



April 14, 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,

Today, the Department kicked off a series of [discussions](#) across the state on the future of early childhood in Louisiana. In these sessions, we talk about what we have learned so far in the implementation of our unified rating and improvement system and coordinated enrollment and how we can adjust our policies to better serve families and children. We also discuss what supports will be provided to programs and teachers to help prepare all Louisiana children for kindergarten.

The sessions, which will be led by Early Childhood staff, cover the following topics:

- Initial statewide results from CLASS observations and Coordinated Enrollment in the Learning Year;
- Expectations for programs and community networks for 2016-2017; and
- System of supports to help improve interactions and instruction in early childhood classrooms.

We invite everyone to participate in these discussions. We need your input on what is working well for Louisiana families and children and how we can improve our work together. See below for more information about dates, times and locations. Click [here](#) for the presentation that will be used in these sessions. For questions, contact Nasha Patel at [nasha.patel@la.gov](mailto:nasha.patel@la.gov).

To help Community Networks prepare for 2016-2017, the Department released the [Lead Agency Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#) this week. We are seeking organizations in every community in Louisiana to work closely with Pre-K, Head Start and child care partners to coordinate observations and enrollment. These organizations will continue to lead local efforts to unify early childhood, helping to ensure every child in Louisiana can access a quality early childhood program that helps prepare them for kindergarten. For questions, contact Kaye Eichler at [kaye.eichler@la.gov](mailto:kaye.eichler@la.gov).

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

**John**

John White  
Louisiana Department of Education  
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

---

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

## SCHEDULE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD ROUNDTABLE SESSIONS: APRIL 14 - APRIL 26

Here is more information about the in-person roundtable sessions:

Date	Time	Location
April 14	11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Bossier Parish School Board Bossier Instructional Center 2719 Airline Dr. Bossier, LA
April 15	11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Claiborne Conference Center 1201 North 3rd St. Baton Rouge, LA
April 19	11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Children's Coalition Offices 1363 Louisville Ave. Monroe, LA
April 20	10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Parkview Baptist Church 6301 Camphor St. Metairie, LA
April 26	10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Rapides Parish School Board Gladys Higdon Instructional Center 502 Beauregard St. Alexandria, LA
April 26	2:30 p.m. - 4 p.m.	Lafayette Parish School Board Vermilion Conference Center 326 Gautier Rd . Lafayette, LA

The Department conducted a Roundtable Webinar on April 13. The slides can be accessed [here](#), and the recording can be accessed [here](#).

For questions, contact Nasha Patel at [nasha.patel@la.gov](mailto:nasha.patel@la.gov).

## INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS REVIEW

Early childhood supervisors and directors should determine whether their programs meet the educational and developmental needs of their children. To help managers identify whether programs align with the [Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards](#) the Louisiana Department of Education is leading an online [review of early childhood curricular resources](#). Programs using a curriculum rated as Tier I and Tier II are placed under state contract, which means that orders can be placed either [directly](#) with the publishing company or, online through the [book depository](#). For questions and concerns, please contact [LouisianaCurriculumReview@la.gov](mailto:LouisianaCurriculumReview@la.gov).

## LOUISIANA EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY SURVEY

To better understand the perspective of Louisiana families, the Department of Education has partnered with United Way of Southeast Louisiana to conduct a statewide [Early Childhood Family Survey](#) that is being administered by Louisiana State University. The survey is being conducted in two ways:

- **Paper:** Paper surveys were distributed to a randomly selected sample of publicly-funded sites across the state. These surveys have been mailed to the selected programs. Families will mail the surveys back to LSU in the provided self-addressed stamped envelopes.
- **Online:** Families in publicly-funded that did not receive the paper survey can complete the survey online. A [one page letter for families](#) has been provided and can be printed and distributed to families of publicly-funded children.

We are asking families to submit their responses to the survey by **April 30, 2016**. Thank you for your support and assistance with the Louisiana Early Childhood Family Survey! For questions, please contact Nasha Patel at [Nasha.Patel@la.gov](mailto:Nasha.Patel@la.gov).

## PREPARATION FOR COMPLETING THIRD CHECKPOINT IN GOLD® - DUE MAY 31

As a reminder, teachers should begin finalizing their third GOLD® Checkpoints in order to meet the May 31 deadline. Teaching Strategies® offers an array of resources on this process including *Quick Start Guides* for Teachers and Administrators available to anyone with an account through the "Help?" feature of the Teaching Strategies® website. More information about the checkpoint process can be found [here](#).

## UPDATING OTHER CLASSROOM INFORMATION IN GOLD® - DUE MAY 31

Administrators and teachers should also ensure that the following informational metrics have been entered in the GOLD® system for each classroom:

- [Teacher: Child ratios](#)
- Lead Teacher Degree
- Louisiana Teacher Certification
- Pre-K or Infant/Toddler Curriculum

Teachers must additionally ensure that children with IEPs or IFSPs, including speech, are marked as having IEPs or IFSPs in the GOLD® system. All information must be entered by May 31.

Administrators can review the status of finalized Checkpoints for their classes by accessing the "Assessment Status Report" (located under the Checkpoint tab in the GOLD® system). For questions and additional assistance, please contact Ivy Starns at [ivy.starns@la.gov](mailto:ivy.starns@la.gov).

## SPRING GOLD™ UPDATES

Cohort 3 networks should plan to attend the final series of technical assistance visits with Teaching Strategies® staff. These sessions will provide information on accessing and analyzing reports, closing out the 2015-2016 year, and instructions on getting ready for 2016 - 2017. A "Save the Date" flyer will be sent to Lead Agencies highlighting these sessions which are scheduled for April 25 through May 6.

Programs from Cohorts 1, 2, and 3 are encouraged to take advantage of *Advanced GOLD™ Training*. This professional development opportunity includes an on-site visit with a Teaching Strategies® consultant. Sessions are free of charge for interested programs (other than costs of stipends, etc.) and are tailored to support teachers, supervisors/directors and others in using GOLD™ to its maximum potential. Sessions are limited. For questions, please contact Ivy Starns at [ivy.starns@la.gov](mailto:ivy.starns@la.gov).

## SAVE THE DATES - JUNE TEACHER LEADER SUMMIT

Please save the date for the Teacher Leader Summit in New Orleans at the Morial Convention Center. Early Childhood session will take place on June 1-2, 2016. An Early Childhood track will feature interactive sessions focusing on improvement efforts at the class, program and/or community level.

Registration information has been sent to Lead Agencies. Slots will be limited, so networks should work together to determine how those slots should be distributed. Additional details related to the Teacher Leader Summit will be included in future editions of the Early Childhood Connection Newsletter. For questions, please contact Ivy Starns at [ivy.starns@la.gov](mailto:ivy.starns@la.gov).

## APPLICATION FOR ASSESSMENT

For the 2016-2017 school year, early childhood sites that would like to administer an alternate early childhood assessment (for birth to preschool) may do so. Interested programs must apply for a waiver by April 19, 2016. Please note that this is only required if your site does not want to use GOLD®.

Information regarding assessments will continue to be included on the Early Childhood Performance Profiles. Programs must continue to input data regarding teacher's education levels, certification status, class ratios and curriculum through the GOLD® system even if an alternate assessment waiver is granted. The alternative Birth to Five Assessment for 2016-2017 waiver can be found [here](#). For questions, please contact Ivy Starns at [ivy.starns@la.gov](mailto:ivy.starns@la.gov).

---

## FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

### PROVIDER PORTAL - CAFE UPDATES AND WEBINAR

The Department is launching the Provider Portal of the Common Access Front End (CAFÉ) system. The CAFÉ Provider Portal will allow you to conduct business with the Department on a self-serve basis by giving you the ability to access and manage your provider information online, including licensing and provider certification. The link can be found [here](#).

Licensing - CAFÉ will allow you to:

- Apply and pay fees (via credit card) online;
- Upload documents (ex. state central registry (SCR) disclosure forms, criminal background clearances (CBC) );
- Communicate with notifications and reminders regarding your site;
- Report changes (ex. director/administrator, contact information, etc.);
- View submitted forms; and
- Check application status.

You must contact Michelle DeMeulenaere at 225-342-9905, 60 days prior to license expiration date to receive your Unique ID number that is an exclusive number to this system to link your account to make any changes, renewals, or updates in the system. Instructions for using CAFÉ for licensing can be found [here](#).

Provider Certification - CAFÉ will allow you to:

- Apply online as a new provider, or depending on your provider type, submit your midpoint and renewal applications; and
- Upload documents (Ex. verifications, training certifications, documentation of identity, fire marshal inspection, etc.).

Instructions for using CAFÉ for provider certification can be found [here](#).

**Licensing and Provider Certification will host a webinar on CAFÉ on April 20 from 11:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.** Please see below for link and call-in information:

<https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/licensing1/>

**Call In:** 1-800-832-0736

**PIN:** 9174840

---

## CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

### STATE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS - CCDF ANNUAL NOTICE - LEVEL 1

The Department would like to remind centers to be prepared for hurricanes and other regional disasters. If an emergency covers a large area such as a parish or region of the state, the Department will closely monitor conditions out of concern for your safety and for the safety of the children and families you serve.

Please know that should the Department determine your center to be included in a parish or region affected by a disaster, your license/certification may be suspended until you obtain post disaster approval and submit the required "Re-Opening Form" to the Department. For more information about emergency preparedness and the CCDF Annual Notice-LEVEL 1, please click [here](#).

For additional questions, please contact Michelle DeMeulenaere at [Michelle.Demeulenaere@la.gov](mailto:Michelle.Demeulenaere@la.gov) or call 225-342-9905.

---

## LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

## SPRING CLASS DEADLINE - MAY 15

Lead Agencies are required by Bulletin 140 to submit spring CLASS observation scores for all classrooms in publicly-funded sites by Sunday, May 15. Note there will be an appeals process for extenuating circumstances which may be used to exclude scores from classrooms and sites from the Practice Performance Ratings. For questions, please contact Nasha Patel at [Nasha.Patel@la.gov](mailto:Nasha.Patel@la.gov).

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS AND WEBINAR - EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY NETWORK LEAD AGENCY

On Wednesday, April 13, the Department issued a Request for Applications for Early Childhood Community Network Lead Agencies. Through this Request for Applications, the Department is seeking to identify and fund Lead Agencies for the two-year period beginning July 1, 2016, continuing through June 30, 2018. The Request for Applications for Early Childhood Community Network Lead Agencies can be found [here](#).

Lead Agencies must:

- Conduct administrative functions for the Community Network
- Coordinate CLASS observations, assure that accurate observations are conducted for the all Toddler and Pre-K classrooms and that feedback is provided to all participating programs
- Coordinate the birth-to-age-five enrollment and the state funding application for the Community Network.

**An information webinar related to the Request for Applications for Early Childhood Community Network Lead Agencies will be held on Monday, April 18, from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.** Please see below for link:

<https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/leadagencyrfa/>

**Call In:** 1-800-832-0736

**PIN:** 9174840

For questions, please contact Kaye Eichler at [Kaye.Eichler@la.gov](mailto:Kaye.Eichler@la.gov).

## WEEKLY EARLY CHILDHOOD LEAD AGENCY OFFICE HOURS - NO OFFICE HOURS ON APRIL 19 OR APRIL 26

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. **There will be no office hours on April 19 or April 26 due to the regional roundtables.**

**Weekly Time:** Tuesdays, 3:00-4:00 p.m.

**Call In:** 1-800-832-0736

**PIN:** 9174840

---

## OTHER

### STATE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS - CCDF ANNUAL NOTICE - LEVEL 1

The next Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council meeting will take place on **Wednesday, May 18**. The time is still being confirmed. The meeting will be held in the **Claiborne Building, 1201 N. 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA**.

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

---

## 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](#)

---