### LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

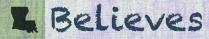


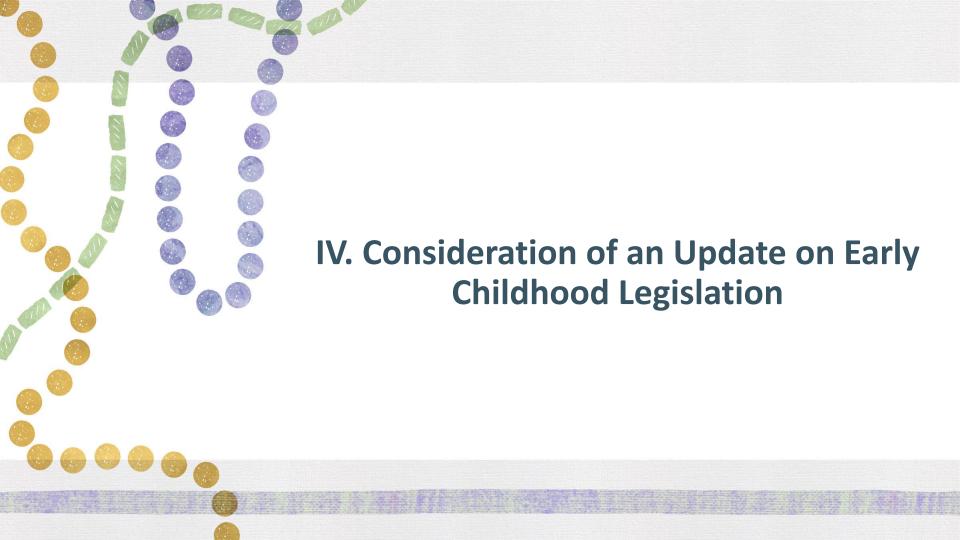
# **Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council**

May 19, 2021

### Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Approval of the Minutes of March 17, 2021
- IV. Consideration of an Update on Early Childhood Legislation
- V. Considerations of Revisions to Bulletin 746—Louisiana Standards for State Certification of School Personnel
- VI. Consideration of an Update on COVID-19 Impacts and Early Childhood Stimulus Funding
- VII. Consideration of Louisiana's Child Care and Development Fund State Plan
- VIII. Consideration of the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council Quarterly Report Quarter 1 2021
  - IX. Adjournment







### 2021 Legislative Tracking

Advisory Council | Wednesday, May 19, 2021

Libbie Sonnier, Ph.D., Executive Director Louisiana Policy Institute for Children

### The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children

- Mission: Advancing policies to ensure that Louisiana's young children are ready for success in school and in life.
- Vision: We envision a Louisiana in which all young children, birth through age four, are safe, healthy, and reach their full potential.
- Our Work: The Policy Institute seeks to be a source of nonpartisan, independent information on issues concerning children ages birth through four in Louisiana.



# The Buckets of Revenue Possibilities for Louisiana's Youngest Learners







- ☐ HB 1, Zeringue: Provides for the ordinary operating expenses of state government for Fiscal Year 2021-2022
- HB 304, Lyons: Provides for coordinating data in order to evaluate the early childhood care and education network, prioritizing the provision of related services and funds, and creating a program to provide instructional materials for home use
- ☐ HB 312, Freiberg: Provides relative to criminal history review with respect to teacher certification



- ☐ HB 322, Freeman: Provides for the sharing of limited student information for the purpose of administering certain federal food assistance programs
- ☐ HB 383, Stagni: Amends the definition of "caretaker" in laws pertaining to child in need of care proceedings
- ☐ HB 391, Magee: Authorizes the recommendation of medical marijuana in raw or crude form and limits the dispensing of such product
- ☐ HB 434, Nelson: Levies taxes on sales of cannabis and provides for the use of the avails of the taxes
- HB 440, Nelson: Levies fees for licenses and permits relative to cannabis

- ☐ HB 461, Hughes: Provides relative to violations by facilities licensed in accordance with the Specialized Provider Licensing Act
- ☐ HB 468, Landry: Provides relative to extension of Medicaid coverage for an individual experiencing postpartum
- ☐ HB 514, Magee: Removes exemption of sales tax from certain medical marijuana products; dedicates 25% of revenues to the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund
- ☐ HB 592, Hilferty: Establishes an income tax deduction for certain early childhood care and education expenses
- ☐ HB 601, Goudeau: Creates the Pelicans specialty license plate



- ☐ HB 605, Wright: Provides relative to sales and use tax reform
- ☐ HB 628, Stefanski: Provides for sports wagering





- ☐ SB 7, Peterson: Provides relative to the state minimum wage
- ☐ SB 49, Carter: Provides relative to the state minimum wage
- □ SB 51, Carter: Creates an individual income tax credit for teachers and early childhood educators
- ☐ SB 110, Johns: Provides relative to the regulation of sports wagering
- SB 121, Talbot: Authorizes a parish governing authority to levy an excise tax on sports wagers
- SB 138, Fields: Provides for refundability for the child care expense individual income tax credit

■ SB 142, Ward: To provide for the disposition of funds generated by sports wagering



### Questions

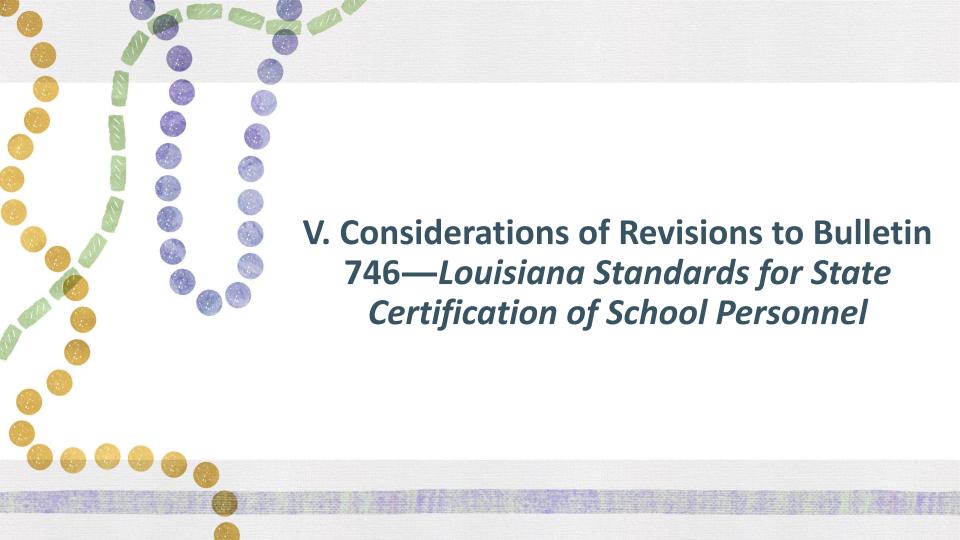
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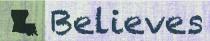


## **Bulletin 746: Louisiana Standards for State Certification of School Personnel**

BESE Policy governs the standards for certification of K-12 and early childhood educators, including the standards for obtaining the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC).

Bulletin 746 establishes statewide requirements for the the certification process to ensure it provides a systematic and nondiscriminatory procedure for the credentialing of teachers and other school personnel.

- This Bulletin falls under the purview of the Office of Legislative Affairs, Policy and Workforce Support, which is responsible for carrying out activities related to teacher certification as mandated by legislation and Bulletin 746.
- These certification procedures governed by Bulletin 746 include the issuance and renewals of the FCAC.

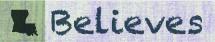


### **Overview of Recommended Revisions**

Current Bulletin 746 language has resulted in misalignment with Bulletin 137's language on required professional development.

Current language for Bulletin 746, guidelines for the renewal of the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate, uses the phrase CEU (Continuing Education Units, equivalent to ten clock hours). CEUs are referenced in other school personnel certification requirements (Social Worker and School Psychologist).

- This terminology is not aligned to Early Childhood Licensing Requirements set forth in Bulletin 137, which references 'clock hours.'
- This has provided substantial field confusion and resulted in delayed renewals of the ECAC due to misunderstandings and incomplete submissions.



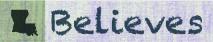
### **Overview of Recommended Revisions**

Revisions to Bulletin 746 will promote alignment in ECAC policy and make requirements clear for the field.

In addition to several other recommended revisions to the Bulletin, the Department will recommend that BESE revise the language in Bulletin 746 detailing acceptable professional development for the renewal of the ECAC at the June BESE meeting.

These proposed revisions will remove the reference to CEUs and add the CDA credential as an additional form of documentation for those that qualified for the initial Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate with a degree. A valid CDA results in more than 45 hours of continuing education.

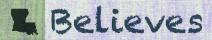
This change will provide better alignment with Bulletin 137 and the common understanding of the early childhood workforce.

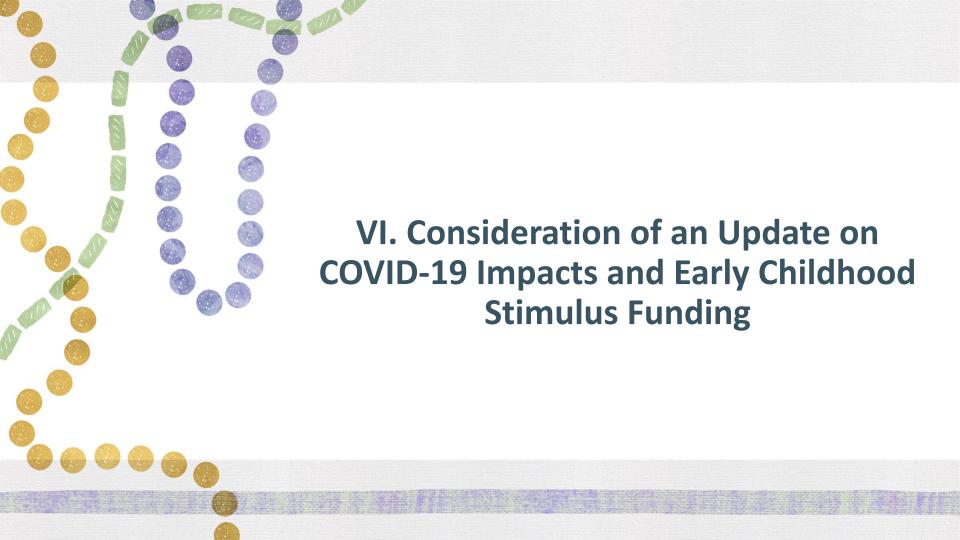


### **Bulletin 746 Recommended Revisions**

Revised teacher certification policy will provide clearer alignment with other requirements and guidance, and encourage streamlined attainment of the ECAC.

- a. For individuals meeting eligibility requirements with a CDA, the early childhood ancillary certificate shall be valid for a three-year period. The ancillary certificate may be renewed by the LDE at the request of the applicant's employer with submission of either documentation of a renewed CDA credential, awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition, or documentation of:
  - i. either 4.5 continuing education units, a 3 credit-hour course, or 45 clock hours of approved training or professional development in early childhood care and education; and
  - ii. a minimum of 80 hours of work experience with young children or families with young children within the last three years.
- b. For individuals meeting eligibility requirements with a bachelor's degree or higher, associate degree, technical diploma, certificate of technical studies, or career diploma, the early childhood ancillary certificate shall be valid for a three-year period. The certificate may be renewed by the LDE at the request of the applicant's employer with submission of documentation of:
  - i. either 4.5 continuing education units, a 3 credit-hour course, or 45 clock hours of training in early childhood care and education, or a CDA credential earned from a BESE-approved early childhood ancillary certificate program and awarded by the council for Professional Recognition; and
  - ii. a minimum of 80 hours of work experience with young children or families with young children within the last three years.



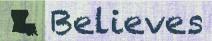


### **COVID-19 Impacts on Child Care**

The impacts of COVID-19 on the early childhood field, and the child care sector in particular, are significant.

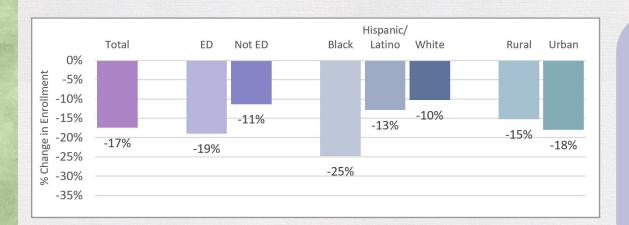
New Year, Same Challenges: The Continued Impacts of COVID-19 on Louisiana's Child Care Providers, a report released by Louisiana Policy Institute for Children (LPIC) today, found that from March 2020 to January 2021, the child care sector experienced an estimated \$245 million loss (nearly \$200,000 per center).

Without immediate stabilization, child care providers are still at risk of closing their doors permanently. This would be devastating to children, families, and our economy; and Louisiana cannot let this happen.



### **COVID-19 Impacts on Pre-K Enrollment**

Statewide pre-K enrollment in October 2020 was 17% lower than in October 2019, and that decline was larger for certain subgroups of students.

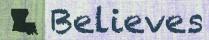


While it is difficult to measure the impact of these drops in enrollment, and how this is exacerbated by potential increases in childhood trauma as a result of the pandemic, communities and school systems should anticipate needing to provide additional support to children entering school or ECE programs this fall.



### Overview of Louisiana's Federal Stimulus Funding to Support Education

LOUISIANA'S ALLOCATIONS					
	CARES Act (April 2020)	CRRSA 2021 (Dec 2020)	ARPA (March 2021)	TOTAL	
ESSER	\$ 286,980,175	\$ 1,160,119,378	\$ 2,605,462,325	\$ 4,052,561,878	
GEER	\$ 50,276,799	\$ 22,985,320		\$ 73,262,119	
GEER non-public schools		\$ 55,566,230	\$ 49,073,000	\$ 104,639,230	
GEER Total	\$ 50,276,799	\$ 78,551,550	\$ 49,073,000	\$ 177,901,349	
CCDF	\$ 67,581,166	\$ 198,319,710	\$ 773,153,348	\$ 1,039,054,224	
TOTAL	\$ 404,838,140	\$ 1,436,990,638	\$ 3,427,688,673	\$ 5,269,517,451	



# **CRRSA Funding Plan**

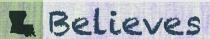
### Believe! and Achieve! Launch

To support school systems and community networks with planning for and budgeting new funds under the <u>Coronavirus</u> Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, the LDOE has launched *Achieve!* (pre-K-12) and Believe! (Early Childhood).



Believe! (Early Childhood) and provides community networks with prioritized activities, funding opportunities, and resources to develop community plans in alignment with the priorities and focus areas outlined in <u>Believe to Achieve: Louisiana's</u> <u>Educational Priorities</u>.





### The Department's Plan to Support Early Childhood

Based on stakeholder feedback, the Department is focusing on the following when developing its plan for administering CRRSA funding, and supporting communities and sites.

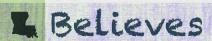
- Child care is stabilized immediately, with a focus on providers and the early childhood workforce.
- **Communities increase access** to opportunities for high-quality early childhood care and education this year.
- Teachers are prepared to lead classrooms and provide high-quality interactions for all children every day.
- Young children who experienced disruptions in learning this year are given opportunities to prepare for school.





### **Projected CRRSA Budget**

Child Care Stabilization	Estimated Budget
Direct financial supports to all child care provider types via LaCAP grants, etc.	
Type III early childhood teacher support grant	
Community Recovery Grants	
Package of business training, consultation, and shared services, including a microloans pilot program	
Misc. Additional Supports (e.g. licensing fees, CCCBC fees, data system supports, etc.)	
Access Expansion	
Launching LA B to 3 by funding all Ready Start Network funding requests for projects that expand access to B-3 seats in high-quality diverse delivery settings	
Providing supports to Ready Start Networks with B-3 seats to develop a funding sustainability plan for seats	
As a result of insufficient funding in the ECE Fund, matching local investment to fund projects that expand access to B-3 seats for the 2021-2022 year	
Child Care Supply Building and Access Expansion Grant opportunity	
Classroom Quality	
Outdoor play enhancement opportunity for child care providers (via CCR&Rs)	
Package of operational/quality supports for providers, including training, classroom supports, and technology	
Family Engagement and Supports for All Children	
Supporting the development of a family engagement website, advisory group, and outreach opportunities	
Total Budgeted	
Total Remaining (Unbudgeted)	

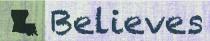


# **Child Care Stabilization**

### **Child Care Stabilization Efforts**

Using CRRSA and CCDF funding, the Department plans to carry out numerous activities to support child care stabilization.

- Continuing to reimburse CCAP based on enrollment through the end of 2021
- Providing direct stabilization grants (LaCAP grants) to all child care providers
- Providing grants to Type III child care providers to support teachers and help stabilize the child care workforce
- Establishing a child care microloan program and offer business supports and trainings
- Providing additional community recovery grants to lead agencies to support child care recovery locally

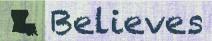


### **Child Care Provider Grant Opportunities**

**LaCAP Relief Grants:** An additional grant opportunity for CCAP Certified Type III and Family Homes as well as Non-CCAP Certified Providers is anticipated to release in **July** of 2021. We heard from many providers that a larger grant earlier in the year would be better than three smaller grants.

**Additional Grants**: The Department anticipates making two additional grant opportunities available to licensed Type III centers. More information will be provided this spring regarding the grant amounts and the grant application deadlines. We anticipate sharing more specific information in early June and for both of these grant opportunities to be available in late summer.

- Early Childhood Teacher Support Grant: Type III centers will be eligible to apply for a grant to provide teacher stipends to supplement teacher pay during the pandemic.
- Accountability Participation Grant: Type III centers that participate in CLASS observations this year (local and Picard) will be eligible to apply for a grant to offset additional costs and administrative burdens of participating in the accountability system this year.

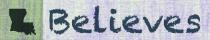


# 2021 COVID-19 Community Child Care Recovery Grants

Early childhood lead agencies are eligible to apply for a second round <u>COVID-19 Community</u> <u>Child Care Recovery Grants</u> to support activities aligned to the 2021-2022 Believe! Guidance.

The Department recommends the following allowable uses as best practices for this grant:

- Providing financial supports (e.g. bonuses, incentive pay, etc.) to encourage and incentivize the early childhood workforce to return to work or continue working in this sector
- Purchasing and distributing additional PPE/sanitation supplies
- Providing direct financial support to providers to support them to stay open or re-open
- Promoting enrollment through additional informational campaigns or other outreach to families
- Supporting quality of child care centers, through means such as professional development, coaching and training, and observations
- Supporting families with continuous learning at home, as a result of temporary facility closures
- Purchasing and implementing curricula or programs focusing on social-emotional development and/or trauma informed instruction
- Providing supports to families who are not currently enrolled in early childhood care



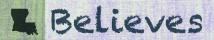
# **Community Recovery Grants**Funding Amounts

Lead agencies should base their total requested funding amount on the number of current CCAP providers in the network and other unique impacts COVID-19 has had on the community.

Size of Network	Suggested Funding Range
Fewer than 5 CCAP providers	\$25,000 - \$50,000
5 to 10 CCAP providers	\$50,000 - \$100,000
11 to 20 CCAP providers	\$100,000 - \$150,000
21 to 40 CCAP providers	\$150,000 - \$200,000
41 to 50 CCAP providers	\$200,000 - \$300,000
More than 50 CCAP providers	\$300,000 - \$400,000

<sup>\*</sup>Note: Community networks can apply for amounts that fall outside of these suggested ranges if they provide justification in their application.

Applications are due May 26, and BESE will award funding amounts at the June BESE meeting.



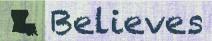
### **Access Expansion**

### **Access Expansion Efforts**

Using CRRSA, the Department plans to support Ready Start Networks to expand access to high-quality early care and education for children birth through age three this year.

The Department is implementing the following initiatives to increase access expansion efforts in the coming year:

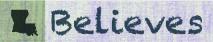
- Launching a pilot of LA B to 3 with stimulus funding in Ready Start Networks in 2021-2022
- Providing additional funding for Ready Start Networks to develop funding sustainability plans to begin identifying opportunities for local funding to sustain LA B to 3
- Matching current local investment for B-3 seat programs
- Launching an innovative, new child care supply building and access expansion grant for communities to build capacity locally for additional child care supply



### Launching LA B to 3

Thanks to CRRSA funding, 22 Ready Start Networks will serve close to 3,000 additional birth through three-year-olds in 2021-2022 through the expanded LA B-3 initiative.

- In 2021-2022 Super App requests, 50 out of 65 (80%) early childhood community networks requested funding for **4,641** birth through three-year-old seats (B-3 Seats) based on an analysis of their community's need and capacity.
- Through CRRSA funding and PDG Renewal funding, LDOE was able to fund all Ready Start Network seat requests in diverse delivery for a total of 2,970 seats.
- All Ready Start Networks were able to request additional funding to support funding and sustainability planning in their communities to ensure the tenability of LA B-3 seats.



### **ECE Fund Match Plan**

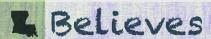
LDOE will commit a 1-1 match to match funding for Ready Start Networks who secured local funding to create seats that expand access for birth through three year olds.

Ready Start Network	Local Funds Raised	ECE Match Funds	Total for Early Childhood Education
Orleans	\$3,500,00	\$3,500,00	\$7,000,000
Caddo	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000

Other networks anticipate securing local funds in the coming months, including Jefferson and Rapides.

### Use of state funding awarded from the ECE Fund:

- At least 70% of any funding awarded to the applicant will be used to directly fund additional slots in Type III early learning centers rated "Proficient"
- Seats are for children eligible for the Child Care
   Assistance Program (CCAP), otherwise defined as economically disadvantaged
- Remaining funds can be used to administer the program, improve quality of seats offered (e.g., professional development, curriculum, enrollment initiatives, etc.), and cover other costs

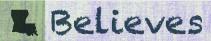


# 2021 Community Supply Building and Access Expansion (CSBAE) Grant

As part of efforts to increase child care infrastructure to expand access, the Louisiana Department of Education is launching an innovative, <u>new funding opportunity</u> focused on community-level strategies and solutions to increase supply of, and access to, quality early care and education.

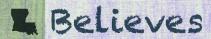
This is a phased grant opportunity executed over a two year period to provide funding to support initiatives focused on building child care supply and increasing access at the local level that can be tailored to the specific needs of each early childhood community network.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Community Access Analysis, Strategic Planning and Design	Strategy Implementation & Sustainability Planning	Long Term Sustainability and Evaluation of Strategy Implementation



# **Phase Deliverables and Funding**

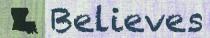
Phase	Grantee Deliverables	Funding
Phase 1 - Community Access Analysis, Strategic Planning and Design (within 3-6 months of the initial award)	Grantees will submit a plan to increase access to early childhood care and education that is aligned with community needs.	\$100,000 per network for project staffing, business supports, consultants, etc.  This funding may be renewable for year two of the project.
Phase 2 - Strategy Implementation & Sustainability Planning (within months 4-12)	Grantees will implement the strategies they developed to build supply and increase access to early childhood care and education.	Up to \$500,000*  *Subject to change based on needs determined in Phase 1 of grant
Phase 3 - Long Term Sustainability and Evaluation of Strategy Implementation (within months 5-18)	Grantees will submit a long-term sustainability plan inclusive of information related to scalability to meet additional community-level gaps in access.	Grantees that successfully create new child care supply will be given opportunities to apply for additional funding for seats.



# **Potential CSBAE Grant Strategies**

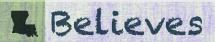
Funding will be provided for community network lead agencies to pursue activities that build supply and increase access including, but not limited to:

- Establishing partnerships with existing child care providers to expand access
- Expanding infant and toddler child care classrooms in existing facilities
- Establishing new partnerships to leverage community-based facilities to expand child care options
- Building child care supply in areas with limited to no options for early childhood care and education



# **CSBAE Grant Timeline**

Date	Early Childhood Community Network Key Activities
March 30	The Department releases <i>Believe!</i> and the Request for Applications for the two community network funding opportunities.
April 1	The Word versions of the applications for each opportunity will be sent to all lead agency contacts.
During April	The Department will use the April Collaboratives and lead agency office hours to provide additional guidance and answer questions.
April 28	Applicants submit an Intent to Apply via Google Form by 5 p.m.
May 26	Applicants submit a final application via Google Form by 5 p.m.
Week of May 31	The Department notifies recipients of the grants.
June BESE	The Department will make funding recommendations to BESE for both grant opportunities.
July 1	Community networks will have access to grant funding in eGMS.

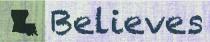


# **Classroom Quality**

# **Classroom Quality**

Teachers should be prepared to lead classrooms and provide high-quality interactions for all children every day.

- Communities will work with school systems and Child Care Resource and Referral agencies
  to ensure that all early childhood classrooms are utilizing high-quality curriculum and are
  receiving professional development to support effective implementation of instructional
  tools and best practices.
- Communities and school systems will provide high-quality direct and related service support for young children with IEPs to increase inclusive opportunities within the least restrictive environment.
- Communities will partner with regional Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to understand and support efforts to conduct early learning center needs assessments, enhance child care environments, and ensure the technology needs of child care centers are met.



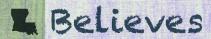
# **Outdoor Learning Engagement Opportunity**

The LDOE is providing Type III early learning centers the opportunity to enhance the outdoor learning environment through training, equipment, and engagement support.

Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies are participating in GO NAPSACC training, provided by the Louisiana Department of Health to understand how to plan outdoor spaces for high quality engagement with children.

Trainings will be provided to participating centers, and needs assessments will be completed to make a plan for outdoor improvement.

Equipment and materials will be purchased for centers based on the needs assessment and the number of classrooms in the early learning center.

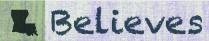


# **Supporting Disruptions in Learning**

# **Supporting Disruptions in Learning**

Young children who experienced disruptions in learning this year are given opportunities to prepare for school.

- Communities and school systems will be prepared to identify children in need of intervention through universal developmental screenings.
- Communities will develop plans in partnership with families, school systems, and program partners to **support transitions** into school, through extended learning opportunities.
- Communities will develop plans to **enhance continuous learning** through high-quality interactions and developmentally- appropriate learning activities for all children, regardless of their educational setting.
- Communities and sites will support children's **social and emotional development** which may have been interrupted or impacted by breaks in routines and disruptions in relationships with their caregivers.



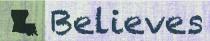
# **Developmental Screening**

Communities and school systems should be prepared to identify children in need of intervention through universal developmental screenings.

When developmental and learning needs are identified **early** and **accurately**, and children receive timely, appropriate and effective supports, interventions and specialized services aligned to their needs, learning is accelerated, skill gaps are closed, and children achieve at higher levels.

The Department has provided the following to support the development of a universal developmental screening process:

- ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire) trainings for lead agencies and CCR&Rs;
- Co-branded customized Learn the Signs. Act Early Brochures and Milestone Checklists;
- An interactive map with links to local resources to support child development, such as Child Find and Early Steps.

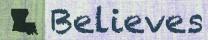


# **Early Childhood Transitions and Continuous Learning**

Community networks should develop plans to support early childhood transitions and enhance continuous learning in partnership with families and program partners.

The Department has provided the following to networks and school systems:

- Deep dive webinars with lead agencies to assist in the planning and implementation of summer transition programs or a series of events to support transitions;
- Guidance documents for <u>supporting early childhood transitions</u>;
- A framework for <u>designing a pre-K/K transition program</u>;
- Vendor showcase webinars to spotlight family engagement programs;
- Developmentally appropriate tutoring strategy aligned to <u>Accelerate</u>;
- Technology devices, connectivity and tutoring services through the <u>Real-time Early</u> <u>Access to Literacy (REAL) program</u> and
- Guidance on funding these initiatives.



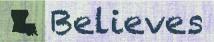
# **Social and Emotional Support**

Communities and sites will support children's social and emotional development which may have been impacted by breaks in routines and disruptions in relationships with their caregivers.

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) is an intervention that teams a mental health professional with early childhood professionals to improve the social, emotional and behavioral health of young children in early learning settings.

The Department has partnered with <u>Tulane's TIKES program</u> to provide the following to support children's social and emotional development:

- Increased MHC services for type type III centers with services expanded for type I, type II, and family child care providers;
- Tele-health services available to anyone caring for young children;
- Parent outreach and professional seminars for families; and
- Weekly webinars for providers, <u>TIKES Mental Health Wellness Wednesdays</u>.

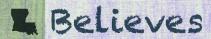


# American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Plan

# 2021 American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

The American Rescue Plan Act, or ARPA, is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill passed by the 117th United States Congress and signed into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021. It includes nearly \$15 billion in flexible Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) dollars and a child care stabilization grant fund of nearly \$24 billion.

Louisiana will receive nearly \$297 million in CCDBG and approximately \$475 million for child care stabilization, totaling more than \$770 million of further support for Louisiana child care providers and families. Combined with previous stimulus awards, Louisiana will receive more than \$1 billion to support child care and families.



### **ARPA**

## CCDBG Funds and Child Care Stabilization Funds

Louisiana will receive approximately \$297 million in Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds and approximately \$475 million for the Child Care Stabilization fund.

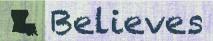
### **CCDBG Funds**

Can be used to carry out the programs within the Child Care and Development Fund grant (CCDF)

### **Child Care Stabilization Funds**

Strictly for child care providers (all types of providers) to remain open--may be used for

- Personnel costs, including payroll and salaries for an employee, employee benefits, premium pay, or costs for employee recruitment and retention
- Rent or payment on any mortgage obligation, utilities, facility maintenance or improvements, or insurance
- Personal protective equipment, cleaning and sanitization supplies and services, or training and professional development related to health and safety practices
- Purchases of or updates to equipment and supplies to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency
- Mental health supports for children and employees



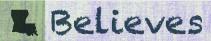
# **ARPA Listening Sessions**

The LDOE hosted a series of stakeholder listening sessions to hear feedback on how funds from ARPA might be used to support early childhood programs and families.

Stakeholders participating in these listening sessions include:

- child care providers
- lead agencies
- families
- Child Care Resource & Referral agencies
- the Mental Health Consultation program
- Early Childhood Care and Education Commission and Advisory Council members
- other early childhood advocates and policymakers, including DCFS and LDH

Common themes heard during the listening sessions include the need for additional workforce incentives for recruitment and retention, incentives for expanding infant and toddler care, additional business supports for child care expansion and more.

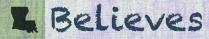


# **ARPA Survey**

To assist the state in prioritizing this recovery spending, the Louisiana Department of Education is surveying the early childhood field to gather feedback regarding the prioritization of proposed eligible funding categories.

Early childhood stakeholders are asked to complete <u>ARPA Funding Planning Survey</u> by May 21, 2021.

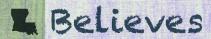
Please share the <u>survey</u> with program teachers and leaders, families, and other community stakeholders.

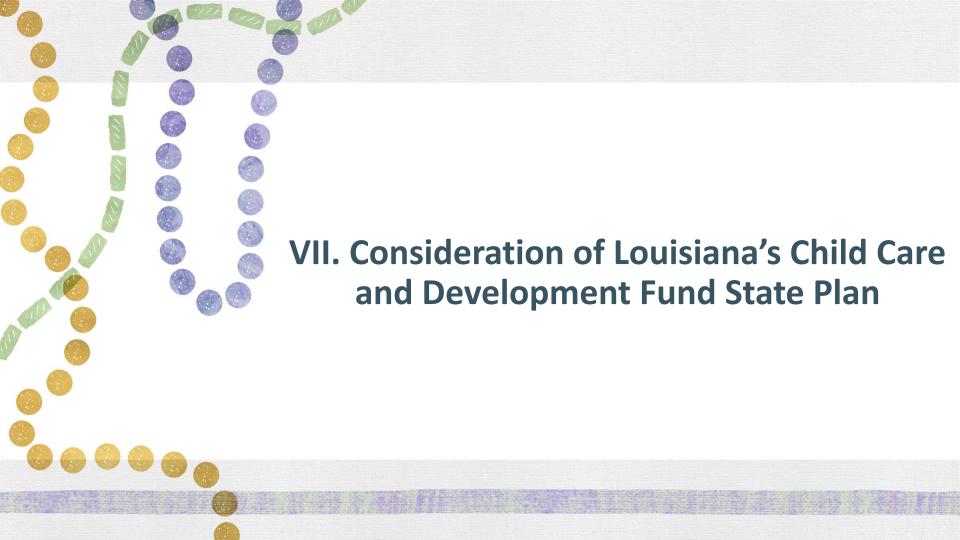


# **Developing Louisiana's ARPA Plan**

After the conclusion of the ARPA listening sessions and the completion of the ARPA survey, the Department will synthesize feedback from stakeholders and begin developing its plan for how to utilize the ARPA funding to support children, families, child care providers, and the early childhood workforce.

The Department hopes to release a summary of stakeholder feedback and a public document detailing the ARPA spending plan no later than July of this year.

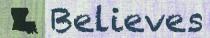




# **Child Care and Development Fund State Plan**

As Lead Agency, the Department seeks your input as a part of developing the State Plan.

- Child Care and Development Fund Grant (CCDF)
- Background on the State Plan
- Areas Covered by the State Plan
- Questions or Comments

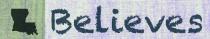


# **Child Care and Development Fund**

The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Grant is a block grant of federal monies that are distributed by the states.

### The CCDF Grant

- Provides resources to enable low-income parents to work or pursue education and training so that they can better support their families while at the same time promote the learning and development of their children;
- Provides funding to enhance the quality of child care for all children and increases access to families; and
- Improves the health and safety of children in child care.



# **Background on the State Plan**

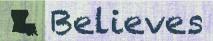
The plan describes how the CCDF program will be administered by Louisiana.

### What is a CCDF State Plan?

- A standard document that state use to demonstrate how a Lead Agency complies with all the federal regulations.
- The document generally covers licensing, subsidy (CCAP), background checks and quality improvement and access increase in child care.
- Every state or territory is currently completing a State Plan which must be submitted to the Office of Child Care by July 1, 2021.

### What time period does the State Plan cover?

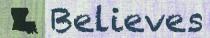
- The document includes the state's plan for child care for 3 years (10/1/2021 9/30/2024).
- The document does **not** lock the state in as revisions can be made at any time and states often make revisions as circumstances or policies change.



# **Child Care and Development Fund**

### What does CCDF cover in Louisiana?

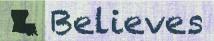
- Licensing
- Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)
- Child Care Criminal Background Checks
- Quality and access investments including but not limited to Resource and Referral Agencies, Mental Health Consultations, Pathways Registry, scholarships, child care curriculum, community network and Ready Start Network supports, teacher and director professional development, and other workforce development



# **CCDF** and the Path Toward Kindergarten Readiness

CCDF funds have played an integral part in preparing Louisiana children for kindergarten.

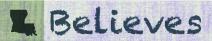
CCDF Investment	What is Funded
Child Care Assistance Program	Seats in quality rated early learning centers and family home/in-home providers
Licensing	Health and safety monitoring of early learning centers and CCAP providers
Unified Rating System	CLASS observations
Enrollment	Supports communities to coordinate enrollment
Ready Start Networks	Funding to support community-level efforts to drive faster rates of quality improvement and access expansion locally
ECAC Scholarship	Tuition for child care teachers to attend BESE-approved ECAC programs
Pathways Registry	Registry for teachers, directors and trainers



# **CCDF** and the Path Toward Kindergarten Readiness

CCDF funds have played an integral part in preparing Louisiana children for kindergarten.

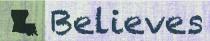
CCDF Investment	What is Funded	
Coaching and Technical Assistance	Coaching and technical assistance provided by regional CCR&R agencies	
Training/PD	Delivery and follow-up professional development provided by regional CCR&R agencies	
Mental Health Consultation	Intensive coaching for programs/teachers	
Curriculum Initiative	Funding and support for implementing high quality curriculum	
Bonus Payments and School Readiness Tax Credits	Owners, directors and teachers receive payments or credits for performance or credentials	
Early Childhood Assessment System	Individual child portfolios are provided for publicly funded children through Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment program	



# **Areas Covered by the State Plan**

The sections below are broken down in the State Plan where the Lead Agency provides more description.

- 1. Define Leadership and Coordination with Relevant Systems and Funding Sources
- 2. Promote Family Engagement Through Outreach and Consumer Education
- 3. Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families
- 4. Ensure Equal Access to Child Care for Low-Income Children
- 5. Establish Standards and Monitoring Processes to Ensure the Health and Safety of Child Care Settings
- 6. Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce
- 7. Support Continuous Quality Improvement
- 8. Ensure Grantee Program Integrity and Accountability

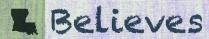


Section 1 defines the CCDF leadership and describes the coordination in development of the State Plan.

### This section identifies:

- The leadership of the CCDF program
- Stakeholders that were consulted in the development of the plan
- The coordination with child care resource and referral agencies
- · The development of disaster preparedness and response plans

- Louisiana is unique among states in using School Readiness Tax Credits, which encourage improving quality and supporting families, teachers and communities directly to meet the state match for the CCDF grant.
- Louisiana supports child care with emergency preparedness planning through resources and tools.

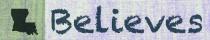


Section 2 describes how family engagement is promoted via outreach and consumer education.

### This section identifies:

- Outreach provided to limited English proficiency and disabilities
- The parental complaint process
- Information and education provided to consumers and providers
- Procedures for providing information on developmental screenings

- Louisiana's Mental Health Consultation Program provides supports for families and providers to address concerns related to social-emotional development.
- Louisiana has developed a revised <u>Developmental Screening Guidebook</u> and <u>landing page</u> specific to young children with disabilities.
- Louisiana has developed a <u>Resource Guide for Preventing Expulsion and Suspension</u> to use with families and child care providers

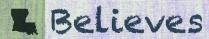


Section 3 describes how stable child care assistance is provided to families.

### This section identifies:

- Eligibility requirements for children and families
- Family contributions to payments
- How access is increased for vulnerable children and families
- How continuity of work is supported for families

- Louisiana has added a CCAP eligibility criteria to include those who are actively seeking employment for a 90 day period.
- Louisiana has increased eligibility income from 55% of the State Median Income to 65% of the State
   Median Income which allows families making more money to qualify for CCAP.

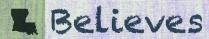


Section 4 describes how equal access to child care is ensured for low-income children.

### This section identifies:

- How parental choice is maximized and supply building mechanisms are implemented
- How market rates are assessed and the cost of child care is analyzed
- How adequate payment rates are established
- How payment practices are implemented and timeliness of payments is ensured
- How affordable copayments are established

- Louisiana has raised the CCAP rates to at least the 75th percentile.
- Louisiana provides quarterly CCAP bonus payments child care centers based on their quality rating and CCAP payments.

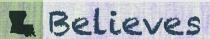


Section 5 describes standards and monitoring practices that ensure health and safety of child care.

### This section identifies:

- Licensing requirements
- Standards for ratios, group sizes, and qualifications for CCDF providers
- Health and safety standards and training for CCDF providers
- · Monitoring and enforcement policies and practices for CCDF providers
- Background check requirements

- Licensing regulations for centers and health and safety regulations for family home and in home providers were updated.
- Staff:child ratio for all types of centers are aligned.
- Key Training Modules developed to train on key health and safety topics.

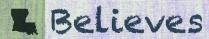


Section 6 describes strategies to recruit and retain a qualified and effective child care workforce.

### This section identifies:

- Professional development framework
- Training and professional development requirements
- Use of CCDF Quality Funds to support training and professional development
- Early learning and developmental guidelines

- Louisiana has developed a <u>PD Vendor Guide</u> inclusive of early childhood education vendors.
- The Department continues to work with Board of Regents, LCTCS, and institutions of higher ed to strengthen Louisiana's <u>Birth to Kindergarten educator pathway</u>, including by exploring articulation for a stackable ECAC to Bachelor's Degree pathway.



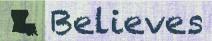
Section 7 describes continuous quality improvement supports.

### This section identifies:

- Professional development framework
- The use of quality funds
- The quality rating and improvement system
- Strategies for improving supply and quality of child care services for infants and toddlers
- Child care resource and referral services
- Program standards and facilitating compliance with state standards
- Evaluating and Assessing the Quality and Effectiveness of Child Care Program
- Accreditation supports

### **Highlights:**

• Since the implementation of the unified quality rating system and aligned quality supports, the average CLASS score has improved from 4.73 in 2015-2016 to 5.21 in 2019-2020.



Section 8 describes strategies for program integrity and accountability

### This section identifies:

- Internal controls
- Accountability measures

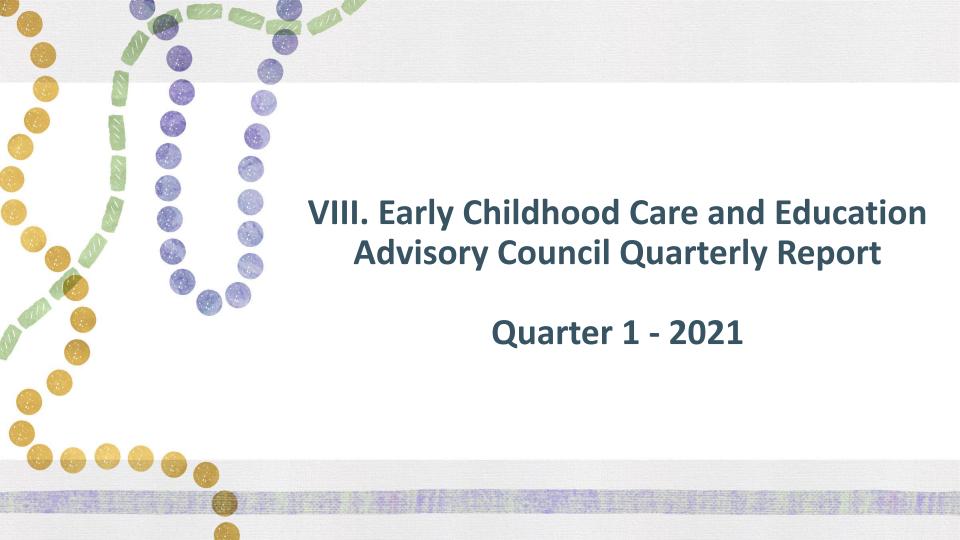
- The Lead Agency has a Fraud and Recovery Unit to investigate potential fraud and recover funds as needed.
- The Lead Agency has asked the Division of Internal Audit to review its internal controls.
- The Lead Agency has contracted with Postlethwaite and Netterville to audit CCAP transactions and use of LaCAP grants by providers.



# **Timeline and Next Steps**

Date	Activity
April-May 2021	Consultation on the development of the CCDF State Plan begins.
April 15, 2021	Draft State Plan becomes public and consultation continues.
May 19, 2021	Draft State Plan presented during public meeting and Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council.
June 30, 2021	State Plan will be submitted to the federal level for review.
October 1, 2021	CCDF State Plan becomes effective.

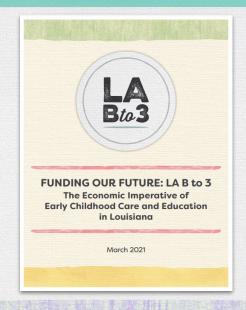


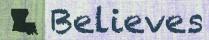


## Key Activities in Quarter 1 Louisiana's ECCE Commission Report

The Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Commission has released <u>Funding Our</u> <u>Future: The Economic Imperative of Early Childhood Care and Education in Louisiana.</u>

For the third year in a row, the report calls for a state investment of \$85.8 million and an increase of nearly that amount annually over the next decade to expand access to affordable, high-quality early care and education for thousands of working families in need, particularly those with children below age three.

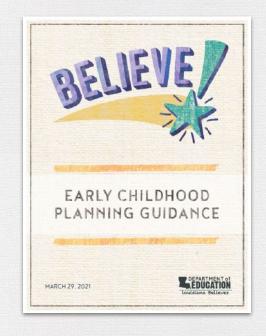




## Key Activities in Quarter 1 Believe! Early Childhood Planning Guidance

To support school systems and community networks with planning for and budgeting new funds under the <u>Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA)</u>
<u>Act</u>, the LDOE has launched *Achieve!* (pre-K-12) and Believe! (Early Childhood).

<u>Believe! (Early Childhood)</u> provides community networks with prioritized activities, funding opportunities, and resources to develop community plans in alignment with the priorities and focus areas outlined in <u>Believe to Achieve: Louisiana's</u> <u>Educational Priorities</u>.

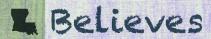




# Key Activities in Quarter 1 Early Childhood Community Networks, SuperApp

School systems planned for the 2021-2022 academic year with their early childhood community network lead agency to complete the early childhood components of Super App.

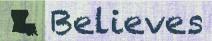
Торіс	Early Childhood Vision	Description Super App Questions	
Local Governance	Communities drive faster rates of improvement in access and quality at the local level.	School systems linked the community network's blueprint.	
Access	More children birth through age three should be able to access publicly-funded spots in high-quality child	School systems worked with networks to identify strategies to increase access for targeted age groups	
	care centers.	School systems uploaded the network's Coordinated Funding Request	
Quality	All early childhood classrooms in the state should be offering high-quality care and education for all children.	School systems requested funding for B-5 high quality curriculum, professional development, and specialized supports.	



# Key Activities in Quarter 1 Early Childhood Community Networks, Super App

Community networks submitted bold, ambitious seat requests developed in partnership with program partners, district leadership, and community leaders.

- Using Preschool Development Renewal Grant dollars, Louisiana piloted the first year B-3 Seats initiative in the 2020-2021 academic year.
- 13 Ready Start Networks are currently serving **672** children (as of April 2021) in high-quality centers. Additionally, Volunteers of America is serving **18** children in Family Child Care in the Greater Baton Rouge area.
- CRRSA funding is allowing LDOE to drastically expand the opportunity to serve 2,970 B-3 children in 22 Ready Start Networks across the state in 2021-2022. In addition to these seats placed in high-quality child care centers, 35 will be placed in Family Child Care through Volunteers of America.





# Key Activities in Quarter 1 SuperApp, Early Childhood Quality

48 early childhood community networks received funding to support early literacy development.

Early Childhood Literacy	Awarded	
Curriculum	\$1,644,098	
Professional Development	\$2,150,750	
Total	\$3,794,848	

46 early childhood community networks are receiving funding to provide professional development to address the unique needs of children ages 3-5 with disabilities.

Professional Development	Awarded		
Specialized Support	\$200,000		



## **Key Activities in Quarter 1**Early Childhood Community Networks

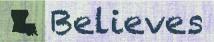
The Department and Community Networks continue to support sites through implementation of the Early Childhood Accountability System to ensure children have high quality experiences.

#### **Supporting the Early Childhood Accountability System:**

- Lead agencies scheduled and began completing spring CLASS® observations.
- The ULL Picard Center continued scheduling and conducting third party audits of local lead agency CLASS® observations
- The Department collaborated with lead agencies to monitor the COVID-19 community risk index published by LDH and pause/resume in-person observations as appropriate.
- The Department collaborated with stakeholders like the Department of Health to provide guidance allowing in-person observations by fully vaccinated observers regardless of community risk index.

#### **Early Childhood Accountability for 2020-2021:**

• The Department received approval for the recommended Bulletin 140 Emergency Rules regarding Performance Scores & Ratings for 2020-2021, which had been endorsed by the ECCE AC.

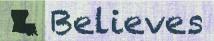


## **Key Activities in Quarter 1**Early Childhood Community Networks

The Department and Community Networks have continued to support local sites to implement the early childhood accountability system and to coordinate enrollment.

#### **Working Together to Coordinate Enrollment:**

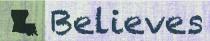
- Lead agencies worked with sites to complete the February Child Count.
- Communities collaborated on developing their Coordinated Enrollment Plans and made eligibility determinations.
- Communities using creative approaches to enroll families such as:
  - Transitioning to virtual pre-K roundup to enroll children;
  - Scheduling phone appointments with teachers and staff to complete enrollment applications;
  - Increasing promotion and advertising campaigns for early childhood care and education;
  - Using <u>DirectMatch</u> as a contact-free method of determining income eligibility; and
  - Preparing for a potential increase in demand and/or eligibility for pre-K this fall.



## **Key Activities in Quarter 1**Ready Start Networks

Ready Start Networks continue to bring together partners to pursue innovative solutions to their local communities' greatest challenges in expanding access to early care and education

- The 26 Ready Start Networks continued pursuing the four pillars: developing and pursuing goals outlined in their **blueprints**, recruiting committed stakeholders for their **coalition**, establishing and/or maintaining **governance** for shared decision-making, and exploring new diversified **funding** strategies.
- 9 networks interested in becoming a Ready Start Network participated in a Get Ready Cohort, a series of informative webinars hosted by the Department to determine whether or not to apply for Cohort 4.
- The Ready Start Network Cohort 4 Request for Applications was released.



## Key Activities in Quarter 1 Supporting Families to Be Successful

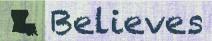
The Department has supported families through partnerships and resource development.

#### **LENA Start** Pilot

 Ready Start Networks have partnered with families to implement the LENA Start where families learn strategies to directly link language and conversations to a child's routine and everyday activities.

### Louisiana Family Website

- The Department is creating a family website designed to help families learn about school readiness, access to health and safety resources and empowering families.
- In partnership with Louisiana Department of Health, the LDOE released a Family Website Survey to learn more about the needs from families.



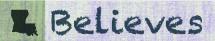
# Key Activities in Quarter 1 Supporting Teachers to Be Successful

The Department conducted onsite reviews for ECAC programs in the first quarter

Two Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs participated in the on-site review process, designed to identify strengths and opportunities for growth with ECAC programs: Frog Street and Center for Development and Learning.

- Program leadership has showed an overwhelming openness to receiving feedback during the process and have demonstrated a strong commitment to improvement.
- Much coursework has demonstrated instructors clearly modeling and labeling the teaching skills they want candidates to implement in the classroom.
- Areas of improvement include the quality of supports and reducing coaching variability.

8 onsite reviews have been completed and two additional reviews are scheduled for spring 2021.



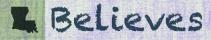
# **Key Activities in Quarter 1**Supporting Directors to Be Successful

The Department is supporting child care directors in meeting standards for high quality learning, leadership, and business practices.

#### The Department supported directors by:

- Enhancing shared services efforts to offer greater efficiency in workforce and business operations;
- Providing training and technical assistance pilots on business practices and finance planning;
- Strategizing the development and management of a substitute directory
- Offering training and technical assistance on administration of the Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Providing new director outreach and support

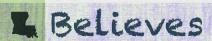
<u>The Louisiana Early Leaders Academy</u> continued to offer in-person training and coaching, with plans to launch year three in April.



# Key Activities in Quarter 1 Supporting Quality in Struggling Sites

42 early learning centers have continued to participate in Site Improvement Planning (SIP).

January 2021	<ul> <li>Field Support Consultants (FSCs) conducted director interview gaining insight into the struggles of managing a low-performing center.</li> <li>Sites were provided with improvement data based on Fall 2020 CLASS scores.</li> </ul>
February 2021	<ul> <li>Improvement plans were reviewed and modified as needed.</li> <li>Sites continued to receive prioritized resources, including coaching and technical assistance.</li> </ul>
March 2021	FSCs prepared for spring discussions with Child Care Resource and Referral partners supporting Site Improvement Planning



# Key Activities in Quarter 1 Supporting Family Child Care (FCC) Providers

The Department continues to engage, learn from, and support family child care providers through the FCC pilot, and using the information collected to inform statewide strategy.

#### **Supporting Family Child Care Providers:**

- Pilot operators Children's Coalition, On Track by Five, and Volunteers of America continued to provide twice monthly one-on-one coaching (mostly virtual) and technical assistance, network meetings, and group training to all 53 family child care pilot participants.
- Spring CLASS® and FCCERS® observations were conducted with the ULL Picard Center is conducting third-party CLASS® observations for the first time in this pilot.
- The Department has convened an FCC Licensing Workgroup whose goal is to recommend revisions to *Bulletin* 137, to include necessary carve outs for early learning centers in a residence.
- February child count for FCC homes resulted in 248 children attending at the time of the count.
- The Department has convened an FCC Provider Focus Group which meets monthly to discuss important issues surrounding the pilot and share their input on key programmatic decisions.

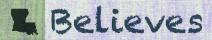


# Key Activities in Quarter 1 Supporting Child Care Centers (Licensing)

The Department has supported child care centers through referrals to TIKES Mental Health Consultation.

The Division of Licensing has seen an increase in reports of inappropriate discipline. If the investigation from those reports received confirm inappropriate discipline, centers have been referred to Tulane for additional support in this area.

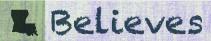
Tulane is offering TIKES Mental Health Consultation via telephone or secure video platform to Louisiana caregivers, parents; Type I, II, and III child care centers; Family Child Care and In Home providers; respite care center caregivers; and others caring for young children.



## Key Activities in Quarter 1 Supporting Child Care Centers (CCAP)

The Department has provided supports for providers to help stabilize the sector.

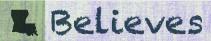
- State CCAP maximum rates were increased based on the 2020 Market Rate Survey.
- Providers are being paid at the state maximum.
- Provider child care assistance payments based on enrollment was extended to December 31, 2021.
- LaCAP Grants were offered to both certified and non-certified child care centers and family homes.
- Family Child Care providers attended a focus group meeting that addressed BESE revisions to Bulletin 139.



## Key Activities in Quarter 1 Supporting Child Care Centers (CCAP)

The Department has provided supports for families through CCAP.

- Income eligibility for families was increased to approximately 200% of the federal poverty level, allowing families to make more and still qualify for CCAP.
- CCAP introduced the Resource Guide For Preventing Expulsion & Suspension.
- The Early Head Start and Head Start Collaboration offered before and after school authorizations to Head Start families for extended day child care services.
- CCAP planned application expansion initiatives are presently occurring across the state.



## Key Activities in Quarter 1 Publicly-Funded Licensed Early Learning Centers

#### **Licensing Type**

	Type I	Type II	Type III	FCC	In-home
January 2021	236	181	982	220	7
February 2021	238	186	998	230	7
March 2021	236	185	1002	239	8

#### **Star Ratings:**

	0 Star	1 Star	2 Star	3 Star	4 Star	5 Star
2021	20	12	106	536	687	200
2020	8	19	197	604	582	110

<sup>\*</sup>This does not include new, unrated sites.

