February 14, 2019

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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

Across our state and nation, experts in early childhood have developed excellent professional development opportunities that support Louisiana’s early childhood teachers. This professional development has been carefully designed and aligned in the specific context of Louisiana’s standards and expectations, as well as statewide and local data revealing key trends in the practices, methods, and operations of early education. In an effort to share the highest quality professional development available to Louisiana’s early childhood workforce, the Department is releasing a Request for Applications (RFA) for experts to develop high-quality ready-to-go presentations and trainings, which will become Louisiana’s Early Childhood Key Training Modules.

Louisiana Early Childhood Key Training Modules will be a set of accessible, high-quality trainings designed by experts on best practices in the field of early childhood. Once created, these modules will be owned and branded by the Louisiana Department of Education and shared with key professional development vendors across the state to be used for redelivery.

This RFA is the first in a series of three requests for applications, and is seeking proposals for trainings that are related to Early Childhood Tools and Standards. Additional information and links can be found within this newsletter. If you consider yourself an expert in the field of early childhood education, please consider participating in this application process and making your expertise accessible to all of Louisiana’s early childhood workforce.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS AND DEADLINES:
- Louisiana Early Childhood Key Training Modules RFA Webinar - February 19
- Improving Early and Accurate Identification Interest Survey Due - February 21
- GOLD® Winter Checkpoint - February 28
- Preparing for July 2019 - The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) Webinar - February 28
TEACHING AND LEARNING

LOUISIANA EARLY CHILDHOOD KEY TRAINING MODULES - REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

The Louisiana Department of Education is offering an exciting new funding opportunity for highly qualified trainers! In an effort to share the highest quality training opportunities available to Louisiana's early childhood workforce, the Department has released a Request for Applications (RFA) for experts to develop ready-to-go presentations and professional development that will comprise Louisiana's Early Childhood Key Training Modules.

This RFA is the first in a series of three requests for applications, and is seeking proposals for trainings that are related to Early Childhood Tools and Standards. The application must be submitted by March 13, 2019. In addition to the information provided in the attached Request for Applications (RFA), the Department will host an informational webinar about Louisiana's Early Childhood Key Training Modules RFA 1 on Tuesday, February 19th.

Webinar Date and Time: February 19 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Join the next webinar: https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/986764657
Webinar Phone Number: 1-646-876-9923
Meeting ID#: 986 764 657

For questions, please contact Leslie Doyle.

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.

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." You can view slides and video from the January webinar online.

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.

IMPROVING EARLY AND ACCURATE IDENTIFICATION

When developmental and learning needs are identified early and accurately, children are more likely to receive more timely, appropriate, and effective interventions. Beginning Spring 2019, the Department will partner with interested school systems designated as "Lighthouses" to identify the systems and structures necessary for improving the early and accurate identification of children with diverse developmental and learning needs.

Potential partner school systems will be identified based on:

- Review of system-level data;
- Completion of an interest survey reflecting a willingness to partner with the Department in this work; and
- Results of a phone interview and/or site visit in March.

Interested school systems should review the presentation from the January/February Collaborations and complete an interest survey by
Interested school systems should review the presentation from the January/February Collaborations and complete an interest survey by February 21. For questions, please email classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov.

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 - CHECKPOINT DEADLINE APPROACHING
The deadline for the winter checkpoint is February 28, 2019. In order to prepare for a successful checkpoint, please read 10 Tips for Successfully Completing Your Checkpoint.

If you have any questions or concerns while working toward winter checkpoint completion, please utilize the Louisiana-specific support line at 866-248-2575.

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 resources related to the tax credits as staff and providers begin preparing to file for 2018.

SRTC 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".

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.

SUPERVISION
We have noticed an increased in the number of cited deficiencies regarding children being left unsupervised. Bulletin 137 Section 1713.C. states a staff person shall be assigned to supervise specific children whose names and whereabouts that staff person shall know and with whom the staff person shall be physically present. Staff shall be able to state how many children are in their care at all times. Directors are encouraged to review this requirement with their staff to ensure that no child is ever left unsupervised. Bulletin 137 §1713.C.

The Division of Licensing would recommend each classroom use a daily attendance checklist with children present to be completed before and after the children leave the classroom and play yard.

CCCBC ROSTER
It is recommended that all staff, including owners and directors, are placed on a center's CCCBC roster. If you employ a staff member who already has an eligible CCCBC notification, you should be sure to add that staff member and keep your center's CCCBC roster current. This would allow for your center to be notified, in the event of a change in that individual's eligibility status by the Department's CCCBC unit.

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 27 at 1:00 p.m.
**Webinar Link:** [https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/334103042](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](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/334103042). Please contact Emmy O'Dwyer with any questions.

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**LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT**

**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 19

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**OTHER**

**EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION COMMISSION APPROVES BOLD PLAN**

Louisiana's Early Childhood Care and Education Commission unanimously approved a [bold plan](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/334103042) to address the lack of high quality, affordable child care for children in need.

The plan, called "LA B to 3," aims to serve all children on the current [Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/334103042) waiting list and further expand quality seats to serve 114,000 Louisiana children in need, prioritizing children birth to age 3. Today, only 22,000 children in that age range are being served.

The plan will also strengthen resources for all families, regardless of need, that support nurturing relationships with young children. You can access the [full report](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/334103042) and [Executive Summary](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/334103042) online.

**IN CASE YOU MISSED IT**

Louisiana Finally Has a Plan to Pump Money into Preschool. So, Do It. (NOLA.com, February 3, 2019)
State Commission Unanimously Approves Bold Plan to Increase Access to High Quality, Affordable Early Childhood Education, (Louisiana Believes, February 8, 2019)

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**SUBSCRIBE TO THE NEWSLETTER**

If someone you know wishes to subscribe to this newsletter, please click [here](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/334103042) to subscribe.