



EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER

June 8, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you were one of the thousands who joined us last week in New Orleans at either the Early Childhood Conference or Teacher Leader Summit. It was an honor to be with so many educational professionals dedicated to improving their craft.

Around 2,000 teachers, leaders, and staff attended the Early Childhood Conference. Along with two days of high quality sessions, there were opportunities to network with colleagues and recognize excellence across our state. I encourage you to take the lessons learned back to your sites and implement them to move children forward.

We must continue to elevate early childhood in Louisiana — and that starts with you. This is a valued profession and you are valued professionals. I continue to share your stories across the state. Not only have you supported child development over the last few years, you've also helped stabilize the Louisiana economy during unstable years.

It remains an honor to serve alongside you. I am humbled by the progress we have made over the last few years and deeply committed to continued success. The best is yet to come.

Dr. Cade Brumley

Upcoming Deadlines

- June 16: Deadline for [Early Childhood Lead Teacher Survey](#)
- June 23: Deadline to submit [LELA Cohort 5 applications](#)
- June 30: Final date for free business support services for child care
- July 1: Post 2023-2024 Academic Approval Certificate

Upcoming Events

- June 8: [Free Child Care Business Training](#)
- June 21: [GOLD® Update Webinar for Community Network Lead Agencies and GOLD® Administrators](#)
- June 30: [New Director Webinar](#)
- July 6: [Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar](#)

More Important Dates

Please see the [LDOE School System Support Calendar](#).

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Provider Updates

REMINDER: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinars

On May 4, the Department hosted a webinar for early childhood providers. [Presentation slides](#) are available in the [Quality Providers Library](#) on the Louisiana Believes website.

There was no monthly provider webinar in June. The next monthly provider webinar will be held July 6, 2023. Providers can access the upcoming July provider webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date/Time:	Thursday, July 6 at 1 p.m.
Webinar Link:	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93597745872
Phone Number:	1-312-626-6799
Meeting ID:	935 9774 5872
Passcode:	641464

REMINDER: TIKES Mental Health Consultation

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) is an intervention that teams a mental health professional with early childhood professionals to improve the behavioral health of young children in early learning settings. The TIKES ECMHC provides support at no cost to Type III and registered Family Child Care sites. Onsite support and professional development is provided for teachers and other early childhood professionals by early childhood mental health specialists.

For more information visit the [TIKES](#) webpage.

UPDATES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

NEW: Cohort 5 LELA Application is Live!

The Department released applications for Cohort 5 of the Louisiana Early Leaders Academy (LELA) on Tuesday, May 30, 2023. LELA Cohort 5 will be a 10-month, executive-level program for directors of publicly-funded early learning centers that aims to strengthen existing leaders in the field. Participating educators, known as Fellows, are selected through a competitive application process for directors aiming for excellence in their daily leadership of their early learning centers.

[LELA applications](#), also available via a Google Form, went live on Tuesday, May 30. Interested directors must complete the application by June 23, 2023, to be considered for this opportunity.

- Please allow 45-60 minutes to complete a thoughtful and thorough application. This application is the first step in the competitive process of applying to be a Louisiana Early Leaders Academy (LELA) Fellow.
- If you are interested in learning more about the Louisiana Early Leaders Academy, you can review the previous years' information by accessing the [LELA page](#) on the Louisiana Believes website.
- Stakeholders who know a potential applicant may [nominate applicants](#) through a Google Form.

NEW: Medicaid Post-COVID-19

Louisiana Medicaid currently provides health insurance coverage to just over two million individuals throughout the state. Due to the continuous coverage requirement of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, Medicaid has not ended coverage for most members since March 2020.

In late April 2023, Medicaid will begin sending letters and renewal packets to those members where more information is needed to determine if a member is still eligible. This will occur over a 12-month time period.

For approximately half of Medicaid members, eligibility redeterminations require action from the member. Medicaid will send a letter requesting additional information from the member so we can properly redetermine their eligibility. Members who have elected to use the self-service portal and receive email communication will receive an email.

For full details about Medicaid information, please review the [Medicaid Renewal Toolkit](#), email mymedicaid@la.gov, or call 1-888-342-6207.

If unsure of whether or not teachers or providers have any kind of health insurance coverage, email navigators@swlahec.com, visit www.GetCoveredLA.org, or call 1-800-435-2432.

REMINDER: 2022-2023 Early Childhood Lead Teacher Survey

The Department of Education is conducting its annual statewide [Early Childhood Lead Teacher Survey](#). This survey was sent on Friday, May 12, to all early childhood lead teachers in publicly-funded sites through the email address associated with their Teaching Strategies GOLD® accounts. The Department is asking that all early childhood lead teachers complete this brief online [survey](#) that measures levels of teacher satisfaction with the training or supports available to them. The results from this survey will be aggregated at the Community Network Lead Agency level and shared as an informational metric on the Community Network Lead Agency Performance Profile. Individual results of the survey are confidential and will never be shared with programs or Lead Agencies. **Please note that the deadline of the survey has been extended to June 16, 2023.**

Please contact robert.jones4@la.gov with questions.

REMINDER: 2023-2024 Academic Approval Certificates for Type III and Family Child Care Providers

2022-2023 Academic Approval certificates will expire on June 30, 2023, and providers should post their 2023-2024 Academic Approval certificates at their sites starting July 1, 2023. Please email kishia.grayson@la.gov if you have submitted the [2023-2024 Program Partner Assurances](#) to the Department and did not receive an email with your 2023-2024 Academic Approval certificate or if you have any other questions regarding Academic Approval.

If you are a Family Child Care provider and would like to learn more about the benefits and requirements of Academic Approval, please contact felicia.jackson3@la.gov.

NEW: Free Child Care Business Trainings—Final Offering for 2023

All licensed providers (Type I, II, III) and Family Child Care providers have one final opportunity to enhance early learning site business knowledge and put into practice new business skills. On June 8, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. First Children's Finance will offer a 1.5 hour online training session on staffing early learning sites and understanding and managing finances. CEUs will be offered. Providers can take advantage of this final opportunity in 2023 by using this [registration form](#).

Contact shallan.jones@la.gov for questions about this opportunity.

REMINDER: Louisiana Healthcare Navigators—Connecting Early Childhood Care and Education Staff to Healthcare Options

The Louisiana Department of Education is partnering with the Southwest Louisiana Area Health Education Center (SWLAHEC) to connect early childhood educators with healthcare options for which they are eligible. Starting in May 2023, Early Childhood Healthcare Navigators for a Healthy Louisiana will provide free one-on-one assistance to early childhood educators, checking eligibility for, applying for, and updating existing account information for Medicaid, LaCHIP, and/or Marketplace Insurance Plans.

Early Childhood Healthcare Navigators, serving every parish, will provide the following:

- Education on health insurance options
- Information on how to utilize health coverage
- Information on how to locate health care providers
- Information on how to access preventive care
- Flexible meeting times and locations
- Help to consumers to keep their information up-to-date
- Help to navigate the Health Insurance Marketplace
- Access to the Navigator Newsletter

To find out more about this free one-on-one assistance



- Scan the QR code and fill out the short online form
- Email navigators@swlahec.com
- Visit www.GetCoveredLA.org or call 1-800-435-2432

Contact shallan.jones@la.gov for questions about this opportunity.

NEW: 2023 Teacher Leader Summit and Early Childhood Conference Session Presentations

Thank you for participating in another stellar Teacher Leader Summit and Early Childhood Conference!

Teacher Leader Summit and Early Childhood Conference participants can access session attendance logs and copies of session presentations through a shared drive link provided via email from events@emergentmethod.com. Emails to Teacher Leader Summit participants were sent out on June 7th and emails to Early Childhood Conference participants will be sent out on June 9th.

Questions about Teacher Leader Summit and Early Childhood Conference attendance logs and session presentation copies can be submitted to events@emergentmethod.com.

REMINDER: Teachstone® – The CLASS® Learning Community

The CLASS® Learning Community is a group of educators dedicated to helping children by measuring and improving teacher-child interactions. Join for free and browse the available resources. Resource documents, recorded webinars, discussion boards, and blog posts are available. New on-demand webinars include:

- [Helping Children Bridge the Two Worlds of Home and School](#) (blog)
- [Supporting Interactions in Special Needs Settings](#) (podcast)

NEW: GOLD® Update Webinar for Community Network Lead Agencies and GOLD® Administrators

The Department hosts monthly GOLD® update webinars for site and network leaders and site support agencies such as CCR&Rs. Please also read the Department’s [TS GOLD® Guidance](#) and [TS GOLD® FAQ](#) documents for helpful information and GOLD® protocols.

The June GOLD® webinar will focus on end-of-year support. The Department will answer questions and provide technical assistance for the end-of-year closeout. Participants can access the GOLD® informational webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date/Time:	Wednesday, June 21, at 1:00 p.m.
Webinar Link:	https://ldoe.zoom.us
Phone Number:	1-312-626-6799
Meeting ID:	974 0485 0210
Passcode:	980775

Please contact ECAssessment@la.gov with any questions.

REMINDER: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Webinars and Resources

Teaching Strategies offers several [on-demand recorded webinars](#) for early childhood teachers and leaders. Visit the [Learning in Action Library](#) for tips and classroom support. Some spotlight activities include [Web of Investigations](#) and [Classroom Materials that Promote Content Learning](#).

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) KinderConnect Attendance Tracking System

The Louisiana Department of Education has transitioned to KinderConnect as its mandatory attendance tracking system.

TOTS is no longer active, and the online portal is no longer accessible; any transactions recorded on the TOTS POS device or IVR will not be transmitted to the LDOE. The Department’s previous TOTS contractor, Conduent, will not take any action to collect POS or biometric scanners from providers or Community Network Lead Agencies. Providers and administrators can dispose of the equipment as they see fit.

KinderConnect is continuing to host webinars to help with the transition to this new mandatory attendance tracking system. June KinderConnect webinars and training have been updated on the [EdLink Support](#) page.

REMINDER: ARPA Stabilization Grant Assessment (Rounds 1 & 2)

The LDOE is conducting a grant assessment related to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Stabilization grants. The LDOE has partnered with Postlethwaite and Netterville (P&N) to collect information regarding the use of ARPA Stabilization grant funds. LDOE will also use this information to direct future technical assistance.

Participation in the assessment, just like the survey that preceded the assessment, is required. Failure to comply with Postlewaite and Netterville requests, during any part of the assessment process, will impact a site’s ability to receive future grants and may impact a site’s ability to receive CCAP payments.

If you have questions, contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543. If you require technical assistance regarding how to complete any requests for documents from P&N, contact P&N at info@LDOE-pnsurvey.com.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Quarterly Bonus Payments

Children who do not attend their child care program regularly do not receive the benefit of high-quality child care. During the 2020 COVID emergency, the Department suspended payments based on attendance and began payments based on enrollment.

Monthly CCAP payments will continue to be based on enrollment; however, moving forward quarterly bonus payments will be paid based on attendance. The Department will utilize the KinderConnect system to track attendance, so it is critical that your families utilize this system each day their child is in attendance.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Eligibility Redetermination for Families

The LDOE CCAP team sends notifications of upcoming redeterminations to providers and families monthly.

Families must respond immediately with a new CCAP [redetermination application](#), check stubs, and immunization records. The case will not be extended if documents are not received according to the dates on the CCAP 11RC - Redetermination Notice (to families) and CCAP 11RCP - Provider Redetermination Notice (to providers).

Failure to submit the redetermination application and all required documents will result in the closure of the family's CCAP case. Once the case is closed, if services are still needed the family will need to reapply for CCAP and will be placed on the waitlist, if deemed eligible. As a reminder, if the application is not received by the 15th of the redetermination month the client and the provider will receive a Notice of Terminated Services effective for the last day of the month.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Underutilized Authorizations for Families

The CCAP Eligibility Team conducts monthly reviews of underutilized authorizations of children who have not attended child care within the previous month. Attendance recorded in the site's attendance tracking system, KinderConnect, is examined as part of the underutilization review. Authorizations must be utilized by families within a 30-day period to maintain CCAP certification.

The CCAP Provider Help Desk staff has been informing providers of the importance of families completing check in/out transactions when children are in attendance, in order to maintain CCAP certification. If CCAP children are not attending, the Department will issue a first notice to families at the mailing address on file, advising families of non-usage of authorizations. If CCAP children appear on the report a second time families will lose their CCAP authorizations. The family's case will be placed in "pend close" status and the provider and family will receive a Notice of Termination of Service for the end of the current month. Families will need to reapply for CCAP, and will be placed on the waitlist, if deemed eligible.

For assistance, please contact the Provider Help Desk at (225) 250-7635 or (225) 252-9543 or enter a [ticket](#) in the Provider Help Desk Ticket System.

UPDATES FOR LICENSED CENTERS, FAMILY CHILD CARE, AND IN-HOME PROVIDERS

NEW: Coming Soon—Online Medication Administration and Health and Safety Training

The Department is currently developing online training support for the medication administration and health and safety training requirements to better serve child care providers by creating easier access. Additional information will be shared when the training supports are completed and ready for implementation.

NEW: Revised Bulletin 137 May 2023 Version

A revised version of [Bulletin 137](#) for May 2023 was posted to the website. In response to [legislation](#) enacted by the 2022 Regular Legislative Session and R.S. 17:407.50.2, the revisions to Bulletin 137 include required training for administration of auto-injectable epinephrine to a child in an early learning center who is believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction.

The following sections of the Bulletin were revised:

§1515. Child Records and Cumulative Files

- E. An early learning center shall provide a written copy of all health-related policies established by the center, including policies regarding accidents, allergic reactions, fever, illness, immunizations, infection, **administration of auto-injectable epinephrine to a child believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction**, and injuries, to the parent or guardian of each child attending or enrolled in the early learning center.

§1725. Medication Management Training

- A. All staff members who administer medication shall have **medication administration training that includes auto-injectable epinephrine**.
- B. Whether the center is administering medication or not, each early learning center shall have at least two staff members trained in medication administration and at least one trained staff member on the premises during the hours of operation. A staff member who is a licensed practical nurse (LPN) or registered nurse (RN) with a valid nursing license shall be considered to have medication administration training.
- C. **Training for auto-injectable epinephrine** shall be completed every two years with an approved child care health consultant, registered nurse, licensed medical physician, a child care health consultant, an anaphylaxis training organization, or any other entity approved by the Louisiana Department of Health. Training for medication administration shall be completed every two years with an approved child care health consultant.

Please contact a [licensing consultant](#) with questions.

REMINDER: Motor Vehicle Passenger Checks

As a reminder, the negative consequences of extreme heat are so significant that Louisiana has a [law](#) prohibiting leaving children unattended in a vehicle.

- A first offense for leaving a child under the age of six unattended or unsupervised in a car will net a fine of up to \$500 or imprisonment up to six months or both.
- Each subsequent offense will result in felony imprisonment for no less than one year and a fine of no less than \$1,000.

As required in [Bulletin 137](#) §2017, Motor Vehicle Passenger Checks, it is imperative that vehicles are adequately inspected for children before staff exit the vehicle, especially with outside temperatures: **Children can die in a hot vehicle in a matter of minutes.**

Each vehicle shall have a vehicle passenger check and a face-to-name count conducted at each of the following times:

- prior to leaving center for destination
- upon arrival at each destination
- prior to departure from each destination and
- upon return to center

A staff person shall

- Physically walk through the vehicle and inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats, and in all enclosed spaces and recesses of the interior of the vehicle
- Record the time of the visual passenger check and sign the log, indicating that no child was left in the vehicle

For any questions, please contact the site's [licensing consultant](#).

REMINDER: Tornado Drills

Tornado drills shall be conducted at least once per month in each of the following months: March, April, May, and June. These drills shall be done at various times of the day, shall include all children, and shall be documented.

For any questions, please contact the site's [licensing consultant](#).

REMINDER: EdLink Licensing System and Training Opportunities

All providers must use the EdLink system to submit new Licensing applications, renewal Licensing applications, Licensing request changes, and to access the Department's new attendance system, KinderConnect.

Please note:

Renewal applications

- must be submitted prior to the first day of the month in which the current license expires and
- can be started up to 90 prior to the expiration date.

The Department is offering multiple [EdLink trainings](#) where providers will be given instructions for accessing and navigating the system. For the month of June, training is scheduled for Mondays only, beginning June 12. It is highly recommended that providers attend each session in the order in which they are listed. All sessions do require pre-registration, through the links below, so please register early, and note that space is limited.

- Accessing EdLink, 12:00-1:00 p.m.
https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUtcOyhqDirG9LjFjXCt_RBevBnA5s2-xVt
- Completing Type I, II, and III New and Renewal Applications, 2:00-3:30 p.m.
<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUvd-uqqTktHdBwg7WD49LP6q-jy5lwXQg->
- Completing In Home and Family Home Renewal Applications, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEsd-msrzovHdVLYHzqvout1isT_fmIx79P

If you have any questions regarding EdLink, please submit a ticket at [EdLink Support Ticket System](#). You can also visit the Department's [EdLink Training](#) page to access training videos and training manuals. For detailed guidance and screenshots on how to register in EdLink and for access to other resources, please visit the Department's [EdLink Support](#) page.

REMINDER: Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) 5-Year Renewal and Fingerprint Vendor Transition

Child Care Criminal Background Check determinations began expiring in March 2023. Providers and applicants who were fingerprinted in 2018 are contacted via email to initiate the fingerprinting renewal process within 90 days of the CCCBC determination expiration date. The renewal process must be initiated by the provider. Please remind therapists, contractors, and other recurring visitors that they should renew their CCCBCs timely in order to provide continued services and notify them that there is a new fingerprinting vendor and new fingerprinting sites.

Providers should ensure rosters are up-to-date, with all current employees listed, or providers will not receive an email

notification to initiate the renewal application for employees. CCCBC determinations will expire if they are not renewed in time. As a reminder, fingerprint resubmission is required for renewal applications. A hard identification card, such as a state-issued driver's license or state identification card, is required to submit fingerprints; LA Wallet or a digital driver's license is not acceptable.

Note that on Monday, May 8, 2023, fingerprinting for the CCCBC system transitioned from fingerprint vendor Gemalto to IDEMIA: fingerprinting with Gemalto/Thales concluded Thursday, May 4, 2023. Any applicant that was not able to fingerprint with Gemalto by May 4, 2023 should pre-enroll and schedule a fingerprint appointment with IDEMIA at: <https://uenroll.idemigo.com/workflows/27N4H8/>. If a payment was submitted to Gemalto for fingerprinting and the applicant was not able to fingerprint by May 4, 2023, providers were issued reimbursements by Gemalto/Thales.

The new fingerprinting vendor, IDEMIA, offers two payment options: payment at the time of service by credit card, business check, or money order made payable to IDEMIA or "No Charge Authorization Codes" (NCACs), also referred to as coupon codes. The NCAC service will allow sites to establish an account that is backed by a major credit card (currently VISA, MasterCard, Discover and AMEX). The benefit of a NCAC account is that providers are only charged once their applicants are fingerprinted.

Please view [detailed instructions](#) to create a No Charge Authorization Code account. NCAC account setup may take up to a week for processing. Completed Authorization forms should be faxed to 952-945-3326 or emailed to LAUEPACCOUNTS@US.IDEMIA.com. Cash is **not** an acceptable payment option. Please view a list of [current fingerprinting locations](#).

Fees for fingerprinting services going forward are as follows:

- State and Federal Livescan: \$55.75 or \$60.75 if the site selected for appointment is a Sheriff's Office
- State and Federal Hard Version Fingerprint Card for former Louisiana Residents: \$55.00
- Former Louisiana Residents Livescan: Same as above with additional \$39.99 convenience fee

For questions, please contact a CCCBC Analyst at (225) 342-2716 or email ideccbcprocessing@la.gov.

REMINDER: Business Supports for Early Childhood Providers

The LDOE is continuing to assist Type I, II, and III centers and CCAP-certified Family Child Care providers through a wide range of business supports designed to strengthen businesses by empowering and educating early childhood administrators in business leadership. Please review this [important information](#) on how to participate, how to [sign up](#), and the eligibility requirements for these opportunities. Please note that **the opportunities mentioned in this section are available until June 30, 2023.**

Please contact shallan.jones@la.gov with any questions.

UPDATES FOR DIRECTORS

NEW: Monthly Office Hours for New Directors

Every month, the LDOE team holds a webinar that focuses on a topic related to early childhood quality while also helping to expand directors' network of peers. Office hours are targeted towards new directors. Come learn about Type III requirements, connect with other directors, and stay up-to-date with upcoming events and deadlines.

This month's topic is *"An Overview of Louisiana Pathways."* Participants will gain a better understanding of how to further their careers using the career development system.

Webinar Date/Time: June 30, 2023 at 12:00 p.m.
Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92700204655>
Webinar Phone Number: 1-470-381-2552
Meeting ID: 927 0020 4655
Passcode: 212827

Contact tella.henderson@la.gov with any questions.

UPDATES FOR COMMUNITY NETWORK LEAD AGENCIES

NEW: Weekly Webinar for Community Network Lead Agencies

The Early Childhood team hosts Office Hours most Tuesdays at 3 p.m. for Community Network Lead Agency contacts. The purpose of these webinars is to provide updates and answer questions for Community Network Lead Agencies. Presentations from previous Community Network Lead Agency Office Hours are located in the [Community Network Lead Agency Library](#).

The upcoming schedule for weekly webinars for Community Network Lead Agencies can be found below:

- June 13: Early Childhood Updates
- June 20: Early Childhood Updates
- June 27: Early Childhood Updates
- July 4: No Office Hours due to 4th of July Holiday

Note that topics are subject to change. Please email devon.camarota@la.gov with questions.

IN THE NEWS

[Louisiana Announces Fourth Cohort of Leadership Program to Enhance Early Learning](#) (Louisiana Department of Education)

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For questions regarding community network lead agencies, please contact leadagencysupport@la.gov.
- For all questions regarding child care criminal background check processing, please contact LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov.
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.

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