal fiscal years after the final payment or as described in 2 CFR 200.333, whichever is longest.

I, the undersigned, am authorized to sign and submit this application on behalf of the public, charter, nonpublic school and/or child care center. I assure and certify that the agency site(s) will comply with the assurances, regulations, policies, guidelines, and/or requirements, as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of funds for the program(s) for which this application is made.

This agreement, including the assurances contained herein, is binding on the institution, its successors, transferees, and assignees as long as it receives financial assistance to fund the program(s) for which this application is made. This agreement, including the assurances contained herein, is given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all financial assistance to operate the program(s) for which this application is made.

The information in this agreement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, including the name and mailing address. I understand that this information is hereby given in connection with the receipt of funds for the program(s) for which this application is made. I understand that State Agency personnel may, for cause, verify information; and that deliberate misrepresentation may subject me to prosecution under applicable Federal and State criminal statutes.

Principal/Director Signature

Date

Principal/Director Printed Name

Name of School or Center

INITIAL HERE _____