



January 31, 2019



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

As you all know, the lack of high-quality, affordable early care and education is a serious problem in Louisiana - for our children and our workforce. Louisiana has established a strong system for capturing quality and access and assessing gains and needs. Of the economically disadvantaged four-year-olds in our state, 92 percent are enrolled in publicly-funded sites. However, Louisiana provides services for less than ten percent of the state's economically disadvantaged infants to two-year-olds.

Recognizing this gap of accessibility, legislators passed [Act 639 \(2018\)](#) establishing the Louisiana [Early Childhood Care and Education Commission](#), which is comprised of 38 legislators, government officials, early childhood providers, advocates, and community representatives. The Commission was charged with studying and making recommendations relative to specific matters of early childhood care and education and reporting these recommendations to the legislature. The Commission has met several times with local and national experts and will release a report prior to the start of the next legislative session in April. The report will provide the legislature, the Governor, and the Department with recommendations on improving access to high-quality care and education for children in Louisiana.

The Early Childhood Care and Education Commission convened on Tuesday, February 29th for its final meeting of this fiscal year. The commission [approved a draft](#) of a road map for the future called "LA B to 3." Through the proposal for LA B to 3, the Commission envisions funding that will better prepare Louisiana's youngest learners for kindergarten and beyond, address the early childhood workforce crisis, and position Louisiana for a brighter future. Supporting children in these crucial early years of development, will have a positive effect on K-12 education as well. Providing in need children with quality early education experiences enables more children to be on track for success in kindergarten and beyond.

The Commission will reconvene in Summer 2019 to discuss issues such as early childhood quality, affordability and access, as well as locally-driven decision making and collaboration.

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

John

John White
Louisiana Department of Education
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UPCOMING EVENTS AND DEADLINES

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- [Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council](#) - February 13
- [GOLD® Winter Checkpoint](#) - February 28
- [Preparing for July 2019 - The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate \(ECAC\) Webinar](#) - February 28
- [New Director/Administrator Webinar](#) - March 23

TEACHING AND LEARNING

EARLY CHILDHOOD ANCILLARY CERTIFICATE (ECAC) - REMINDER FOR 2019

Beginning July 1, 2019, directors must verify that all lead teachers have an ECAC as a minimum requirement. Lead teachers employed in the center who do not have the ECAC must earn it within 24 months of their start date as a lead teacher.



GET HIRED + QUALIFY + CERTIFY

The [Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate \(ECAC\)](#):

- Can be earned at no cost by presenting a qualifying credential or degree;
 - CDA training and technical diploma training should be completed at a [BESE-approved Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program](#), which can often be accessed at no cost through Louisiana Pathways Scholarships.
- Is valid for three years, and can be renewed for free by demonstrating ongoing professional development; and
- May qualify teachers for the highest levels of School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC).

The Department will host a second informational webinar for directors, site leaders, and teachers titled, "[Preparing for July 2019 - The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate.](#)"

Webinar Date and Time: Thursday, February 28 at 9:00 a.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/714558382>

Webinar Phone Number: 1-646-876-9923

Meeting ID#: 714 558 382

Additional information can be found in the [Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate FAQs](#) and the **NEW** [ECAC Staffing Map for Directors](#). For questions, please contact [Michelle DeMeulenaere](#).

2019 TEACHER LEADER SUMMIT REGISTRATION

The 2019 Teacher Leader Summit will take place June 26-28, 2019 at the Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. To help offset the cost of running a high-quality, multi-day event for thousands of Louisiana educators, the LDOE will charge a small registration fee for the 2019 Summit. This fee will cover admission to conference, conference sessions, and lunch. Educators can receive a discount by registering early and by registering for all three days at once. For more information, view the [2019 Teacher Leader Summit Overview](#).

GOLD® CORNER - New Video: Enabling the Comprehensive Set of Objectives for a Site

While the Department does not require programs to use the comprehensive set of GOLD® objectives/dimensions, administrators are welcome to enable these settings for a site that is planning on using the full assessment tool. For more information on enabling the comprehensive set of GOLD® objectives/dimensions, please watch [this new support video](#) for step-by-step instructions for administrators.

Reminder: February 28, 2019 is the deadline to complete the winter checkpoint in GOLD®.

SCHOOL READINESS TAX CREDIT (SRTC)

Louisiana's unique package of School Readiness Tax Credits benefit families, teachers, directors, providers, and businesses connected to Type III centers. Below are a few updates for Louisiana's School Readiness Tax Credits:

- **Type III Eligible Directors:** In October, directors were emailed a letter about center star rating and directors SRTC leveling. There were some errors in this letter. Due to the correction of an error in the original letter, some directors will become eligible or ineligible, based on your centers 2018 star rating. A series of calls have been made to notify directors this week. The corrected letters will be emailed by the end of this week, reflecting the correct star rating for 2018, and director SRTC leveling based on that star rating. The purpose of this letter is to notify directors of their 2018 star rating and director SRTC level according to Louisiana Pathways Career Ladder for directors.
 - Please note: If a director qualifies at a higher level via the [Administrator Track Career Ladder for directors](#) they will be able to claim School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC) at that higher level.
- **Families:** In December, Centers were mailed Louisiana School Readiness Tax Form R-10614 "Child Care Expense Credit" for parents. If your center has not received or needs additional Louisiana School Readiness Tax Form R-10614 "Child Care Expense Credit" for parents, email [Demita Walker](#) and include:

- Check for parents, email [Donita Walker](mailto:Donita.Walker@la.gov), and include:
 - Center's license number
 - Center's mailing address
 - Number of additional forms needed

Additional Resources:

- The Department has released NEW FAQs for 2018 School Readiness Tax Credits for [businesses](#), [providers](#), [staff and directors](#), and [parents and families](#).
- The Department has also published the [2017](#), [2018](#), and [2019](#) School Readiness Tax Credit Star Levels, linked in the [Quality Providers Library](#) under "School Readiness Tax Credit". Providers should use the [2018 School Readiness Tax Credit Star Levels](#) for filing 2018 taxes.
- The Department has also made available the November 2018 webinar on School Readiness Tax Credit, entitled [Updates for Claiming 2018 SRTC](#), linked in the [Quality Providers Library](#) under "School Readiness Tax Credit".

CLASSROOM CHRONICLES

Classroom Chronicles is a blog series that highlights the inspiring everyday work of Louisiana educators. Each month, the blog will spotlight an teacher who is taking that extra step to make an impact on the lives of their students, school and community. To nominate an teacher to be featured, please complete this [quick survey](#). If the teacher you have nominated is selected, a member of the Department's communication team will be in touch.



CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

HAZARD FREE CENTER AND PLAY YARD

We have seen an increase in the number of deficiencies being cited for hazards. Indoor and outdoor areas shall be free of hazards. [Bulletin 137§1903.C](#). All equipment such as toys used by children shall be maintained in a clean and safe condition and in good repair. Movable equipment such as shelves shall be secured and supported so that it shall not fall or tip over. [Bulletin 137§1901.G - H](#).

The Division of Licensing would recommend a thorough check of the center's indoor and outdoor licensed space as well as completing a daily hazard checklist of the center.

ATTENDANCE LOGS

Daily attendance records for children shall be maintained and accurately reflect children on the center premises at any given time. These records shall include the child's first and last name, each arrival and departure time, and the first and last name of the person or entity to whom the child is released. [Bulletin 137§1507.A](#).

Daily attendance records for staff shall be maintained and accurately reflect the staff members and owners on the center premises at any given time. These records shall include the staff member's or owner's first and last name, each arrival and departure time. [Bulletin 137§1507.B](#).

GENERAL LIABILITY INSURANCE POLICY DOCUMENTATION

Documentation of current commercial liability insurance shall include the name of the early learning center, physical address of the center, name of the insurance company, policy number, period of coverage and explanation of the coverage. [Bulletin 137§1503.D](#).

If you have questions, please contact your consultant at (225) 342-9905 or e-mail LDELicensing@la.gov.

IMPORTANT UPDATES FOR CHILD CARE CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS (CCCBCs)

All CCCBC applicants must be fingerprinted within **30 days** of registering to avoid the application being cancelled. As of January 1, 2019, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) increased their criminal record search fee by **\$1.25**. There have also been changes in fingerprint locations. Be sure to review the most recent list of LDOE-designated [fingerprint locations](#). Any questions should be directed to [Valerie Black](#).

CCCBC REQUIREMENTS FOR CLASS OBSERVERS

When a Picard CLASS® observer visits a center, the center should use the Child Care Civil Background Check System to check the eligibility of the observer. Because Picard CLASS® observers are not regular visitors, they should not be added to the center's roster.

For more information on meeting the requirements for Picard CLASS® observers, review the [CCCBC Requirements for CLASS® Observers](#) guidance document.

DIRECTOR SUPPORT

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

The Department will offer a webinar every other month especially designed to support **new child care directors and school-based pre-K administrators**. Our upcoming webinar will address:

- Louisiana's unified early childhood rating system and Performance Profiles
- Classroom observations for teacher-child interactions as measured by CLASS™
- Community partners that support the early childhood system

Webinar Date and Time: March 23 at 1:00 p.m.

Webinar Link:<https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/334103042>

Webinar Phone Number:1-646-876-9923

Meeting ID: 334 103 042

The Department hosted a webinar on Wednesday, January 23rd covering these same topics. You can view the webinar presentation [here](#).

Please contact [Emmy O'Dwyer](#) with any questions.

LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES FOR LEAD AGENCIES

The beginning of the new year is the perfect time to take stock of your early childhood community network. Do you need a New Year's resolution to reshape or reorganize your local network? This [link](#) is a perfect resource for lead agencies and their partners to read together and plan next steps.

WEEKLY WEBINAR/CONFERENCE CALL FOR LEAD AGENCIES

The Early Childhood Team holds a weekly webinar/conference call question and answer session for lead agencies. The sessions are held on most Tuesdays from **3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.** The Early Childhood Team provides updates and reminders. Additional topics are determined by caller questions. A meeting invitation containing the connecting information to the Zoom webinar account has been sent to all lead agency contacts. Contact [Kaye Eichler](#) if you have questions.

Upcoming Schedule for Weekly Webinar/Conference Call for Lead Agencies

- February 12

COMMUNITY COORDINATED ENROLLMENT PLAN

Bulletin 140 requires that each Lead Agency submit a Coordinated Enrollment Plan for their community by February 1 each year. To provide support and training to complete the Coordinated Enrollment Plan, the Department conducted a webinar at noon on Wednesday, December 5. The recorded presentation can be found [here](#). Any questions about the Coordinated Enrollment Plan should be directed to [Lindsey Bradford](#).

OTHER

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

The next meeting for the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council will take place on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, at 1:00 p.m. in the Claiborne Building, located at 1201 N. Third Street in Baton Rouge. You can view a live stream of this meeting [here](#). For additional information, please email [Leslie Doyle](#).

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

[Latest Revamp of Child Care at State School Board Tuesday](#), (*The Advocate*, January 18, 2019)

[Louisiana Launches Pilot Programs to Increase Early Childhood Education Access, Improve Quality](#), (*Louisiana Believes*, January 23, 2019)

[\\$700,000 Allocated to Louisiana Early Childhood Pilot Projects](#), (*U.S. News & World Report*, January 23, 2019)

[BESE Approves \\$700K to Improve Early Childhood Education](#), (*The Advocate*, January 23, 2019)

[How Sports Betting, Early Childhood Education in Louisiana Might Become an Unlikely Alliance](#), (*The Advocate*, January 25, 2019)

[\\$86M Could Help Tackle Child Care Assistance Waitlist in Louisiana as Part of Broader Initiative](#), (*The Advocate*, January 29, 2019)

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