

July 16, 2020



## News for Early Childhood Educators

Dear Colleagues,

One of the many lessons my time in public schools has taught me is that no job is as challenging as being an effective educator. Nothing impacts student learning like a highly-qualified teacher armed with a robust curriculum.

If we expect our children to be at their best, it's important we establish support structures to help the adults in our buildings reach their potential. As leaders, we must take ownership of the professional growth of our employees. Building teacher and leader capacity is a cornerstone of any successful school and system. A recent announcement by the Department displays how capacity-building programs can benefit educators and children across the state.

Just last week we announced the second cohort of our [Louisiana Early Leaders Academy](#). Sixty early childhood educators from 22 parishes chose to invest in their craft by participating in this 11-month program for directors of highly rated, publicly funded early learning centers. One of our critical goals is to ensure children enter school kindergarten ready. To do that, we must invest in our early childhood educators. I'm pleased to support this effort to build additional capacity in early childhood education.

More communities across the state are also now involved in strengthening local approaches to increase access to quality early childhood opportunities as [Ready Start Networks](#). With thirteen new communities forming Cohort 3, the state now has twenty-six Ready Start Networks implementing bold local plans for early childhood care and education. These networks will create blueprints that drive strategy, expand and form diverse coalitions of a broad range of stakeholders, establish local governance structures for shared decision-making, and implement fundraising strategies.

Louisiana is greatly improved by highly-qualified professionals who lead with a growth mindset. As your State Superintendent, I'm committed to working alongside each of you as we develop new ways to move our children, educators and state forward.

Dr. Cade Brumley  
State Superintendent of Education

### Upcoming Deadlines

- *Main Street Recovery Grant application window opens- July 28*

### Upcoming Events

- *New Lead Agency Onboarding Session 2 Webinar-July 17*

### More Important Dates

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

Please click the image below to read the **Early Childhood Newsletter** in your browser.

## In this Issue:

- **COVID-19 Updates**
- **Updates for Teaching & Learning**
- **Updates for Funding & Enrollment**
- **Updates for Licensed Centers**
- **Updates for Directors**
- **Updates for Lead Agencies**
- **Early Childhood in the News**
- **Other**
- **Contact Us**



News for Early Childhood Educators

June 4, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

The Louisiana Senate unanimously confirmed the appointment of Dr. Code Brantley to be the next State Superintendent of Education. The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (SBESE) appointed Dr. Brantley to lead Louisiana's school system at its May 20, 2020, meeting. His official start date will be June 8, 2020.

SBESE President Sandy Hillaway issued the following statement following the confirmation:

"I applaud the Senate for their confirmation of Dr. Brantley today. These are unprecedented times; strong leadership will be important to the success of our short- and long-term work to address unmet learning due to COVID-19 closures and to ensure that students and schools are prepared for a strong start next year. This will be a huge responsibility, but we have the right leader for it. Not only does Dr. Brantley have extensive K-12 experience and a proven track record of success, but he possesses perhaps the number one quality which SBESE sought: the ability to effectively and fearlessly bring all parties to the table to move education forward. Louisiana needs a visionary leader, but more importantly we need an empathetic, cooperative, adaptable and trusting leader."

Please join us in welcoming him and supporting his transition.

Additionally, Gov. Edwards announced Monday that following continued improvement in Louisiana's COVID-19 outlook and a significant increase in testing capacity and contact tracing, Louisiana is moving to [reopen its schools](#) as of this month's reopening strategy on June 5, in order to ensure the health and safety of children and staff, centers must continue to follow the reopening guidelines detailed in the [Office of Public Health's Guidelines for Child Care](#). Sites will be able to increase group size while maintaining correct ratios. The Department is continuing to support our child care providers as they become operational again by sending a second round of SCAP Relief Grants. Approximately \$2M in grant funds are expected to be released to eligible publicly-funded providers who submitted an application by the second week of June.

I am also pleased to note the [Teacher-Led Learning Series: The Virtual Series is now underway](#), with nearly 6,000 educators in attendance. The event will continue through June 5.

[Download the newsletter for Early Childhood Educators](#)

## COVID-19 Updates

### New: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Availability for School Reopening

As school systems plan for operations during the 2020-2021 school year, the Department is working in concert with the Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (GOHSEP) to address immediate personal protective equipment (PPE) needs.

GOHSEP will provide:

- at least one cloth (reusable/washable) mask for each student and faculty member;
- at least 2,000 disposable masks (for visitors and/or students/faculty that may forget their mask); and
- at least 3 thermometers per each school.

These provision standards are recommended as some individuals/parents will provide their own masks and others may not. However, this should address the PPE needs for public school systems, non-public schools, and early learning centers for school reopening.

School systems should make PPE requests directly to the Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (OHSEP) directors in respective school systems by following the steps outlined below:

1. School systems should compile data that depicts number of students, number of faculty members and number of schools.
2. Each school system will make requests to the respective parish OHSEP based on data specified in number one (above bullet).
3. Requests for this should go to the [local parish OHSEP contact](#).
4. Delivery will be made to the school systems' warehouse for school distribution as systems already have a mechanism to disseminate supplies.

If there are additional PPE needs, please contact OHSEP directors to discuss the circumstances to ensure everyone can work together to address additional needs as circumstances require.

Please contact [LDOECOVID19support@la.gov](mailto:LDOECOVID19support@la.gov) with questions.

### New: Main Street Recovery Grant Program

[Act 311](#) of the 2020 Regular Legislative Session enacted several COVID-19 relief funds including the Louisiana Main Street Recovery Fund that awards grants to eligible Louisiana small businesses to assist in their recovery from the economic impacts of COVID-19. The Main Street Recovery Grant Program will be administered by the [Louisiana Department of Treasury and State Treasurer John Schroder](#). Act 311 set aside \$275 million for small business grants allowing businesses to apply for up to \$15,000 to cover eligible expenses. In the first sixty days of the program, \$40 million of the fund will be awarded to businesses owned by women, minorities and veterans.

The first day applications will be accepted is **July 28**. To learn more, go to <https://www.louisianamainstreet.com/>. Find out if your [business is eligible](#) and enter your contact information to be notified when the application portal comes online.

Questions can be directed to [info@louisianamainstreet.com](mailto:info@louisianamainstreet.com).

[Act 12 of the 2020 First Extraordinary Session](#) provides for a one-time rebate for eligible workers earning \$50,000 per year or less, who spent at least 200 hours working during the COVID-19 crisis from March 22, 2020 through May 14, 2020.

### **Reminder: Frontline Workers**

The Louisiana Department of Revenue will accept applications from July 15 through October 31 from workers employed in essential critical infrastructure jobs on or after March 11, 2020, including:

- Government, private and non-governmental organizations' workers essential for food assistance programs, including school lunch programs
- Bus drivers and workers who provide or support intercity, commuter and charter bus service in support of other essential services or functions, including school bus drivers
- Workers providing dependent care services, including childcare, eldercare, and other service providers necessary to maintain a comprehensive, supportive environment for individuals and caregivers needing these services

The Louisiana Department of Revenue will accept applications online or on a downloadable printed form. Due to limited funding for the rebate program, eligible workers are encouraged to apply as soon as possible using the online application portal at [FrontlineWorkers.la.gov](https://FrontlineWorkers.la.gov).

For more information, read [Revenue Information Bulletin 20-020](#).

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

### **Office of Public Health Guidelines for Centers**

The Office of Public Health and the Louisiana Department of Education have developed required [guidelines](#) for child care centers to use as they remain open or reopen. In order to ensure the health and safety of children and staff, child care providers must continue to follow the required guidelines detailed in the [Office of Public Health Guidelines for Child Care](#). The Guidelines have been updated to provide more clarity and address transportation. Note that beginning in August, the LDOE will begin listing providers who have not met all the required guidelines so families can make an informed choice for where to send their children.

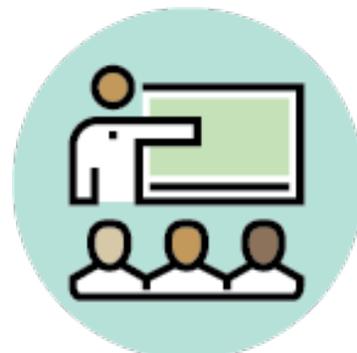
## Updates for Teaching and Learning

### **Updates for Teaching and Learning**

#### **New: Pre-K-3 Assessment Guidance**

The Department recently released a [suite of guidance documents](#) to help school systems and early learning centers plan assessment administration for the 2020-2021 school year.

- [2020-2021 Pre-K to Third Grade Assessment Guidance](#) has been released. The two approved Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) options are DRDP-K and *TeachingStrategies GOLD*® KEA. The four approved K-3 Literacy Screener options are Acadience Reading (formerly DIBELS Next), DIBELS 8th Edition, STEEP, and STEP.
- [Early Childhood \(pre-K\) Assessment Guidance for Various Learning Environments](#) outlines requirements and resources for assessing publicly funded children (ages 3-5) using *TeachingStrategies GOLD*® in various learning environments; including traditional, virtual, and hybrid.
- [K-3 Assessment Guidance for Various Learning Environments](#) outlines requirements and resources for administering the KEA and K-3 Literacy Screener for various learning environments, including traditional, virtual, and hybrid.
- [2020-2021 TeachingStrategies GOLD](#)® Guidance has been released for Early Childhood, OSEP, and KEA.



Questions regarding assessments can be directed to [meredith.eckard@la.gov](mailto:meredith.eckard@la.gov) or [bridgette.cupstid@la.gov](mailto:bridgette.cupstid@la.gov)

### **Interact NOW Teacher Summit**

The Interact Now: Teacher Summit is a virtual summit to support early childhood teachers on the most critical aspect of teaching--the ways we support children socially and emotionally.

Sessions will address:

- Maintaining high-quality interactions in all learning environments
- Creating a trauma-responsive classroom
- Educational equity
- Improving Instructional Support, at home or in the classroom
- Engaging with families and modeling interactions
- Preventing and addressing challenging behavior
- CLASS strategies for teaching
- And more!

Learn more at [www.Teachstone.com/teachersummit](http://www.Teachstone.com/teachersummit).

## **Updates for Funding and Enrollment**

### **LA 4**

LA4 payments for May TANF went out on Monday, July 13.

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

### **Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)**

#### **LaCAP Relief Grant Round 3**

To support eligible certified providers for reopening and operational costs, the Department is offering a third round of the Louisiana Child Care Assistance Provider (LaCAP) relief grants.

Child care providers face increased costs related to increased cleaning and sanitation, required adult-child ratios and group sizes detailed in the [Office of Public Health Guidelines for Child Care](#), and other activities necessary to maintain safe operations.

Child care assistance providers (Type III centers and certified home-based providers) who become operational, serving children by August 1, may be eligible to receive this grant. As an incentive to enroll CCAP children, an additional \$25 per CCAP authorized child enrolled by August 1, 2020 as determined by LDOE will be provided. It is expected that funds will be released by the second week in August with the additional CCAP funds released the following week. The application can be found [here](#).

#### **Provider Payments**

CCAP will extend child care payments to providers based on enrollment through September 30. Providers will continue to be paid by enrollment and not by attendance per their center's capacity.

#### **Client Redeterminations**

Presently, CCAP client redeterminations are extended as follows:

- June and March redeterminations are extended to September 2020.
- July and April redeterminations are extended to October 2020.
- August and May redeterminations are extended to November 2020.

For questions regarding CCAP, please email the Provider Ticket System at <https://provider.supportsystem.com>

## **Updates for Licensed Centers**

### **License Renewals**

There has been a temporary change in the way renewal



applications are being processed. Previously, providers would go through CAFÉ to complete the renewal process. Now, providers will receive a detailed email at the beginning of the month in which the license expires with the enclosed jot form application.

The Department is aware of the delay in fire and/or health inspections; this will not affect the licensing status, but renewal applications will not be considered complete until these approvals are received.

#### **Guidelines During Licensing Visits**

For the health and safety of early learning center staff and Licensing staff, all center employees or any other adults in the center, including the Licensing staff, will wear a face covering, wash hands, and practice social distancing. Also, all adults and children must be screened prior to entering the center.

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

## Updates for Child Care Criminal Background Checks

The Department will continue to waive the LDOE fees for the Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) and continue to cover the fee charged by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) until September 30. The remaining fingerprint fees must be paid prior to the applicant submitting fingerprints. The latest version for [Fingerprint Locations for CCCBCs](#) is dated July 7.

## Updates for Directors

**Retail purchases of supplies:** The Department has [a letter](#) center providers can use if they are unable to purchase more than the minimum supplies at retailers. The letter gives permission to exceed the minimum, if accompanied by the provider's driver's license and a copy of the center's license. If the retailer is not responsive to the letter, please email [LDOECOVID19support@la.gov](mailto:LDOECOVID19support@la.gov).

**Supplies & PPE:** For centers that are still searching for a vendor to help acquire cleaning supplies and PPE, please note all early learning centers are eligible for steep discounts on everyday items and big purchases, if they [complete authorization to use state contracts](#).

**Promoting Hygiene:** [The Health and Safety Resource Guide](#) has been updated to include new videos including hand hygiene, masks, and social distancing.

## Updates for Lead Agencies



#### **New Lead Agency Onboarding Session 2 Webinar**

The Department is excited to support individuals who are new to the role of community network lead agency. On July 17 from 1:30 p.m., the Early Childhood Team will host a second onboarding webinar to provide guidance and resources about the lead agency's role and responsibilities. This event is open for all lead agencies but is specifically designed to support those new to becoming a community network lead agency.

#### **The webinar will be divided into two sessions**

- [Session 1: Community Network Administration, CLASS® Observations and Accountability](#)
- Session 2: Coordinated Enrollment and State Funding-July 17 at 1:30 p.m.

New lead agency contacts will receive an email containing a link to attend this webinar. Lead agencies who are not new but are interested in attending, please contact [amy.poirier@la.gov](mailto:amy.poirier@la.gov).

## Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)<sup>®</sup> Virtual Training Opportunity

The LDOE is hosting a series of one-day virtual ASQ<sup>®</sup> training for all lead agency contacts and CCR &R's. Ages & Stages Questionnaires<sup>®</sup> (ASQ<sup>®</sup>) provides reliable, accurate developmental and social-emotional screening for children between birth and age six. Drawing on parents' expert knowledge, ASQ<sup>®</sup> has been specifically designed to pinpoint developmental progress and catch delays in young children—paving the way for meaningful next steps in learning, intervention, or monitoring.

**Who:** Lead agency and CCR&R contacts (2 slots available per network)

**When:** July 20 - July 24 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (participants attend one day only)

**How:** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ldoe-asq-virtual-training-tickets-111808161220>

For additional questions or information, please contact [brittany.braun@la.gov](mailto:brittany.braun@la.gov)

### 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 other colleagues, learn new ideas, review Department updates, and answer questions for lead agencies. These sessions are held on most Tuesdays at 3 p.m. and usually last a half-hour. Contact [amanda.colon@la.gov](mailto:amanda.colon@la.gov) with questions.

### Upcoming Schedule for Weekly Webinar for Lead Agencies

- July 21 at 3 p.m. Current events and updates
- June 28 at 3 p.m. Current events and updates

### Recent Lead Agency Resources

- [June 23 Office Hours webinar slides](#)
- [June 30 Office hours webinar slides](#)
- [July 14 Office Hours webinar slides](#)

## Other

### New: Every Child Counts – 2020 Census

By now, every home has received an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. The 2020 Census count impacts the federal funds that communities receive each year for programs and services that are critical for schools, students, and younger children, such as:

- Special education, Head Start, after-school programs, and classroom technology.
- Food assistance, including free and reduced-price school lunches.
- Maternal and child health programs.
- Planning, preparedness, and recovery efforts for national emergencies, including COVID-19.



Self-responses, which can be completed online, by phone, or by mail until October 31, ensures federal funding to support Louisiana students. View the most recent Louisiana 2020 Census Self-Response Weekly Highlights provided by the U.S. Census Bureau Atlanta Region.

The Department encourages school systems to explore the newly available [2020 Census Toolbox](#) to find activities specially designed to be engaging and appropriate for each grade level, from counting for kindergarteners to examining career statistics for high schoolers.

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

## Early Childhood in the News

[Louisiana Announces Second Cohort of Leadership Program to Enhance Early Learning](#)  
(Louisiana Believes)

[Why the Way Our Children Watch Screens Matter](#) (BBC Reel)

[Food: Where to Get Meals for Free Meals for Kids Amid Coronavirus Pandemic](#)  
(WAFB)

[What Parents Can Learn from Child Care Centers That Stayed Open During Lockdown \(NPR\)](#)

[Louisiana to Award Nearly \\$11 Million in Federal Funding to Child Care Providers Impacted by Public Health Crisis \(Louisiana Believes\)](#)

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### Contact Us

- 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).



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