



December 3, 2015



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

Our shared goal is to help *every* child enter kindergarten ready. To do so we must understand what is happening in *every* early childhood classroom. In Louisiana we now have a common tool and language - the *CLASS* system - for observing classrooms and providing feedback. By December 15, we will have reached our first milestone: ensuring that every publicly-funded classroom receives a baseline observation and individualized feedback.

No other state in the nation is going to such lengths to observe classroom interactions and instruction and provide feedback to help programs improve their practices. With this information, we can highlight models of excellent teaching in our own state - whether that is in a school, Head Start, or child care program. We can better support teachers by pinpointing specific areas of improvement and providing more individualized resources for support. And families can make more informed choices about the best options for their children.

As a reminder, Lead Agencies are responsible for completing all fall *CLASS* observations by December 15. Special thanks to Lead Agencies for coordinating this work as well as to the administrators, directors and leaders from school districts, Head Start, and child care who have become *CLASS*-reliable and conducted observations. Completing 5,000 observations statewide represents a tremendous amount of effort and dedication.

All programs should be able to access their results and are encouraged to use the information to address the unique needs of their teachers. For child care programs in particular, resource and referral agencies are available to help. For more information, please click [here](#).

Starting in January, the state, in partnership with Lead Agencies, Teacher Leaders, resource and referral agencies, mental health consultants, and CDA preparation programs, will begin using this information to strengthen supports for early childhood programs and teachers statewide.

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

John

John White
Louisiana Department of Education
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FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

COORDINATED ENROLLMENT - COHORT 3

Cohort 3 Coordinated Enrollment Plan Templates were released in November and must be completed by January 15, 2016. To provide support to Cohort 3, the Department conducted a webinar on *Laying the Foundation for Coordinated Enrollment*. To view the webinar, please click [here](#). The Department also conducted in-person technical assistance sessions with Lead Agencies and their partners. Please email any questions to nasha.patel@la.gov.

COORDINATED FUNDING FOR 2016-2017 - CHECK OUT THE NEW GUIDE

Bulletin 140 requires that each Lead Agency submit a Coordinated Funding Request on behalf of their Community Network, requesting seats for LA 4, NSECD, Pre-K Expansion Grant, and Allocated CCAP Seats. To learn more, please check out the new Coordinated Funding Information Guide [here](#). The Department also conducted a Coordinated Funding Request Webinar which may be viewed [here](#).

Coordinated Funding Requests are due by January 18, 2016.

A NEW PILOT FOR CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE

In 2016-2017 the Department will pilot a new approach to funding Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) seats, using allocations from the state. The Department has released the [Allocated Child Care Assistance Pilot Overview](#) to provide more information to child care centers who are interested in a different way to fund CCAP seats for children birth to three-years-old. Up to 1200 seats statewide will be converted for the 2016-2017 Pilot. Please note that this represents a new way of funding existing seats. This is not new funding.

Seats will be requested through the Coordinated Funding Request submitted by Lead Agencies. For more information, please review the [overview](#) or email nasha.patel@la.gov.

LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLYING FOR THE PRE-K EXPANSION GRANT

Every community in Louisiana can apply for new federal funding for 4-year-old seats. To assist Lead Agencies and interested partner providers, the Department will conduct a Pre-K Expansion Grant Informational webinar on **December 9**, from 12-1pm. This webinar will feature current Pre-K Expansion Grantees, and participants will be able to ask questions about their experiences and learn more about the grant opportunity. Lead Agencies and other interested participants are welcome to join, and this webinar will be recorded.

Date: December 9, 2015

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

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

CHILD CARE RESOURCES

One of the simplest ways to help improve the child care assistance application process is to ensure your families submit their application with all supporting documents. Check the eligibility [survey](#) to see what is needed. Additionally, be sure to label every single page with the family's information. Receiving all application materials together and having them labeled will speed up the application process.

For questions or assistance, you may call the Department at 1-877-453-2721.

- Press 1 for questions from families or applicants regarding CCAP or general early childhood questions.
- Press 2 for child care licensing or call Licensing directly at 1-225-342-9905.
- Press 3 for child care providers with questions related to CCAP or call Provider Certification directly at 1-225-342-0694.

The child care assistance (CCAP) [website](#) has many resources for families applying for CCAP or those currently receiving child care assistance.

- Eligibility [survey](#)
- Application [checklist](#) which lists everything needed to complete the CCAP application
- CCAP [application](#)
- Change [report](#) for listing any changes to existing cases
- Household designee [form](#) for the TOTS process
- [Locations](#) for TOTS finger scanning

The mailing address and telephone number for CCAP Household Eligibility are below:

Department of Education
CCAP Household Eligibility
P. O. Box 260037
Baton Rouge, LA 70826

Telephone: 1-877-453-2721
Fax: 225-342-3906
Email: LDEccap@la.gov

Website: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/early-childhood/child-care-assistance-program>

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.

LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

LEAD AGENCY ACTION ITEM REMINDERS

Thanks to Lead Agencies and programs for completing the October 31 action items such as the *GOLD*[™] checkpoint and October 1 Child Count. If those action items have not yet been completed, please do so immediately.

Note that the Department has been working with Teaching Strategies[®] to allow sites to enter performance profile data **for teacher/child ratios** and **teacher certification**. These metrics must be entered for each classroom by **Friday, December 11**.

Lead Agencies are required by Bulletin 140 to submit fall *CLASS* observation scores for all classrooms in publicly-funded sites by **Tuesday, December 15**. Classrooms without observation results for the fall observation period will receive scores of 1. 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.

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.

The focus topics for the following weeks will be as follows:

- **December 8 Topic:** Completing Fall CLASS Observations
- **December 15 Topic:** Preschool Development Grant Example and Questions
- **December 22:** No Office Hours
- **December 29:** No Office Hours
- **January 5 Topic:** Preschool Development Grant Case Example and Questions
- **January 12 Topic:** Coordinated Funding Request

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

OTHER

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL - MEETING REMINDER

The next Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council meeting will take place on **Monday, December 7, at 1 p.m.** 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.

SAVE THE DATE - LEAD AGENCY AND TEACHER LEADER COLLABORATIVES

Lead Agency and Teacher Leader representatives are invited to save the date for the collaborative events in January. More details to follow.

- **January 20, 2016** - Baton Rouge
- **January 25, 2016** - Thibodaux
- **January 26, 2016** - Lafayette
- **January 27, 2016** - Natchitoches

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