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# NEWSLETTER

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## News for Early Childhood Educators

May 21, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Last week, the [Department launched Strong Start 2020 for early childhood communities and providers](#). The [Early Childhood Strong Start 2020 Planning Framework](#) outlines priorities and funding opportunities in order for early childhood communities and sites to work together to ensure:

- All **child care centers have the tools and resources they need to reopen safely** and in accordance with Office of Public Health guidelines.
- **Communities sustain and increase access** to opportunities for early childhood care and education in the near and long-term.
- **Teachers are prepared to lead classrooms and provide high-quality interactions** for children every day.
- **Families are supported to re-enroll** children in early childhood programs, **or to provide quality care and education in their homes** if programs are unable to reopen or remain open.

A part of Strong Start 2020 is the state's investment in directors of Type III centers through the [Louisiana Early Leaders Academy \(LELA\)](#). This executive level training for child care directors provides them with the skills, training, and community to adapt and lead through new challenges. Year One fellows shared their thoughts on the impact of the program in this short [video](#). Applications for the Leaders Academy are open now through June 5th, and I hope you consider [applying](#). The [application guide](#) will provide applicants with the information needed to evaluate this exciting opportunity.

In service,

Beth Scioneaux  
Acting State Superintendent  
Twitter @La\_Believes

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## Upcoming Deadlines

- Lead Agency Budget Revisions - *due June 1*
- [Community Child Care Recovery grants](#) application-*due June 12*

## Upcoming Events

- [ECCE Advisory Council meeting](#)- *May 26*
- [Resilient Louisiana Commission, ECCE Subgroup meeting](#)- *May 26*
- Teacher Leader Summit: The Virtual Series- *May 28-June 5*

## More Important Dates

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

## COVID-19 Updates

### New: P-EBT

Louisiana has been approved for the new Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program. This program will provide extra help buying groceries for the families who normally receive free and reduced-price meals (FRL) at schools under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The [portal](#) went live on Monday. As of 8 a.m. today, over 180,000 applications have been processed on behalf of more than 300,000 children. Please be aware that Head Start and Type II centers typically participate in the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program rather than NSLP and therefore their families are not eligible for these benefits.

For more information please see the [LDOE digital flyer](#) or the [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

### Office of Public Health Guidelines for Centers

The Office of Public Health and the Louisiana Department of Education have developed required and suggested [Office of Public Health Guidelines for Child Care](#) for child care centers to use as they reopen, informed by the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control. Per the White House's Reopening America plan, Louisiana will be reopening in Phases as the state meets certain criteria. Throughout these phases, restrictions will be gradually relaxed. In order to ensure the health and safety of children and staff, centers must follow the required guidelines detailed in the [Office of Public Health Guidelines for Child Care](#).

## Updates for Teaching and Learning

### **New: 2020 Teacher Leader Summit: The Virtual Series**

**The 2020 Teacher Leader Summit: The Virtual Series will take place from May 28 to June 5.** It will bring together a host of educators and content experts who are focused on creating meaningful growth for every student, every day. Educators will share their knowledge, learn new skills, and prepare for the 2020-2021 school year.

The Department recently released the [session list](#) in conjunction with the event app. Sessions include a variety of topics for teachers, school leadership, and school system staff. In an effort to ensure as many Louisiana educators as possible are able to attend sessions, on May 22, the Department will release a list of sessions to be broadcasted live on YouTube. The live broadcasts will allow educators across the state to attend the sessions live regardless of event registration. This means that educators who were waitlisted or unable to register will be able to view the sessions on YouTube as they happen.

Though not all sessions will be broadcasted live, all sessions will be recorded and posted to the [Teacher Leader Library](#) shortly following the event.

Please contact [ldoeevents@la.gov](mailto:ldoeevents@la.gov) with questions.

### **GOLD® Updated Guidance**

Due to COVID-19, the Department waived the May checkpoint requirement. Therefore, sites do not need to take any action in order to finalize the current academic year. If there is a specific situation where a teacher needs to close out, please check *not observed* and the reason being *site closure*.

Questions regarding GOLD® can be directed to [meredith.eckard@la.gov](mailto:meredith.eckard@la.gov).

### **GOLD® OSEP Exit Procedure Support and Guidance**

GOLD® OSEP Administrators can support teachers and service providers in completing [exit assessments](#). OSEP Administrators must [exit or transition child records](#) on an IEP when the child stops receiving services, when the child transitions to Kindergarten, or if another reason for exit occurs

Once the exit date is entered, the "Days Receiving OSEP Services" will display the number of days between the entry date and the exit date. If the number of days is 183 or more, then the child record meets the required number of days receiving OSEP services to be included in the OSEP Federally Mandated Year-End Report. Once all of your exit requests are submitted, the system will need some time to update. It is recommended that you wait a day before running the report to reflect all requests and submissions.

As a result of transitioning from AEPS to GOLD® OSEP, it will not be required to send an end-of-year report.

[Updated guidance](#) can be found in the Classroom Resources and Initiatives Library.

Questions regarding *GOLD® OSEP* can be directed to [brittany.braun@la.gov](mailto:brittany.braun@la.gov).

## Updates for Funding and Enrollment

### DirectMatch

This year, the Department is requiring that all community networks gain access to DirectMatch which allows networks a quick, easy, contact-free method for determining child eligibility. The LDOE is offering Technical Assistance sessions for anyone who would like a one-on-one hands on training in how to access and use the system. Sessions can be scheduled [here](#).

Please reach out to [lindsey.bradford@la.gov](mailto:lindsey.bradford@la.gov) for access or with any questions.

### LA 4/NSECD

During school closures, LA 4 and NSECD payments have continued based on enrollment rather than attendance.

- All LA 4 State General Funds payments through May have been issued as of April 21.
- TANF payments for March were issued on May 19. April and May are pending with DCFS.
- All NSECD payments through May have been issued as of May 1.

Any questions regarding LA 4 or NSECD can be directed to [lindsey.bradford@la.gov](mailto:lindsey.bradford@la.gov)

### Louisiana Child Care Assistance Provider Round 2 Grant

As Louisiana moves into Phase I of reopening its economy, the Louisiana Department of Education is funding an additional grant opportunity for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) child care providers operating by June 1. Applications were due May 20. All open Type III, family child care and in-home providers currently CCAP certified were eligible to apply.

Payments are expected to be issued by the second week in June. Operational costs such as staff salaries, staff recoupment bonuses, supplies, rent, and utilities are allowable for use of the Grant funds. There will be another grant opportunity in the next few months for providers who are not ready to be open by June 1.

### Pandemic Protective Services Crisis Application

Essential critical infrastructure workers are eligible to [apply](#) for CCAP subsidy child care through May 31, 2020. For questions regarding CCAP, please contact [LDECCAP@la.gov](mailto:LDECCAP@la.gov).

## Updates for Licensed Centers

### License Renewal Applications for May Providers

The CAFÉ Provider Portal is currently down, preventing the submission of CAFÉ Renewal Applications. In order to process your application, please complete the Renewal Application using the form that will be emailed to you. Providers with March renewals who have not completed their application should do so by using the emailed form.

Please include the following with the Renewal Application form:

- Current approval from Office of Public Health;
- Current approval from Office of State Fire Marshal;
- Current approval from City Fire (if applicable);
- Current General Liability Insurance; and
- LDE Office of Early Childhood Academic Approval (if Type III center)

If you have any questions, contact your Licensing Consultant at 225-342-9905 or [LDElicensing@la.gov](mailto:LDElicensing@la.gov).

### **Urgent Communications needed during COVID-19**

Please let the Division of Licensing know if your center is temporarily closed. If your center is still open, please take this [survey](#). The Department is working hard to be sure essential employees have their child care needs covered during this unprecedented time. Remember to report any updates regarding closures or center re-openings to [LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov](mailto:LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov).

### **Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) Updates**

Please refer to the updated list of [fingerprint locations](#), last revised May 13<sup>th</sup>, and call ahead before sending applicants to be fingerprinted. The LDOE \$15.00 administrative fee, out of state fee, and the DCFS fee have been waived for the CCCBC application until June 30<sup>th</sup>. Fingerprint fees must still be paid prior to being fingerprinted.

Please contact [LDECCCBCprocessing@la.gov](mailto:LDECCCBCprocessing@la.gov) with any CCCBC questions.

## **Updates for Directors**

### **Applications for the Louisiana Early Leaders Academy (LELA) Now Open**

Now, more than ever, early learning leaders need support to bring forth an ambitious vision for Louisiana's youngest. As center directors consider what the future may hold, the Louisiana Early Leaders Academy offers the opportunity to build leadership skills and a network of peers who support each other for their success and most importantly, ambitious goals for young children.



Year One fellows report that this program is transformative. Learn more through this short promotional [video](#) or by visiting the [LELA website](#).

Whether you are currently open or not, if you are a Type III center rated Proficient or Above, you are [eligible to apply](#). The deadline for applications is June 5.

The Leaders Academy is structured to provide and support the implementation of new learning into practice, including:

- Bi-monthly online training sessions;
- Personal coaching with an individualized focus;
- A community of peers; and
- Exclusive opportunities to learn from national and state leaders in early childhood education.

Please email [emmy.odwyer@la.gov](mailto:emmy.odwyer@la.gov) if you have any questions.



**Connect. Lead. Learn**

## Updates for Lead Agencies

### Request for Applications for Community Network Lead Agencies 2020

**REMINDER:** The Department released the [Lead Agency Request for Application 2020](#) which designates a lead agency to each community network. Applications must be submitted to [amanda.colon@la.gov](mailto:amanda.colon@la.gov) by May 22 end of day.

#### Lead Agency RFA Timeline:

- **Release date:** April 23
- **Informational Webinar:** May 5 (Weekly Webinar)
- **Intent to Apply:** May 15
- **Final application:** May 22 end of day

#### **Office Hours: Every Tuesday is Weekly Webinar for Lead Agencies**

The Early Childhood Team provides a Weekly Webinar for **lead agency contacts**. The purpose is to provide time each week to collaborate with colleagues, learn new ideas/Department updates, and answer questions for lead agencies. These sessions are held on most **Tuesdays at 3:00 p.m.** and usually last a half-hour. Contact [amanda.colon@la.gov](mailto:amanda.colon@la.gov) to request an invitation or with questions.

#### **Upcoming Schedule for Weekly Webinar for Lead Agencies**

- May 26 at 3:00 p.m. Current events and updates
- June 2 at 3:00 p.m. Current events and updates
- June 9 at 3:00 p.m. Current events and updates

#### **Important Lead Agency Budget Dates:**

- June 1 – All budget revisions must be submitted by this date.
- June 30 – All funds must be expended and all goods and services must be received by this date. At this time, funds will not be carried forward into FY 2020-2021.
- July 15– Reimbursement claims for all other state and federal awards ending June 30, 2020 are due in eGMS

Please reach out to [lindsey.bradford@la.gov](mailto:lindsey.bradford@la.gov) with any questions.

## Recent Lead Agency Resources

- [Spring 2020 Collaboratives Webinar](#)
- [Engagement and Outreach Strategies](#)
- [May 5 Office Hours webinar slides](#), Lead Agency RFA Information
- [May 12 Office Hours webinar slides](#), LA 4 Enrollment and Survey
- [May 19 Office Hours webinar slides](#), Strong Start and Community Grants

## Other

### ECCE Advisory Council - Upcoming Meeting, May 26

The next meeting for the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council will take place on May 26 at 1:00 p.m. This meeting will be held via Zoom and streamed to the [LDOE YouTube Channel](#). For additional information, please email [leslie.doyle@la.gov](mailto:leslie.doyle@la.gov).

### Resilient Louisiana Commission, ECCE Subgroup - Upcoming Meeting, May 26

The next meeting for the Early Childhood Care and Education Subgroup of the Resilient Louisiana Commission will take place on May 26 at 2:30 p.m. This meeting will be held via Zoom and streamed to the [LDOE YouTube Channel](#). Members of the public are encouraged to provide questions and public comments during this meeting to [ryan.n.gremillion@la.gov](mailto:ryan.n.gremillion@la.gov).

*NOTICE: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance during the following meetings, please contact [leslie.doyle@la.gov](mailto:leslie.doyle@la.gov) at least three business days in advance of the meeting describing the assistance that is needed.*

## Early Childhood in the News

[Department Provides Funding Opportunities and Resources to Ensure Strong Start For Early Childhood Communities](#) (Louisiana Believes)

[Louisiana Charts Course Forward for Summer Activities, Child Care](#) (Louisiana Believes)

[Love and Structure Will Carry Us Through](#) (The New York Times)

[Supporting Kids During the Coronavirus Crisis](#) (Child Mind Institute)

[Louisiana to Feed As Many as 600,000+ Students Whose Schools Closed in Pandemic](#) (Louisiana Believes)



### Contact

For questions regarding COVID-19, school closures, or other concerns, please contact [LDOECOVID19@la.gov](mailto:LDOECOVID19@la.gov)

For questions regarding licensing, or child health and safety, please contact [LDElicensing@la.gov](mailto:LDElicensing@la.gov).

For questions regarding lead agencies, please contact [leadagencysupport@la.gov](mailto:leadagencysupport@la.gov).

For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact [earlychildhood@la.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@la.gov).