



September 30, 2016



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

We know that young children benefit from high quality interactions and instruction in the classroom. But until now we have not had a consistent way of observing our classrooms and providing feedback to teachers. We have used different observation measures and established different standards for observer reliability, making it more challenging for programs and teachers to understand how they are doing and how to improve.

Last year, through your efforts, we observed nearly 100% of all toddler and PreK classroom in publicly-funded sites consistently, using the Toddler and PreK CLASS™ system of measures. The Department also contracted with the University of Louisiana Lafayette to conduct third party observations to help ensure accuracy and consistency statewide.

Based on lessons learned last year, we want everyone to have consistent expectations for the third party observations. Principals and directors also told us that their teachers wanted specific feedback from the third party observations. Today we are releasing a [brief document](#) that covers the expectations, protocol and feedback process for the third party observers.

We hope this document helps you and your teachers prepare for this year's CLASS™ observations, which have just begun. If there are additional questions, please email [Nasha Patel](#).

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

John

John White
Louisiana Department of Education
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

TEACHING AND LEARNING

SETTING UP CLASSROOMS IN THE CLASS SYSTEM AND IN GOLD®

All classrooms must be set up in the Department's CLASS system and in GOLD® by **October 1**. A few important reminders:

- All programs will be under the Department's GOLD® license this year. If you are a program that is still operating under your own license, email [Ivy Starns](#) as soon as possible.
- Please ensure that all classrooms (infant, toddler, and pre-K) are set up in the GOLD® online system, even if they do not have publicly-funded children.
- For every classroom, the following information must be entered:
 - Lead Teacher degree

- o Lead teacher certification
- o Curriculum used
- o Ratios ([Gold, Silver, Bronze](#))

Please ensure that all pre-K and toddler classrooms are set up in the CLASS system.

PRACTICE PERFORMANCE PROFILE RATING CALCULATOR

The Department has released a [Practice Performance Profile Rating Calculator](#) to support sites to better understand how their Practice Performance Rating is calculated. This tool can be used in combination with the observation score file for your site. The observations score file includes each site's individual CLASS™ scores formatted to be easily used with the performance profile calculator, and is available through your Lead Agency.

The Department has also released [instructions](#), a [webinar](#), and a [power point presentation](#) to support sites to use the Practice Performance Profile Rating Calculator.

CURRICULUM REVIEWS

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

OCTOBER 1 CHILD COUNT

Bulletin 140 requires that all publicly-funded children are counted as they were enrolled on October 1, and that the count be submitted to the Department by October 31. For the purposes of these counts, children are considered part of the age cohort they belong to on September 30, for the entire 2016-2017 school year. For example, if a child is three on September 30, but turns four on November 22, that child is counted as part of the three-year-old age cohort for the 2016-2017 school year. Please work with your Lead Agency to submit accurate October 1 child counts.

CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

NEW DIRECTOR TRAINING- OCTOBER 19

An in-person, new director training has been scheduled for **Wednesday, October 19 from 1:00 p.m. -2:30 p.m.** in the in the Claiborne Building, located at 1201 N. 3rd street, Baton Rouge.

This training is for **new directors, director designee's or owners** who need a refresher on the Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulation. Please click [here](#) to register. Registration is limited to no more than two individuals per center.

For questions, please contact [Michelle DeMeulenaere](#).

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENT

All early learning center staff, owners, and directors must follow their center's behavior management policy with all children. This policy prohibits children from being subject to physical or corporal punishment, which includes any punishment that causes any child physical pain or discomfort. This also includes verbal abuse, using offensive or profane language, telling a child to "shut up," or making derogatory remarks about children or family members in the presence of children.

For questions in regards to this policy, please contact [LDE Licensing](#) or call 342-9905 to speak to your Licensing Consultant.

FOR AFFECTED CENTERS: POST-FLOOD REQUIREMENTS FOR BUSINESSES

A [news release](#) from the state Fire Marshal has been posted to provide guidance on re-opening businesses post-flood.

FOR AFFECTED CENTERS: FEDERAL ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND CHILD CARE CENTERS

Child care centers that have been affected by the floods should register for FEMA at [disasterassistance.gov](#). Centers may additionally be eligible for Small Business Assistance to support center clean up and repair. The Department has posted a [one-pager](#) with information on how to access these loans including how to find guidance on the application process.

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FOR AFFECTED CENTERS: RESOURCES FOR RESTORING HEALTHY CHILD CARE CENTERS

- Helping to clean and protect child care facilities:
 - Child Care Aware has released a [newsletter](#) with information on the steps to take to recover a child care facility following a flood. This provides details on how to clean up flood water and damage, as well as how to prevent mold.
 - [Guidance on mold prevention](#) for homeowners and renters is available from the Center for Disease Control. The LSU Ag Center has released [information on mold removal](#) for flooded homes and properties.
- Protecting children's health:
 - The environmental protection agency has released [information on how to protect children](#) when cleaning up a flooded area.
 - The office of Administration for Children and Families has a [recorded conference call and resources](#) that provides information about how to safely clean and repair child care centers for children.

FOR AFFECTED CENTERS: PUBLIC ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM

Private Nonprofit entities interested in applying to the [Public Assistance Grant Program](#) are required to complete a [Request for Public Assistance](#) form on Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) website ([LouisianaPA.com](#)). This form must be submitted within 30 days of the disaster declaration.

ADDITIONAL FLOOD ASSISTANCE

The Department is diligently working with staff, providers and families to inform them of all resources available. As many of these deadlines are quickly approaching, please share the list below among your networks.

- [Governor's Disaster Resources Page](#): Resources for flood survivors.
- [Disaster Unemployment Assistance](#): Residents and businesses in 22 parishes have until October 14 to apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance. For more information on how to apply or to apply online, please visit the [Louisiana Workforce Commission](#) website.
- [Disaster Legal Services](#): Free legal assistance is available for Louisiana flood victims at 1-800-310-7029
- [Apply for FEMA Assistance for Individuals and Households](#): Individuals and households seeking disaster related assistance
- [Disaster Distress Hotline](#): If you are experiencing emotional distress due to the storm, call the National Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990. This toll-free, multilingual, crisis support service is available 24/7 and also available via SMS by texting 'TalkWithUs' to 66746

LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

OCTOBER 1 CHILD COUNT- RECORDED WEBINAR

Lead Agencies are required to count all publicly-funded children birth to five attending early childhood programs in their community networks as of October 1. These counts must be completed by October 31.

To provide support and training to complete the child count, the Department conducted a [recorded webinar](#).

USING CLASS™ FOR COMPASS IN 2016-2017

Local Education Agencies and Charter Organizations are encouraged to use CLASS™ as the rubric for evaluating professional practice of public school pre-K teachers in all or some of their schools. For more information please see the [Compass Choices for Early Childhood Networks 2016](#).

LEAs that choose to use CLASS™ as the Teacher Professional Practice Rubric for public school pre-K teachers for 2016-17 must complete the waiver and return to [Compass@la.gov](#) by **September 30, 2016**.

SETTING UP CLASSROOMS IN THE CLASS SYSTEM and in GOLD®

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- All programs will be under the Department's GOLD® license this year. If there are any programs that are still operating under their own license, email [Ivy Starns](#) as soon as possible.
- Please ensure that all classrooms in publicly-funded sites (infant, toddler, and pre-K) are set up in the GOLD® online system, even if they do not have publicly-funded children.

- Please ensure that all pre-K and toddler classrooms are set up in the *CLASS* system.
- If you have any sites without site codes, please email [Tara Baylot](#).

LOCAL CLASS™ OBSERVATIONS

All pre-K and toddler classrooms in publicly-funded sites must be set up in the *CLASS* system, with observation orders scheduled by **October 1**.

Fall observations must be completed by **December 15**. Enhancements have been made to the *CLASS* System that allow Lead Agencies to enter or correct observations that they assign to local observers. Additionally, third party observation scores will now show up in the system.

WEEKLY EARLY CHILDHOOD LEAD AGENCY OFFICE HOURS

The Early Childhood Team is conducting weekly office hours for lead agencies. These calls are an opportunity for lead agency representatives to call in with any questions they may have about their current work and to hear updates from the Early Childhood Team. These sessions are typically held every **Tuesday from 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

Use this information to connect: **1-855-240-2575**, PIN: **81774907**

Future Office Hours will be held on the following Tuesdays:

- **October 4**
- **October 11**

WEBINAR - COORDINATED FUNDING REQUEST FOR 2017-2018

Bulletin 140 requires that each Lead Agency submit a Coordinated Funding Request on behalf of their Community Network, requesting seats for LA 4, NSECD, and pre-K Expansion Grant. The Department will be providing guidance and information for completing the Coordinated Funding Request through the newsletter.

To provide support and training to complete the Coordinated Funding Request, the Department will conduct a webinar on Wednesday, October 12. The webinar will be recorded.

What: Coordinated Funding Request Webinar for Lead Agencies

When: Wednesday, October 12

Time: 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

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

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

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