



EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER

January 12, 2023

Dear Colleagues:

Happy New Year! We hope that each of you had a holiday that was filled with special moments and memories with family and friends.

The New Year generally begins with great energy and excitement. We hope that this excitement will carry us through another successful year of hard work and dedication for the children that we serve. Thank you for your continued work in making such a tremendous difference for the youngest learners of Louisiana.

Upcoming Deadlines

- January 30: Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Award Applications due by 5 p.m.

Upcoming Events

- January 18: [Teaching Strategies® GOLD Q&A for Network Administrators](#)
- January 25: [Young Children with Disabilities Community of Practice](#)
- February 2: [Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar](#)
- February 24: [New Director Webinar](#)
- March 7: [Plain Talk Literacy and Learning Pre-Conference Day](#)

More Important Dates

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

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Provider Updates

NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinars

The next monthly provider webinar will be held February 2, 2023. Providers can access the upcoming February provider webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date/Time: Thursday, February 2 at 1 p.m.
Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93597745872>
Phone Number: 1-312-626-6799
Meeting ID: 935 9774 5872
Passcode: 641464

REMINDER: TIKES Mental Health Consultation

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) is an intervention that teams a mental health professional with early childhood professionals to improve the behavioral health of young children in early learning settings. The TIKES ECMHC provides support at no cost to Type III and registered Family Child Care sites. Onsite support and professional development is provided for teachers and other early childhood professionals by early childhood mental health specialists.

For more information visit the [TIKES](#) webpage.

UPDATES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

NEW: Teachstone® – The CLASS® Learning Community

The CLASS® Learning Community is a group of educators dedicated to helping children by measuring and improving teacher-child interactions. Join for free and browse the available resources. Resource documents, recorded webinars, discussion boards, and blog posts are available. New resources include:

- [Using Open-Ended Prompts to Deepen Language Modeling Interactions](#) (blog)
- [Teaching with CLASS® Podcast - The Mid-School-Year Reset](#)

NEW: Teaching Strategies® Q&A for Network Administrators

The Department will host a webinar for network administrators on Wednesday, January 18:

Webinar Topic: GOLD® Q&A for Network Administrators
Webinar Date/Time: Wednesday, January 18, 2023
Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us>
Webinar ID: 974 0485 0210
Passcode: 980775

Teaching Strategies also offers several [on-demand recorded webinars](#) for early childhood teachers and leaders. Please read the Department's updated [TS GOLD® Guidance](#) and [TS GOLD® FAQ](#) documents for helpful information.

Questions or concerns can be directed to ECAssessment@la.gov.

NEW: Early Childhood Young Children with Disabilities (YCWD) Community of Practice

The Early Childhood YCWD Community of Practice provides a time for Part B, Section 619 special education coordinators and coaches to receive updates and collaborate. Participants can access the YCWD Community of Practice webinar using the information below.

Webinar Topic: Strategies For Success
Webinar Date/Time: Wednesday, January 25 at 2:00 p.m.
Webinar Link: <https://zoom.us/j/6920610085?>
Passcode: gyiy3F

Please contact caitlyn.robinson@la.gov with any questions or concerns.

REMINDER: Teacher Leader Lagniappe Podcast Episode Release

Listen to 2022 Louisiana Early Childhood Leader of the Year, Rochelle Wilcox, talk about what it means to value children, what makes a classroom special, and how to keep teachers motivated to go above and beyond for children. Educators can subscribe to the [Teacher Leader Lagniappe podcast](#) and listen to the latest episode.

REMINDER: Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Award Applications Live!

All candidates for this award program have been nominated and applications have been distributed. Supporting documents to guide candidates are found in the Early Childhood section on the [Louisiana Believes Awards page](#). Applications are due Monday, January 30 by 5 p.m.

Please contact devon.camarota@la.gov for more information or technical assistance.

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Eligibility Redetermination for Families

The Department must resume the 12-month certification of CCAP cases effective February 1, 2023. LDOE CCAP will resume sending notifications of upcoming redeterminations to providers and families beginning January 15, 2023.

Families must respond immediately with a new CCAP redetermination application, check stubs, and immunization records. The case will not be extended if documents are not received according to the dates on the CCAP 11RC - Redetermination Notice (to families) and CCAP 11RCP - Provider Redetermination Notice (to providers).

Failure to submit the redetermination application and all required documents will result in the closure of the family's CCAP case. Once the case is closed, the family will need to reapply for CCAP and will be placed on the waitlist, if deemed eligible.

NEW: ARPA Stabilization Grant Survey

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is conducting a survey related to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Stabilization grants. LDOE has partnered with Postlethwaite and Netteville (P&N) to collect information regarding the use of ARPA Stabilization grant funds. LDOE will also use this information to direct future technical assistance.

During the week of January 10, 2023, all providers who received ARPA Stabilization grant funds (Round 1 and/or 2) will receive an email containing a link to complete the survey from the following sender:

- Sender: P&N - LDOE Grants
- Email address: info@LDOE-pnsurvey.com
- Subject Line: LDOE ARPA Grant Survey – Rounds 1 and 2

The survey must be completed by January 27, 2023.

Participation in the survey is required. If you have any questions, the Provider Help Desk at 225-252-9543 or email providercertification@la.gov. If you require technical assistance regarding how to complete the survey, contact P&N at info@LDOE-pnsurvey.com.

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Eligibility Sliding Fee Scale

The new CCAP Eligibility Sliding Fee Scale will be available on [Louisiana Believes](#) on February 1, 2023.

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) KinderConnect Attendance Tracking System

The Louisiana Department of Education will be fully transitioning from TOTS to the KinderConnect attendance tracking system by March 30, 2023. The Department is hosting pilot providers in this system now and will begin general distribution of tablets for the use of this new system to all providers by February 2023.

In order to connect with this new attendance tracking system and receive a tablet to initiate the system, please ensure that all of the following steps are completed:

1. Register the site in the [EdLink](#) system
2. Register site leaders to become the EdLink Entities Manager for the site
3. Complete the KinderConnect registration (once registered as an Entity Manager in EdLink, instructions will be sent to all Entity Managers)

For detailed guidance and screenshots for how to register in EdLink and for access to other resources, please visit the Department's [EdLink Support](#) page. Additionally, the Department is offering multiple [EdLink trainings](#) in January which providers will be provided with instructions for accessing and navigating the system. Maximum registration for this weekly training is 99, and the last 30 minutes of each meeting will be open for questions, time permitting. To attend any of these weekly trainings, please complete [registration](#).

KinderConnect information will be shared during office hours to help with the transition to this new mandatory attendance tracking system. Office hours are held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:30-2:30 p.m. and can be accessed using the information below.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97565259173>

Phone Number: 1-470-381-2522

Meeting ID: 975 6525 9173

All sites must begin the use of this new attendance tracking system no later than March 15, 2023. *Note: Beginning April 2023, quarterly bonus payments will be paid on attendance tracked by this system and will no longer be paid on enrollment.*

Once the tablet for KinderConnect has been received and attendance has been transitioned from TOTS, please mail the TOTS device back to Conduent. A self-addressed mailer will be provided by calling 1-888-281-0326.

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Quarterly Bonus Payments

Children who do not attend their child care program regularly do not receive the benefit of high-quality child care. During the 2020 COVID emergency, the Department suspended payments on attendance and began payments on enrollment.

Monthly CCAP payments will continue to be based on attendance; however, all quarterly bonus payments issued after April 1, 2023, will be paid based on attendance.

The Department will utilize the KinderConnect system to track attendance, so it is critical that your families utilize this system each day their child is in attendance.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Underutilized Authorizations for Families

The CCAP Eligibility Team has resumed conducting monthly reviews of underutilized authorizations of children who have not attended child care within the previous month. Attendance recorded in the site's attendance tracking system

(i.e., Tracking of Time Services (TOTS) Point of Service (POS), Interactive Voice Response (IVR), KinderConnect) is examined as part of the underutilization review. Authorizations must be utilized by families at least once within a 30-day period to maintain CCAP certification.

The Provider Help Desk staff has been informing providers of the importance of families completing check in/out transactions when children are in attendance to maintain CCAP certification. If CCAP children are not attending, the Department will issue notices to families at the mailing address on file advising of non-usage of authorizations. Families that are not using CCAP will lose their CCAP authorizations, will need to reapply for CCAP, and will be placed on the waitlist if deemed eligible.

For assistance, please contact the Provider Help Desk at (225) 250-7635 or (225) 252-9543, or enter a [ticket](#) in the Provider Ticket System.

UPDATES FOR LICENSED CENTERS, FAMILY CHILD CARE, AND IN-HOME PROVIDERS

REMINDER: Notification of Closure

Providers must make notification to the Division of Licensing via email of any temporary or permanent closures.

- Notification must be made within one day of a temporary closure lasting more than five calendar days but less than 30 calendar days.
- Notification must be made within seven calendar days of a permanent closure, which is a closure of more than 30 calendar days.

For questions, please contact the center's assigned [licensing consultant](#).

NEW: EdLink is LIVE

All providers must use the EdLink system to submit renewal applications, request changes, and access our new attendance system, KinderConnect. Renewal applications must be submitted prior to the first day of the month in which the current license expires.

For assistance with gaining access to EdLink or questions with access, the EdLink Support Team will be holding office hours every Tuesday and Thursday from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Please see the information below to join:

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97565259173>

Phone Number: 1-470-381-2522

Meeting ID: 975 6525 9173

REMINDER: School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)

Parent SRTC tax forms were mailed to Type III sites in December 2022. Director and staff member tax forms will be mailed in January 2023. As a reminder, the requirements for the SRTC for Type III sites and Family Child Care educators who have Academic Approval is that educators must:

- enroll with Louisiana Pathways by submitting an [enrollment form](#) and [employment verification form](#)
- work in the site for at least six months of the calendar year, and
- work at least 30 hours per week at the site.

For questions or to request additional parent tax forms, please contact demita.walker@la.gov.

REMINDER: Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) 5-Year Renewal

Five-year eligibility renewals for the Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) program will begin in March

2023. Providers and applicants who were fingerprinted in 2018 upon the program's launch will be contacted via email to initiate the fingerprinting renewal process.

For questions, please contact a CCCBC Analyst at (225) 342-2716 or email ldcccpcbprocessing@la.gov.

UPDATES FOR DIRECTORS

REMINDER: Early Childhood Child Care Management Software Initiative (CCMSi)

The Early Childhood Child Care Management Software Initiative (CCMSi) application is an opportunity for child care providers to purchase Tier 1 Child Care Management Software at only 20% of the purchase price through the local CCR&R. CCMS is a great way to make business practices more efficient, ensure accuracy in enrollment and billing, and communicate early and often with families.

Providers can now participate by signing up for a year's subscription of a Tier 1 Child Care Management Software system and return the proof of purchase to their CCR&R to receive reimbursement for 80% of the cost. More information about CCMS approved by the LDOE can be found in the [CCMSi Guidebook](#).

Contact shallan.jones@la.gov with any questions.

REMINDER: Free Tax Consultation

Type III centers and CCAP-certified Family Child Care providers can benefit from free and 100% confidential help with taxes; Quickbooks; understanding tax and financial documents, statements, or applications; or more from a certified early childhood-trained Tax Accountant.

Contact Andrea City at andrea@jwroyston.com with JWRA, Inc. if you are interested in free tax support.

REMINDER: Early Childhood Business Consultation

Interested in receiving one-on-one confidential and free business consultation from national early childhood business experts on any child care business topics, including but not limited to finance, policy, marketing, staffing, and more? The individual consultation provided by First Children's Finance's very own Kari Stattleman is completely confidential and individualized.

Contact Kari Stattleman at karis@firstchildrensfinance.org with questions or to schedule a meeting.

UPDATES FOR COMMUNITY NETWORK LEAD AGENCIES

NEW: Weekly Webinar for Community Network Lead Agencies

The Early Childhood team hosts Office Hours every Tuesday at 3 p.m. for Community Network Lead Agency contacts. The purpose of these webinars is to provide updates and answer questions for Community Network Lead Agencies. Presentations from previous Community Network Lead Agency Office Hours are located in the [Community Network Lead Agency Library](#).

The upcoming schedule for Weekly Webinars for Community Network Lead Agencies can be found below:

- January 10: General Office Hours
- January 17: February Child Count, 2022 Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Guest Speakers, and general updates
- January 24: Canceled due to Winter Collaborative
- January 31: SchoolHouse Connection Guest Speaker (extended time of 3 - 4 p.m.)

There are an estimated 5,500 children aged 0-3 experiencing homelessness in Louisiana, yet only 8.5% are enrolled in an early learning program. Child care, Early Head Start, and home visiting programs are uniquely positioned to meet the needs of these families and their children. Join the LDOE and SchoolHouse Connection on January 31 for a conversation to learn more about homelessness, its impacts on young children, and best practices for working with families. CNLAs are encouraged to invite additional members of their team that work directly with families, the local McKinney-Vento Liaison, and other enrollment personnel.

Note that topics are subject to change. Please email amanda.colon@la.gov with questions.

OTHER

NEW: Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Commission Upcoming Meeting, January 24, 2023

The next ECCE Commission meeting will take place on January 24 at 1 p.m. in the Claiborne Building (Thomas Jefferson Room), located at 1201 N. Third Street in Baton Rouge. An overview of the ECCE Commission and meeting materials are available online in the Policy and Guidance [Library](#).

For additional information, please email dana.russell2@la.gov.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, for special assistance at this meeting please contact dana.russell2@la.gov at least three business days in advance of the meeting describing the assistance that is needed.

IN THE NEWS

[Louisiana Early Childhood Policy Landscape](#) (Earllysuccess.org)

[Entergy provides \\$100,000 Grant to Support Early Childhood Education in Jefferson Parish](#) (Entergy Newsroom)

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For questions regarding community network lead agencies, please contact leadagencysupport@la.gov.
- For all questions regarding child care criminal background check processing, please contact LDEcccbcprocessing@la.gov.
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.

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