



EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER

October 14, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

For the first time in Louisiana's history, the Department will recognize and honor early childhood educators and leaders through the Teacher and Leader of the Year Program. Not only is this the first time in Louisiana's history, but it is the first time in the United States for a state Department of Education to specifically honor the incredible professionals who care for our youngest learners. Louisiana has the opportunity to be a national leader in education by honoring our early childhood educators, and every applicant will make history in being a part of the first year of this program.

An early childhood education Teacher or Leader of the Year serves birth-five year old children who are enrolled in a Type III child care center, an Early Head Start or Head Start Center, or in a Family Child Care site participating in the LDOE Family Child Care (FCC) Pilot. Pre-K teachers in traditional school settings should apply through the PreK-12 application, the materials for which can also be found on the [Awards page](#) of the Louisiana Believes website, along with the Early Childhood materials.

Any teacher or leader in the settings described above is invited to apply. There is no formal nomination process this year, but the application process does require recommendations from fellow teachers, site leaders or directors, lead agency employees, parents, colleagues, and/or community members. If you know an outstanding teacher or leader, please check back for updates on how to support these excellent early childhood educators in the application process.

[Application materials](#) are now live and final applications are due January 12, 2022.

Dr. Cade Brumley
State Superintendent of Education

Upcoming Deadlines

- October 15: Louisiana Policy Institute for Children [survey](#) deadline
- October 27: Well-Ahead Grant application deadline
- October 31: Pandemic Protective Services Crisis Application submission deadline
- October 31: GOLD® Fall Checkpoint
- January 12: Teacher or Leader of the Year application deadline

Upcoming Events

- October 18: GOLD® license open for 48 hours
- October 20: [ECCE Advisory Council Meeting](#)
- October 20: [Teacher and Leader of the Year Informational Webinar](#)
- October 21: [Teacher and Leader of the Year Informational Webinar](#)
- October 28: [GOLD® Update Webinar for Site Administrators](#)

- October 29: [Monthly Office Hours for New Directors](#)
- November 4: Early Childhood Provider Monthly Updates [Webinar](#)

More Important Dates

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

In This Issue

- [Updates for COVID-19](#)
- [Updates for Teaching and Learning](#)
- [Updates for Funding and Enrollment](#)
- [Updates for Licensed Centers, Family Child Care, and In-Home Providers](#)
- [Updates for Directors](#)
- [Updates for Lead Agencies](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Other](#)
- [Early Childhood in the News](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

UPDATES FOR COVID-19

NEW: Recording for Early Childhood Provider Updates Webinar

On October 7 the Department hosted a webinar for early childhood providers that included important updates related to COVID-19 and reminders for all provider types. [Presentation](#) slides and a [recording of this webinar](#) are available on the [COVID-19 Landing Page](#) on the Louisiana Believes website.

Providers can access the November provider webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date and Time: November 4 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

TIKES Mental Health Consultation

Tulane offers TIKES Mental Health Consultation via telephone or secure video platform to Louisiana caregivers in need of support during the COVID-19 crisis. Type I, II, and III child care centers, family and in-home child care providers, parents, respite caregivers, and others caring for young children can request a consultation by completing a [request form](#).

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

UPDATES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

NEW: Renew Your Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) to Continue Eligibility for School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTCs)

Teachers and/or directors with Early Childhood Ancillary Certificates (ECACs) that expire in October 2021 should submit renewal or initial application through [Teach LA Live!](#) as soon as possible. Allow 4-5 weeks processing time for each submission. Teachers and/or directors should receive the certificate or further feedback by November 12, 2021. .

For teachers and/or directors with an ECAC that expires in November 2021, please submit renewal or initial application through [Teach LA Live!](#) no later than October 15. Allow 4-5 weeks processing time for each submission. Teachers and/or directors should receive the certificate or further feedback by November 19, 2021.

Once an application is submitted, please check email regularly for replies from the Department. Those who submit can also verify application submission and check for any new messages using the “History” option on [Teach LA Live!](#).

Once an application is processed, additional feedback is provided or the certificate is issued. Case feedback is usually provided via email with instructions on how to correct the application. Certificate information can be reviewed on [TeachLouisiana.net](#). On the right side, choose “Verify a Certificate” or “Teaching Authorization.”

Any questions regarding the processing of an application should be submitted using [Ask a Question](#) within the [Teach LA Live!](#) Portal.

REMINDER: 2021-2022 Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year

This year, for the first time, the Department will recognize and honor Early Childhood Teachers and Leaders of the Year, in step with their PreK-12 counterparts. On October 12, the Department’s Early Childhood Strategy team officially launched this year’s application guidance and materials which can be found in the [Louisiana Believes Awards Library](#). Throughout the application period, the Department will conduct optional technical assistance sessions for lead agencies and applicants. Information for joining the Teacher and Leader of the Year informational webinar is found below (two options available):

Meeting Date/Time: October 20, 2-3 p.m.
Meeting Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92199128988>
Meeting ID: 921 9912 8988

Meeting Date/Time: October 21, 10 - 11 a.m.
Meeting Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92199128988>
Meeting ID: 921 9912 8988

These informational sessions will include reviewing application requirements, best practices on submitting materials, and other technical advice in creating application materials, such as the teaching video. Teachers, leaders, and coaches or mentors who support teacher development should attend these sessions to seek any support needed from the Department, ask questions, and participate in discussions with peers applying for these awards.

Any questions about the application process can be directed to devon.camarota@la.gov.

NEW: 2021-2022 GOLD® Update

In Louisiana's publicly-funded early childhood classrooms, GOLD® by Teaching Strategies® is used to measure each child's growth and development for multiple purposes. The Department has updated the Teaching Strategies GOLD® license to include both Early Childhood and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) within one new license for 2021-2022.

Access to the previous GOLD® license closed on August 31, 2021. All documentation for 2021-2022 should be entered into the new license. The previous license will be open for 48 hours on Monday, October 18, to allow teachers to gather any necessary documentation and reporting that was entered into the old license,

The Department will host a webinar for site-based administrators on Thursday, October 28:

Webinar Topic: GOLD® Update Webinar (Site Administrators)

Webinar Date/Time: Thursday, October 28 at 2 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/94059917874>

Webinar ID: 940 5991 7874

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: FREE MyTeachingStrategies® Webinars

Teaching Strategies® offers a variety of [free webinars](#) on best practices, strategies and tips, product training, and many more learning and development opportunities. The following webinars will be offered in October:

- [Revisiting Room Arrangement as a Teaching Strategy](#), October 19 at 1 p.m.
- [Everyday Amazing: Understanding Behavior and Supporting Positive Interactions](#), October 20 at 3 p.m.
- [Deepening the Teaching and Learning Relationship](#), October 21 at 1 p.m.
- [GOLD® Documentation, Planning, and Engagement Support](#), October 22 at 12 p.m.

NEW: Developmental Screening Initiative

In an effort to support communities and school systems in utilizing universal screenings to identify children in need of intervention, the Department has launched a developmental screening initiative. By Fall 2025, the community network expectation for developmental screenings will be that, at minimum, all publicly-funded children will be screened upon school system enrollment.

Currently the Department is creating appropriate next steps to collect data and analyze the present landscape of screening, referral, and intervention supports among networks. This collaborative effort will aid in appropriately organizing the coordination of supports, resources, and partnerships to assist the field.

There are many valuable resources surrounding this initiative. For example, the [Developmental Screening Guidebook](#) serves as a reference guide to support healthy growth and development of children. The resources within this Guide are intended to deepen the understanding of how children develop, regardless of the child's individual needs, and establish a comprehensive early identification system. [The Early Childhood Transition Process](#) guide provides information to support families in understanding the special education process, make informed decisions for their child, and prepare for smooth and effective

transitions at key entry points. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [Learn the Signs. Act Early](#) has a host of publications, guidance for concerned families, tools to track child development, and other materials.

Contact Charleen.Long@la.gov with questions.

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

NEW: CCAP Family Redetermination Extension

To ensure families continue to receive CCAP services, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricane Ida, redetermination cases have been extended for a three month period:

- September cases have been extended to December 31, 2021
- October cases have been extended to January 31, 2022
- November cases have been extended to February 28, 2022

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

NEW: LA 4 Payments

For the period of August 1, 2021, through October 31, 2021, school systems will receive LA 4 payments equal to the school system allocation as approved in spring 2021. All systems will continue to report actual enrollment and attendance, as in the past; however, payments will be based on the original allocation amount. Beginning in November 2021, a shift will be made so that school systems will be paid based on actual enrollment (including students enrolled in virtual pre-K). Due to funding constraints, school systems are not guaranteed payment for students enrolled in excess of their allocation. August 2021 payments were released on October 11, 2021, and September 2021 payments are pending.

For questions regarding LA 4 please contact kishia.grayson@la.gov.

NEW: NSECD Payments

For the period August 1, 2021, through October 31, 2021, sites will receive NSECD payments equal to the site allocation as approved in spring 2021. All sites will continue to report actual enrollment and attendance, as in the past; however, payments will be based on the original allocation amount. Beginning in November 2021, a shift will be made so that sites will be paid based on actual enrollment (including students enrolled in virtual pre-K). Due to funding constraints, sites are not guaranteed payment for students enrolled in excess of their allocation. August 2021 payments were released on September 29, 2021, and September 2021 payments are pending.

For questions regarding NSECD please contact kishia.grayson@la.gov.

REMINDER: LaCAP Grant Survey for Providers

Child care providers that received LaCAP grants are required to complete a survey from Postlethwaite and Netterville (P&N).

Participation in the survey is mandatory. Failure to complete the survey will impact future grant opportunities. Additional penalties include CCAP payment suspension and participation in an audit of the

LaCAP Grants by P&N.

Providers who did not receive the survey are encouraged to check their spam/junk folder for an email from info@ldoe-pnsurvey.com with the subject "LDOE LaCAP Grant Survey-Unique Link." To have the survey resent, please email info@ldoe-pnsurvey.com and include the provider number and facility name.

For additional information, please contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 or via the [Provider Ticket System](#).

REMINDER: ARPA Stabilization Grants - Flexibility Due to Hurricane Ida

On August 5, the Department released the ARPA Stabilization Grant Round 1 application to all qualified child care providers (including Type I, II, & III licensed child care centers, as well as CCAP-certified in-home and family child care providers). The deadline to submit this application was August 19.

Previously, child care providers were required to be open by September 1, 2021, to receive the ARPA Stabilization Grant. Due to the impact of Hurricane Ida in our state, those centers that applied timely but were closed on September 1, 2021, will still qualify for the ARPA grant.

ARPA grant fund disbursements began regionally the week of September 14.

Please contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543, email ldeccap@la.gov, or enter a [ticket](#) in the Provider Ticket System, if assistance is needed.

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

NEW: CPR/Pediatric First Aid (PFA) Trainers

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) Division of Licensing is assisting licensed child care and in-home providers with obtaining CPR and PFA certification for early childhood staff. The CPR/PFA provider will be authorized to be paid a rate up to \$65 per licensed child care staff member or registered and certified in-home provider. If a CPR/PFA provider has not submitted a quote requesting to be added to the LDOE Division of Licensing's roster, the CPR/PFA provider will be unable to receive payment. Please note: under no circumstance can a trainer, who is a director or owner of a center, be paid for training the staff employed at their center.

Instructions to become eligible as a LDOE CPR/PFA provider:

- Verify you are a registered vendor with the State of Louisiana and have a LaGov vendor number. (<https://wwwcfprd.doe.louisiana.gov/OSP/LaPAC/vendor/srchven2.cfm>)
 - If not registered as a vendor, register prior to entering the LaGov PO.
(link to instructions: <https://www.doe.la.gov/media/gewlb4nk/lagov-vendorregistration.pdf>)
- Submit an Initial Proposal (quote) to the Louisiana Department of Education, Division of Licensing to ldelicensing@la.gov.
- The quote should include at a minimum the vendor number, a description of the training, the names of participants, and total dollar amount for training.
- Once the official quote is approved, a detailed statement will be required for each payment. The

detailed statement should include:

- Vender Number
- Description of the training
- Names of the participants (Center Name, Address, Director's Name, and Phone Number)
- Invoice Number
- Quantity for the training (number of individuals to whom this vendor will be providing services. Up to 300 center staff can be trained at a rate of up to \$65 per staff.)
- Total dollar amount
- Accepted method of payment (P-card payment-credit card or check)
- Ensure you are able to provide a live demonstration and receive a live demonstration from the early childhood center staff.

If the trainer is having trouble obtaining a vendor number, please contact the Vendor Help Desk at 225-342-8010.

If you have additional questions, please contact Licensing at 225.342.9905 or ldelicensing@la.gov.

NEW: Extension of Fence Waivers due Hurricane Ida

On September 17, 2021, a Request for A Waiver from the Child Care Licensing Standards 1903. E Outdoor Space was provided to centers in the declared disaster parishes to allow temporary operation without an outdoor space that is fully enclosed with a permanent fence or other permanent barrier if the fence or barrier was damaged by Hurricane Ida. The permanent fence or other permanent barrier must be replaced or repaired by October 15, 2021. If you are unable to have the permanent fence or barrier replaced or repaired by October 15, 2021, please resend the waiver request submitted with the following information:

- Date of scheduled repair and projected completion date
- Receipt or invoice showing materials purchased

Questions can be directed to your Licensing Consultant at 225-342-9905 or ldelicensing@la.gov.

NEW: Well-Ahead Grant Opportunity

Together, Well-Ahead Louisiana and the Department are offering the "Let's Be Healthy" grant to support child care centers in implementing farm to early care education (Farm to ECE) practices. Farm to ECE focuses on educating child care providers on strategies and activities to increase access to healthy local foods through procurement, gardening, nutrition, and agriculture education.

The first 16 applicants that meet all eligibility requirements will receive \$1,700 in funding and technical assistance to implement Farm to ECE practices.

Application deadline is October 27. More information about this opportunity can be found on wellaheadla.com.

For answers to any additional questions contact wellahead@la.gov.

UPDATES FOR DIRECTORS

NEW: Director Levels for School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTCs)

The Department is sending email notifications of star rating and levels to eligible directors by October 15, 2021. Director and staff member tax forms will be mailed by January 2022.

For re-leveling with Louisiana Pathways Career ladders, new credentials and certifications should be submitted before December 31, 2021, to Louisiana Pathways. Parent School Readiness Tax Credit forms will be mailed to Type III centers by December 2021.

For more information about School Readiness Tax Credits contact demita.walker@la.gov.

NEW: Child Care Management Software Initiative (CCMSi)

The Department is working to increase automation in early learning centers, to streamline time and attendance tracking and other operations, eventually connecting to the state's Edlink database. Eight Department-approved CCMS vendors have been selected to be included in the CCMS Guidebook. This guidebook will be released later this month. Type III child care centers and CCAP-certified family child care providers will be eligible to participate in the initiative, where they can purchase an annual CCMS subscription with an 80% reimbursement for a maximum of \$1,000.

For more information about the CCMSi, contact shallan.jones@la.gov.

REMINDER: Tax Consultation

The LDOE has contracted with [JW Royston, E.A. and Associates, Inc.](#) to provide up to two hours of tax consultation to a limited number of Type III providers, to better understand each provider's current tax situations and needs. All Type III (for-profit and nonprofit) early learning centers are eligible to participate in this opportunity.

Consultation began September 1, 2021, and will be available until June 30, 2022 (or until contract hours have been expended). Type III providers interested in this consultation can begin the process by completing this [interest form](#).

For more information on tax consultation, contact shallan.jones@la.gov.

REMINDER: Advanced Level Business Training

The LDOE has contracted with [First Children's Finance](#) (FCF) to develop and implement a series of business supports for Type III early learning centers in Louisiana, to further enhance the capacity of early learning center owners in Louisiana to build and strengthen internal systems of monitoring, evaluation, and compliance.

Training topics include finance, managing enrollment, partnerships, human resources, marketing and communication, systems compliance, policies and business practices, program planning and evaluation, facility management, and professional staff development/pedagogical leadership.

Additionally, the topics of business efficiency initiatives, specifically Child Care Management Software (CCMS) and automation, will be one of the areas of focus for at least one session.

[Registration](#) is now open for these Louisiana Pathways approved training opportunities.

For more information on these advanced level business trainings, contact shallan.jones@la.gov.

REMINDER: Monthly Office Hours for New Directors

Every month, the LDOE team will hold a webinar that focuses on a topic related to early childhood quality while also helping to expand directors' network of peers. Office hours are targeted towards new directors. Come learn about Type III requirements, connect with other directors, and stay up-to-date with upcoming events and deadlines. This month's topic will be an overview of Bulletin 137 - Early Learning Site Licensing Regulations Information will be shared about understanding the health and safety issues in early learning centers.

Webinar Date/Time: October 29 at 10 a.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/99928176003>

Webinar Phone Number: 1-346-248-7799

Meeting ID: 999 2817 6003

Please contact tella.henderson@la.gov with any questions.

UPDATES FOR LEAD AGENCIES

NEW: Weekly Webinar for Lead Agencies

The Early Childhood Team holds Office Hours every Tuesday at 3 p.m. for lead agency contacts. The purpose of the webinars is to provide updates and answer questions for lead agencies.

The upcoming schedule for Weekly Webinar for Lead Agencies can be found below:

- October 19: Super App (extended to 1 hour)
- October 26: Believe! Application (extended to 1 hour)
- November 2: Performance Profile Release

Contact amanda.colon@la.gov with questions.

OTHER

NEW: Fifth Survey on the State of Child Care in Louisiana

The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children is conducting a fifth [survey](#) to learn about the current state of child care in Louisiana. The survey is being conducted in partnership with United Way and Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies across the state.

All providers are encouraged to complete this survey, answering as many questions as possible, even if participation in earlier surveys was not completed. Findings from earlier surveys were instrumental in informing recovery efforts and emphasizing a need to support the child care sector. Responses are requested by Friday, October 15.

For any questions, please contact info@policyinstitutela.org.

NEW: ECCE Advisory Council - Upcoming Meeting, October 20

The next meeting for the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Advisory Council will be Wednesday, October 20, at 1 p.m. This meeting will be conducted virtually through [Zoom](#) in accordance with R.S. 42:17.1. An overview of the ECCE Advisory Council and meeting materials are available [online](#). For additional information, please email leslie.doyle@la.gov.

NOTICE: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance at this meeting please contact leslie.doyle@la.gov at least three business days in advance of the meeting describing the assistance that is needed.

NEW: ECCE Commission Meeting Materials

The Early Childhood Care and Education Commission met on October 5. [Presentation slides](#) and a [recording](#) of this meeting can be found online. For additional information regarding the [ECCE Advisory Council](#), please email leslie.doyle@la.gov.

IN THE NEWS

['Head Start' to Success: New Acadiana Early Childhood Centers Plant Seeds for Lifelong Learning](#)
(Lafayette Daily Advertiser)

[Louisiana Nonprofits Band Together with Ambitious Goal of Raising \\$500,000 for Hurricane Recovery Fund](#) (Yahoo! Finance)

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding COVID-19, school closures, or other concerns, please contact LDOECOVID19@la.gov.
- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For questions regarding lead agencies, please contact leadagencysupport@la.gov.
- For all questions regarding child care criminal background check processing, please contact LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov.
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.

Subscribe to Our Monthly Newsletter by Completing this Form

The Early Childhood Newsletter is released as a monthly edition. To ensure all subscribers are current, please complete this [form](#) in order to receive our next monthly edition. Please also send this [form](#) to stakeholders who can register as new subscribers.