



July 21, 2016



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

The last few weeks have been difficult for anyone concerned with the promise of our country and the well being of its people. For all that remains to be learned about the events in Minnesota, Texas, and here in Baton Rouge, they have reminded us of deep wounds and persistent scars in the body of our nation.

We each likely have our own take on the events of the last few weeks and what they represent. I myself have struggled to arrive at conclusive lessons from the violence, fear, and anguish I have witnessed across the country and in my adopted home city.

Like you, I have the blessing of a daily vocation that allows me to imagine regularly a better world. So I find myself filtering thoughts, as I watch the news, read social media, and talk to friends and colleagues, through the lens of education.

I have thought more in recent days, for example, about what it means to be a good public servant. Law enforcement officers and teachers share the immense weight of public expectations, even in times of strife - expectations of grace, compassion, patience, and wisdom.

I have thought also about the role of conflict and violence in our communities, especially its scarring effects on children. Now more than ever, we public servants can focus on making schools places of freedom in the truest sense: free of violence, free to discuss difficult subjects, free because of respect among children and adults alike.

And I have thought about race in America. Whatever is revealed by investigations in Baton Rouge and elsewhere, these recent events demonstrate the prominence of racial disparities in any assessment of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness in America today. Education is a fundamental and necessary element of those inalienable rights. So we are called, in these times particularly, to re-examine whether at every stage of education, from child care through higher education, we can honestly assure families that neither race, nor neighborhood, nor family income, shall have a bearing on the opportunities afforded their children to grow and develop.

Though any search for answers will undoubtedly encounter complexity, and though we will not all arrive at common perspectives, we educators must consider recent events and the reactions of those we serve with a thoughtfulness befitting our profession. As early childhood leaders and teachers, our daily work is necessarily connected to both wounds in the body public and to the healing of those wounds. So let us recommit to a just and fair Louisiana, for public servants and the public alike, in this generation and for all to follow.

I look forward to learning your perspective and to conversations in the days ahead.

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

John

John White
Louisiana Department of Education
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

TEACHING AND LEARNING

CLASS® PILOT TO SUPPORT CLASSROOMS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Department has released an opportunity for programs serving children with special needs. Programs may choose one of three support systems aligned with the CLASS® tool. Programs will apply to the Department by submitting an application to their Lead Agency. Lead Agencies need to submit the [CLASS® Pilot Request For Applications \(RFA\)](#) to the Department by **July 22, 2016**.

Coaches and instructors must be able to attend the appropriate training session for their model per the table below. Once participants are selected, specific locations and times will be communicated to Lead Agencies.

Program Name	Dates
Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (MMCI)	August 22,23,24
MyTeachstone	August 25-26
My Teaching Partner - Option 1 / Location A	August 22,23,24,25
My Teaching Partner - Option 1 / Location B	August 22,23,24,25
My Teaching Partner - Option 2 / Location A	August 29-September 1
My Teaching Partner - Option 2 / Location B	August 29-September 1

Please email [Megan Miron](#) with questions.

BELIEVE AND PREPARE: EARLY CHILDHOOD COHORT 2

The Department has released a Request for Applications for [Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood Cohort 2](#). This application is for new or existing university or non-university teacher preparation programs that are interested in designing an Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program to train child care teachers.

Selected programs will receive funding and technical assistance to develop a proposal for an Early Childhood Ancillary Program. Applicants are required to collaborate with local Early Childhood Community Networks.

Teacher preparation programs that are interested must submit a **Notice of Intent Survey** no later than **Friday, July 22**.

Please email BelieveAndPrepare@la.gov with questions.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DATA CERTIFICATION

The Early Childhood Data Certification Process will provide every publicly funded site an opportunity to review the data that will be included in the Practice Performance Profiles for the 2015-2016 Learning Year. The data certification window will be from August 1 - August 19.

Sites will be asked to verify that the information presented is an accurate snapshot of the site's information on October 1, 2015. Sites will verify the count of publicly funded children, teacher degree and certification, and classroom ratios. Please note that curriculum information should be a snapshot of May 31, 2016.

NOTE: No CLASS® corrections will be made through this process.

To provide additional information on the Early Childhood Data Certification process, the Department will provide a webinar. Every Lead Agency must either attend the webinar or access the recording. The webinar details are as follows:

Date: Wednesday, July 27

Time: 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.

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

NEW CURRICULUM REVIEWS ADDED

The Department is continuing to complete Instructional Materials Reviews of birth to five curriculum. In the coming weeks, new reviews will be added to the list. A [current list of rated curricula](#) is on the Department website.

FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CCAP) PROVIDER HELP DESK

The Department has recently launched a Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Provider Helpdesk. Child care providers can now call directly to ask questions about CCAP. Providers will be able to make an appointment to speak with regional specialists.

The helpdesk will be open, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. The provider help desk number is 225-342-1879.

Please note this number is **only** for child care center directors and staff. This is not a line for families or the general public.

A [Child Care Provider Guidebook](#) has been released to share additional information and resources with providers.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CCAP) SUMMER SERIES

The Department is conducting a series of eight [in-person sessions](#) across the state for child care providers that serve children receiving child care assistance. These two-hour sessions will be led by the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) team and will provide specific guidance on how to assist families to apply for child care assistance. CCAP specialists will also be available to assist providers with individual cases or concerns.

COMING SOON - COORDINATED ENROLLMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT

Last summer, the Department released the second [Coordinated Enrollment Self-Assessment](#), in which communities reflected on the state of coordinated enrollment, evaluated their progress from that year, and shared best practices with each other. The Department will conduct the third annual Coordinated Enrollment Self-Assessment in July and August of 2016.

The Department will work with Lead Agencies to coordinate the self-assessment in their communities through meetings, conference calls, and paper-based surveys. More information about the Coordinated Enrollment Self-Assessment, and how providers and sites can participate in the process, will be released in the coming weeks.

CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

LICENSING RENEWAL DOCUMENTATION

Early learning centers are responsible for maintaining both commercial liability insurance for the operation of the center as well as medical coverage for children in the event of an accident or injury. Additionally, approval from the Office of Public Health and the Office of State Fire Marshal are required for each center, and must be current at all times. Documentation of required insurance and approvals must be available for licensing specialists upon inspection.

For more information, please email [Michelle DeMeulenaere](#).

PLAYGROUND AND END OF THE DAY CHECKS

As heat index rises well over 100 degrees outdoors, it is important to complete a visual check of the playground after each use to verify no child has been left outdoors.

At the end of each day, the entire center and play yard should be checked after the last child departs to ensure that no child is left at the center. Documentation must include the date, time of the visual check, and signature of the staff conducting the visual check. The Department has posted an example of a [visual check form](#).

Please email LDELicensing@la.gov with questions.

MOTOR VEHICLE PASSENGER CHECKS

According to **Bulletin 137: [Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations](#)**, a visual check of a vehicle is required after each use to ensure no child is left on a vehicle. A [sample form](#) to ensure the vehicle has been checked thoroughly is located in the licensing library.

For more information, please email [Michelle DeMeulenaere](#).

GENERAL SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Items that can be harmful to children, such as medications, poisons, cleaning supplies and chemicals, equipment, tools, knives, and other

potentially dangerous utensils, must be kept in a **locked cabinet or other secure place** that ensures they are inaccessible to children.

Please note that dangerous items can be brought into the center by children, parents, and visitors. Providers must ensure they check areas frequently for hazards and immediately remove them from the reach of children.

For more information, please email [Michelle DeMeulenaere](mailto:Michelle.DeMeulenaere).

FACTS ABOUT THE ZIKA VIRUS

The Zika virus is primarily spread through the bite of an infected mosquito. The Zika virus can be transmitted from a pregnant mother to her fetus, causing health concerns. Most people do not know they have been infected with the virus. When symptoms do occur, the most common symptoms are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). For those who develop symptoms, the illness is usually mild. The best way to prevent the Zika virus is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. For more information about the Zika Virus, contact the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

SITE CODE UPDATE REQUEST PROCESS

The Department has released a process for Lead Agencies to submit site code change requests for early childhood sites for the 2016-2017 school year. Through this process Lead Agencies can update site information that is connected to site codes, including addresses, contact information, or leadership names.

More information about this process can be found in the [Site Code Update Guidance](#). Lead Agencies will receive an email with the site code update form and lead agency certification letter that will need to be completed by August 15.

For more information, please email [Tara Baylot](mailto:Tara.Baylot).

OTHER

STATEWIDE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT (ESSA) FORUMS

State Superintendent John White will host a series of statewide forums this summer to discuss creating educational opportunities for students through the new federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). All district and school leaders and teachers are encouraged to attend these forums and share their feedback with the Department. A [schedule of forums](#) around the state is posted on the Department's website. Please be aware the location for the Wednesday, July 27, forum in Alexandria has changed.

Please email districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

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