



January 21, 2016



IN THIS ISSUE:

[Superintendent's Message](#)

[Teaching and Learning](#)

[Funding and Enrollment](#)

[Child Safety and Welfare](#)

[Lead Agency Support](#)

[Other](#)

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

In 2012 Louisiana passed a law to unify our early childhood system to help prepare more children for kindergarten. Understandably, there were concerns about how this might work. In response, the Department, under the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, asked Louisiana communities to lead the way. Local leaders, working closely with their teachers and children, would guide the implementation rather than Baton Rouge.

Four years later, Louisiana communities have demonstrated yet again that those closest to children should guide our efforts to improve how we educate our children.

In the first 6 months of the Learning Year, local networks have observed 98 percent of toddler and Pre-K classrooms using the *CLASS*, a rigorous tool focused on classroom interactions. Leaders from child care, Head Start and schools have come together to coordinate application processes to make it easier for families to apply. More families can access early childhood programs - thanks to coordinated funding processes.

This success is only possible thanks to the contributions of every community network partner - lead agencies, public schools, nonpublic schools, Early Head Start and Head Start, child care, resource and referral agencies, and other local organizations - in every community in Louisiana. No other state in our nation has achieved this level of unification on behalf of young learners.

Now the challenge is to focus on impact. Initial *CLASS* results indicate that our programs struggle to provide high-quality instruction, meaning children are not supported to develop the essential skills needed to be successful in school. Families still find it difficult to navigate the process and choose the best option for their children. And there are too many families who desperately want but cannot access a slot for their children in a quality early childhood program.

Addressing these challenges will not be easy or simple. But we intend to continue to work hand-in-hand with our communities to develop local approaches to overcome obstacles and improve outcomes for Louisiana families and children.

As always, thank you for all you do for our children,

John

John White
Louisiana Department of Education
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

TEACHING AND LEARNING

QUALITY START TRANSITION

As Quality Start transitions to the new unified rating and improvement system, providers should be aware of the following important dates.

- January 31, 2016 - Pathways will mail Director and Staff Tax Credit forms to eligible staff.
- **February 1, 2016 - Final deadline for accepting Quality Start applications for 3-5 stars. Centers wanting to apply for 3-5 stars are encouraged to apply as soon as possible to ensure enough time to complete the application process.**
- March 1, 2016 - CCAP providers will receive a notice which will include their star rating, the average number of CCAP children, and the amount of their SRTC.
- March 31, 2016 - Final date for ERS assessments.
- July 1, 2016 - Final date stars will be awarded in the Quality Start program.

Please note that Child Care Expense Credit forms have already been mailed to all CCAP providers with a 2-5 star rating as of July 1, 2015. The letters describing the School Readiness Tax Credits and individual star ratings have also already mailed to all star rated providers. For additional forms, please email dss.qualitystart@la.gov with the amount needed.

Please be advised that any change in your business such as a change of ownership or a change of location may impact your star rating, SRTC, and tiered bonus payments.

For questions about Quality Start or School Readiness Tax Credits, please contact your Quality Start Specialist or email dss.qualitystart@la.gov.

REVIEW OF BIRTH TO FIVE CURRICULUM RESOURCES

The Louisiana Department of Education is reviewing curriculum programs that serve children ages birth to five. Commercial curriculum vendors are invited to submit their products for review. Many vendors have already submitted a product or plan to do so. The deadline for submission is January 29, 2016.

Products will be reviewed in the order in which they are received. Each review will be posted on the Department website upon completion. The Department plans to have all reviews completed by April 1, 2016.

The reviews will be used to determine a new metric on the practice performance profile about the quality of curriculum used by a program. Districts and program may find the reviews helpful when selecting curriculum.

More information about the process as well as copies of the Instructional Materials Evaluation Tool (IMET) Rubric for Infant/Toddler and the IMET Rubric for Three- and- Four-Year-Olds can be found on the Department's [webpage](#).

School districts or individual programs that would like the Department to review a specific commercial curriculum should email the name of the product to Jill Slack at jill.slack@la.gov. Districts or programs that have created their own curriculum and may want their materials to be considered should also email Jill Slack.

For questions, please contact: LouisianaCurriculumReview@la.gov.

FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

COORDINATED ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION WEBINAR - FEBRUARY 3

Coordinated Eligibility Determination is a major component of the Coordinated Enrollment process. To assist Lead Agencies and interested partner providers, the Department will conduct an Eligibility Determination informational webinar on **February 3, 2016**, from 12-1 p.m..

Webinar will feature eligibility requirements for different programs, allowable documentation, and detailed instructions on how to make an

accurate determination. Lead Agencies and other interested participants are welcome to join. Webinar will be recorded.

Date: February 3

Time: 12 p.m.

Link: <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/eligibility/>

CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

LICENSING REGULATIONS (BULLETIN 137) ONLINE TRAINING - COMPLETE COURSE SERIES

In an effort to support new and existing early learning center providers, Licensing has designed a four part series of online courses that will provide an overview of Bulletin 137 - Louisiana's Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations.

All of the course have been released, and can be accessed below:

- [Course 1 \(Chapters 1-9\)](#)
- [Course 2 \(Chapters 11-15\)](#)
- [Course 3 \(Chapter 17\)](#)
- [Course 4 \(Chapter 19 and 21\)](#)

Each course includes lectures, activities and quizzes that provide information related to Bulletin 137. Participants will receive training hours for each completed course. This course is designed for all administrators, directors, teachers and other support staff that own, operate and/or work in licensed "out of home" early learning centers. For questions, please contact Licensing at 225-342-9905 or LDELicensing@la.gov.

BULLETIN 137 - MEDICATION MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR TYPE I, II, AND III LICENSES

All staff members who administer medication must have medication administration training. Whether administering medication or not, each early learning center shall have at least **two** staff members trained in medication administration. Such training must be completed every two years with an approved Child Care Health Consultant.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPERVISORS AND AEPSi COORDINATORS: PLEASE DELETE OLD RECORDS

Early Childhood Special Education Supervisors and *AEPSi* (*Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System Interactive*) Coordinators should work to ensure that their district (or school) has accurate OSEP Progress Data for children who exited during 2014-2015. If you have not already done so, please delete records of children who exited your program during 2014-2015 or in prior years. If a child reached 6 years of age before 7/01/2015 or in the summer months before school started, please delete that record. Please **do not archive** any children.

If you have questions about *AEPSi* and the reporting process, contact Patsy Palmer (225-219-4536) or email (Patsy.Palmer@la.gov).

LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

SUPERVISOR AND TEACHER LEADER COLLABORATION EVENTS

The next round of Supervisor and Teacher Leader Collaboration Events began this week in Baton Rouge, and will continue around the state over the course of the next week. Sessions for Lead Agency Supervisors will be held in the morning. Afternoon sessions will be dedicated to Teacher Leaders. The remaining events will take place in the following locations:

Date	City	Location
January 25	Thibodaux	Nicholls State University Exact location TBD Thibodaux, LA

January 27	Natchitoches	Louisiana School for Math Science and the Arts Exact location TBD 715 University Parkway Natchitoches, LA
January 28	Lafayette	Bayou Church 2234 Kaliste Saloom Rd. Lafayette, LA

All Lead Agencies should plan to attend the morning Supervisor sessions. Lead Agencies should collaborate with program partners to nominate two teacher representatives to attend the afternoon Teacher Leader sessions. Registration information for these events will be forwarded to Lead Agencies.

WEEKLY EARLY CHILDHOOD LEAD AGENCY OFFICE HOURS

The Early Childhood team is offering weekly Office Hours for Lead Agencies. This will be a reoccurring opportunity for Lead Agencies to call in with any questions they may have about their current work and receive additional clarification.

Please note there will not be office hours on January 26.

OTHER

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL - FEBRUARY 4

The next Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council meeting will take place on **Thursday, February 4, at 1 p.m.** The meeting will be held in the Claiborne Building, 1201 N. 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA. The agenda for this meeting can be found [here](#).

This meeting is open to the public and can be live streamed. Please click [here](#) for directions on accessing live streamed meetings.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT FUND STATE PLAN

A public hearing for the draft Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan will be held on **Thursday, February 4, 2016, at 9 a.m.** in the Claiborne Building, Louisiana Purchase Room, 1201 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. A copy of the draft State Plan can be found [here](#). To provide feedback, please enter your comments at this [website](#) or by emailing earlychildhood@la.gov.

A recorded webinar providing an overview of the draft CCDF State Plan can be found [here](#).

SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEWSLETTER

If someone you know wishes to subscribe to this newsletter, please click [here](#) to subscribe.

LDOE Contacts

[John White](#)
State Superintendent of Education
(toll-free) 877.453.2721
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

LDOE Links

[LDOE Website](#)
[Contact Us](#)