



March 3, 2016



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

Now is the time to get families excited about Pre-K and other early childhood options for next year. Communities across Louisiana are conducting fairs, round-ups, expos, and other events in March. These activities are an excellent way to showcase all of your community's options and to help inform parents about the importance of quality early childhood education. Other communities are now in the process of matching families with their desired choice, whether that is in a school, Head Start or child care setting.

Because no one can serve all families, early childhood providers are working together at the local level to coordinate information, eligibility, and application processes. Together communities are making it easier for families to apply and for early childhood providers to plan for next year.

You may be using a unified application, whether that is on paper or online. You may have also developed shared processes for reviewing applications and matching families with their preferred choices. Our most innovative community networks are going a step further, involving other agencies that serve families, providing entertainment and using multi-media such as television and billboards to promote their efforts. For examples of best practices as well as useful guidance, see our Early Childhood Guidebook. If there are any questions about coordinated enrollment, contact Nasha Patel at nasha.patel@la.gov.

Making improvements to enrollment means more children are aware of and can attend quality early childhood programs, thus helping ensure more children enter kindergarten ready.

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

John

John White
Louisiana Department of Education
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

TEACHING AND LEARNING

SAVE THE DATES - JUNE TEACHER LEADER SUMMIT

If you work in early childhood in Louisiana, you are invited to attend the Teacher Leader Summit in New Orleans at the Morial Convention Center the first week of June.

The Early Childhood track will feature interactive sessions focusing on improvement efforts at the class, program and/or community level. To ensure that there is adequate coverage of session topics, the Department is looking for individuals (or groups) who would be interested in presenting sessions at the Summit. This opportunity is open to teachers, supervisors/directors, coaches, and others who work in Early Childhood programs or support those who do.

If you would like to share the knowledge and lessons you have learned in your Early Childhood Community Network, then complete the [Solicitation for Early Childhood Proposals](#) and return it to Ivy Starns at ivy.starns@la.gov. The deadline for proposals has been extended to Friday, March 11.

CLASS SYSTEM - SEE HOW YOUR SITE IS DOING

Users in the CLASS system that are set up as Site Coordinators now have access to site-level score reports. These site level score reports show both local observations and the third party observations for their classrooms at the domain and dimension level. These reports are organized by observation period, and include a flag to show when an observation was conducted by third party observers. If a user is a Site Coordinator for multiple sites, one report can be run for all sites connected to the user's account.

The two observation reports can be accessed through the Reports tab in the CLASS system, and are called:

- *Site CLASS Domain Averages*
- *Site CLASS Dimension Averages*

NOTICE FOR PROVIDERS - SCHOOL READINESS TAX CREDITS (SRTC)

Due to a technology issue with printing, there will be a delay in providers receiving their mailed Provider SRTC letters from Quality Start. Questions related to the Provider SRTC letters can be emailed to dss.qualitystart@la.gov. Quality Start apologizes for any inconvenience.

FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM RATE CHANGES

The increased Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) rates are now in effect. Families who benefit from CCAP have received letters informing them of the changes. This will help low-income families better afford quality early child care and raise funding levels for qualified child care centers and teachers.

Please note that neither providers nor families need to take any action at this time. The rate changes are automatic. To understand the potential impact on a particular child care center, please try out our new [Rate Calculator](#).

Child care directors and teachers can assist with the transition by informing families about the changes. An overview of the child care assistance process can be found [here](#). Families who may be eligible can apply online through the [CAFE](#) application portal. Together we can help more Louisiana families' access quality options that help prepare their children for kindergarten.

2016-2017 LA 4 AND NSECD ALLOCATIONS

The recommended allocations for LA 4, NSECD and the Pre-K Expansion Grant will go before the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on March 3 and 4. **These allocations are tentative and are subject to legislative appropriation. They can be found [here](#) on the BESE website.**

For questions regarding the Pre-K Expansion Grant, please contact nasha.patel@la.gov. Questions related to LA 4 or NSECD should be directed to lindsey.bradford@la.gov.

CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

CHILD CARE AND SCHOOL ENTRY - VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

Louisiana's Immunization requirements for daycare and school entry are important tools for maintaining high vaccination coverage rates and preventing disease in centers. Entry vaccination requirements protect individual children from vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs) and may reduce VPD outbreaks in daycares, schools and communities.

Louisiana Law details the entry and electronic reporting requirements for daycares and schools and states that children entering "licensed day care centers, at the time of registration or entry shall present satisfactory evidence of immunity to or immunization against vaccine-preventable diseases according to a schedule approved by the Louisiana Office of Public Health". The Revised Statutes Title 17-Education 170 are available [here](#).

The current Louisiana Immunization Schedule can be found [here](#).

Please contact the Louisiana Office of Public Health at 504-838-5300 or your [Regional Immunization Consultant](#) if you have questions about this requirement. Compliance with this legislative mandate protects children from vaccine-preventable diseases promote higher rates of vaccination coverage, and in turn, lower rates of VPDs in our State.

Vaccinations have had an enormous impact on improving the health of children in the United States. Most parents have never seen first-hand the devastating consequences that vaccine-preventable diseases have on a family or community. While these diseases are not common in the U.S., they persist around the world. It is important that we continue to protect our children with vaccines because outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases can and do occasionally occur in this country. Vaccination is one of the best ways parents, centers and schools can protect infants, children, and teens from potentially harmful diseases.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN - BULLETIN 137, LOUISIANA EARLY LEARNING CENTER LICENSING REGULATIONS

Children are to be supervised at all times. At the end of each day, the entire center and play yard shall be checked to ensure that no child is left at the center. In addition, vehicles that transport children, must be checked to ensure no child is left in the vehicle. These regulations are further detailed in [Bulletin 137, Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations](#) (§1901 D. End of the Day Check & §2107 A. Motor Vehicle Passenger Check) Forms to assist with the visual checks of the center as well as motor vehicle passenger checks are available [here](#).

LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

MARCH COLLABORATIVE SESSIONS FOR LEAD AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

Lead Agencies should plan to send up to two representatives to the March Collaboration meetings being held as noted below. Refer to the February 23 email from Kaye Eichler for registration details. If the session that you want to attend is full, complete the registration process so that you are placed on the waiting list and you will be able to attend at that location.

Date	Location
Thursday, March 10	Claiborne Building 1201 North Third Street Baton Rouge, LA
Friday, March 11	Bossier Parish School for Technology and Innovative Learning 1841 Swan Lake Rd. Bossier City, LA
	Jefferson Parish School Board

Monday, March 14	501 Manhattan Blvd. Harvey, LA
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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.

Weekly Time: Tuesdays, 3:00-4:00 PM
Call In: 1-800-832-0736; PIN: 9174840

OTHER

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL - VACANCY NOTICE

The Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and Louisiana Department of Education are seeking applications for membership on the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Advisory Council. Currently, there is a vacancy in the role of one representative of a local education agency that is operating publicly funded early childhood programs other than Head Start. **The application can be found [here](#).**

The ECCE Advisory Council is comprised of representatives and stakeholders within the field of early childhood care and education provides input and guidance to the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the Department on matters related to publicly-funded early care and education programs.

Deadline for submitting an application is March 11, 2016. Completed applications, as well as questions about the ECCE Advisory Council position, can be sent to erin.carroll@la.gov.

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LDOE Contacts

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

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