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March 16, 2017



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## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

Now is the time to get families excited about early childhood options for next year. Communities across Louisiana are conducting fairs, round-ups, expos and other events in March. Many are launching online applications or providing new guides or flyers to accompany unified paper applications. These activities are an excellent way to showcase all of your community's options - child care, Head Start and pre-K - and to help inform parents about the importance of quality early childhood education.

Because no one provider can serve all families, communities are working together at the local level to coordinate information, eligibility, and application processes. Together we are making it easier for families to apply and for early childhood providers to plan for next year.

Almost all communities are now using a unified application, whether that is on paper or online. Many have also developed shared processes for reviewing applications and matching families with their preferred choices. Our most innovative community networks are going a step further, involving other agencies that serve families, integrating enrollment activities into other community events and using multi-media such as television and billboards to promote their efforts. If there are any questions or concerns about coordinated enrollment in your community, contact [Nasha Patel](#).

Making improvements to enrollment means more children are aware of and can attend quality early childhood programs, thus helping ensure more children enter kindergarten ready.

And as always, thank you for all you do for our children.

**John**

John White  
Louisiana Department of Education  
Twitter @LouisianaSupe

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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

NEW OPTIONAL FEATURES FOR **GOLD**<sup>®</sup>

Beginning this week, Teaching Strategies will add two new optional features to the *GOLD*® system. Teachers can now include School Readiness Goals as well as a customized time of day when accessing the Weekly Planning Form (under the "Planning" tab).

An **optional** summer checkpoint will be added to *GOLD*®. This will accommodate programs that want a fourth checkpoint (example: for federal reporting or tracking children's progress over the summer months). The **optional** checkpoint must be finalized by July 15, 2017.

All programs serving publicly-funded children **must still complete the three required checkpoint periods** all publicly-funded children for October, February and May.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD ANCILLARY CERTIFICATE - INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate is a professional credential for teachers that are working in early learning centers. The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate can be earned by demonstrating the completion of one of the qualifying credentials or degrees, and by submitting a complete application to the Department. All lead teachers working within publicly-funded child care centers will be required to have the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate by July 30, 2019.

Applying for the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate is free. Teachers who have earned the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate and are working in publicly-funded Type III child care centers may be able to use the certificate to qualify for School Readiness Tax Credits.

More information about the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate can be found in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#), or by contacting [Erin Carroll](#).

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## FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

### QUALITY START REMINDER - SCHOOL READINESS TAX CREDITS

If you are a Quality Rated center, you may qualify for School Readiness Tax Credits. School Readiness Tax Credits may be available for qualifying teachers, directors, centers, and parents. Important information and dates concerning these tax credits can be found [here](#).

For any questions, or if you are a center that opened after star ratings were "frozen" or have another extenuating circumstance, please contact [Mary Jo Smith](#).

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## CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

### NEW DIRECTOR TRAINING FOR LICENSING

An in-person, new director training on licensing has been scheduled for **Thursday, April 6 from 1:00 p.m. -4:00 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 at 225-342-9905  or e-mail [LDE Licensing](#).

### MUMPS

Several cases of mumps have been confirmed in Baton Rouge and the surrounding area.

Any child suspected of having mumps should be immediately isolated. Children and adults infected with mumps are infectious from two days before symptoms to five days after swelling onset, and should be excluded from activities (i.e., work, school, child care) during this time period. Symptoms typically appear 16 to 18 days after infection, but this period can range from 12 to 25 days.

Mumps is spread by droplets of saliva or mucus from the mouth, nose, or throat of an infected person, usually when the person coughs, sneezes or talks. Please distribute this [informational flyer](#) to families. If a child is clinically diagnosed with mumps, regardless of laboratory testing, the case must be reported to OPH. Cases should be reported by calling 800-256-2748 . For more information in regards to mumps call 1-800-CDC-Info , or visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents).

### REQUIRED NOTIFICATION

Events related to the health, safety, or well-being of a child that must be reported to Licensing and Child Welfare include, but are not limited to children being left unsupervised for any amount of time, any reports to Provider of inappropriate discipline to a child by a staff member, physical altercations in the center while children are present, and/or any time a parent notifies the Provider that medical attention was received for an incident that happened at the center. The Critical Incident Report Form is found in the Licensing Library. You can now fill out this form online and e-mail to [LDElicensing@la.gov](mailto:LDElicensing@la.gov).

For questions please call you Licensing Consultant at 225-342-9905 or e-mail [LDE Licensing](mailto:LDE Licensing).

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## LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

### 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 about 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** and

**PIN: 81774907.**

Future Office Hours will be held on the following Tuesdays:

- March 21
- March 28
- April 4

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## OTHER

### EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL - MARCH 22

The next Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council meeting will take place on

**Wednesday, March 22 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.

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