



October 24, 2019



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

For the first time in a decade, the state legislature increased funding for early childhood education. This past June nearly \$2.3 million was allocated to support a federally-required increase in the amount of money families receive through the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). The Department worked closely with providers, stakeholders, the [Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council](#) and the [Early Childhood Care and Education Commission](#) not only in increasing rates, but separating infant and toddler rates in an effort to address the cost differences between the ages. Differentiating the rates for each age is imperative for supporting child care centers and the distinctive needs of our youngest learners. In August, BESE approved the [rate increase](#) and, as of last week, providers began seeing an increase in payments for the CCAP children they serve.

Increasing rates is a step forward for early childhood and families, but there is more work to do. The rate increase only allows CCAP families access to about one quarter of all child care providers. Child care is still not affordable for many parents. In addition to funding to increase this access, we will continue to monitor rates and access to high-quality providers for the families of Louisiana.

During the week of November 4, the Department will release annual [early childhood performance profiles](#) and school [report cards](#), including performance scores for all early childhood centers and schools. The continued inclusion of early childhood centers in the release provides a third consecutive year of network- and site-level information about the quality of and improvement in the early learning setting. To further differentiate and recognize sites, a fifth "High Proficient" category will be included as part of the results this year.

Louisiana's [plan for improvement](#) is a long-term project. It involves thousands of daily actions to raise expectations, make evidence-based choices, and improve practice. [Ready Start Networks](#), in particular, should use the new performance profile results to identify strengths and weaknesses in their communities' offerings to young children and provide support where centers are struggling. This annual release provides the opportunity to step back and reflect on what is working and what is not. I'm looking forward to discussing outcomes with you and to all progress yet to come.

As always, thank you for all you do for our children,

John

UPCOMING EVENTS AND DEADLINES

Upcoming Events

- Early Childhood Care and Education [Advisory Council](#)- November 13

Upcoming Deadlines

- **GOLD®** Checkpoint due- October 31

More Important Dates

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

TEACHING AND LEARNING

GOLD® Fall Checkpoint

The Fall (October) Checkpoint deadline is **October 31**. Final decisions about children's levels, as distinguished from preliminary levels can be made within the Assess area, using the Checkpoint by Child, or the Checkpoint by Class options. For additional guidance, review the [How-to-Guide for Teachers](#).

GOLD® Tip of the Month

In addition to the support for teachers listed above, there are two reports that administrators can use to help support their staff while they prepare to complete and finalize their checkpoint ratings.

First, as teachers add documentation to MyTeachingStrategies®, administrators can generate the [Documentation Status Report](#) to help teachers focus their observations on any objectives and dimensions that do not yet have documentation. Then, when teachers begin to complete and finalize their checkpoint ratings, administrators can generate the [Assessment Status Report](#) to pinpoint which teachers are missing checkpoint ratings.

Administrators can also check out the archived video of this [support webinar](#) for the fall checkpoint.

Please contact meredith.eckard@la.gov with questions regarding **GOLD®**

CLASS® Tip of the Month

Teachstone recently released a document to support coaches and administrators in conducting [Informal Observations](#) (lasting 15-30 minutes). This guide is to help coaches make the most of brief classroom visits to support teacher growth by

- Agreeing upon specific interactions of focus in advance with the teacher
- Gathering objective moment-to-moment evidence on what the teacher did and how the students responded during those interactions
- Preparing individualized feedback designed to highlight moments of effectiveness and leverage the teacher's strengths to support areas of growth

This [resource](#) may be photocopied for classroom use.

Please contact taylor.dunn@la.gov with questions regarding **CLASS®**.

FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

Child Care Assistance Program 2019 Forum Schedule

The Department will be hosting a series of forums across the state that will cover several topics related to child care centers. Applications for CCAP will be accepted and families can apply in-person. For more information, contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-342-1879.

FORUM SCHEDULE			
Parish	Date	Time	Location
St. Tammany (Covington)	October 25	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Tangipahoa Parish School System Technology Center 795 South Morrison Blvd. Hammond, La. 70403
Tangipahoa (Hammond)	October 26	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Tangipahoa Parish School System Technology Center 795 South Morrison Blvd. Hammond, La. 70403
Orleans	November 1	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Mahalia Jackson Elem. School

(New Orleans)	November 2	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	2405 Jackson Avenue New Orleans, LA 70113 New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary 3939 Gentilly Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70126
Baton Rouge	November 9	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Claiborne Building Thomas Jefferson Room 1201 N. Third St. Baton Rouge, LA 70802
Baton Rouge	November 15	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Claiborne Building Thomas Jefferson Room 1201 N. Third St. Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Department Seeks Applications for Child and Adult Care Food Program Institutions

The Louisiana Department of Education's Division of Nutrition Support announced it is seeking applications from eligible institutions interested in administering the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a federally funded program that provides healthy, affordable meals to both children and adults. The program's new fiscal year begins Oct. 1 and applications are accepted year-round.

The program is overseen by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service Program. It is federally funded, but administered by individual states. Program participants receive meals and snacks through daycare centers, after school programs, emergency shelters and homes, among other locations. CACFP meals will be provided at sites under contract with the state education department, or at homes or daycare centers operating under agreements with sponsoring organizations under contract with the agency.

Program [eligibility](#) and [additional program information](#) can be accessed online. For more information on these programs, contact the LDOE Division of Nutrition Support at 1-877-453-2721 or 225-342-3720.

CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

Continuing Education

Licensed early learning centers must provide opportunities for continuing education of staff members who are left alone with children, or who have supervisory or disciplinary authority over children. Early learning centers must ensure the training sessions are conducted and certificates of completion or transcripts are maintained at the center and available for inspection by the Division of Licensing. [Bulletin 137](#) §1721.

Approved Trainers

The Department has been notified that continuing education hours are being given by non-approved trainers. The Department will only accept trainings by current Pathways approved trainers to meet the clock hour requirement. The list of Pathways [approved trainers](#) changes each month, so it is imperative that providers stay abreast of the Pathways [approved trainers](#).

Please call 318-677-3171 with any questions regarding the approval status of Pathways trainers.

Child Care Health Consultants are approved through the Department of Health to conduct Medication Management Training and do not appear on these lists, though they may count as continuing education in accordance with [Bulletin 137](#) §1721(G). A list of Child Care Health Consultants is [available here](#).

Critical/Reportable Incident Form Guidance

The Department has received questions from Providers as to what must be reported as a critical incident per BESE Bulletin 137 Critical Incidents and Required Notifications. Guidance on what to report is available in the [Critical/Reportable Incident Form Guidance](#) document.

If one is ever in doubt, please report the incident to the Division of Licensing. Please contact a licensing consultant with any questions at 225-342-9905 or ldelicensing@la.gov.

Vehicle Checks

Hot weather is here and the temperatures inside vehicles can rise quickly! It is imperative that children are not left in hot vehicles for any length of time!

Licensed early learning centers that provide transportation shall:

- **ensure that no child is left in the vehicle,**
- **conduct visual passenger checks** of all vehicles used to transport children, and
- have a **staff person physically walk through the vehicle and inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats, and in all enclosed spaces and recesses** in the vehicles interior. [Bulletin 137](#) §2107.

- check the parent's car, if the parent transported a child during a field trip.

The parent, the Department and Child Welfare, and the Division of Licensing should be notified immediately of the incident. Review the [regulations](#).

Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBC) For Observers and Frequent or Regular Service Providers and Contractors
Providers must use the CCCBC System to track a person's CCCBC-based eligibility determination. Frequent or regularly scheduled providers should be added to the licensed center's roster by using the "New Application" tab. Providers should use the "Check for Eligibility" tab for infrequent visitors, such as CLASS® Observers. The CCCBC System stores the date the person's eligibility was checked on the "Check Eligibility Audit Log". The visitors must continue to sign the visitor log. There is no requirement to print the determination letter or Check Eligibility screen because the center's CCCBC account will be used by the provider to illustrate compliance to the Licensing Specialist.

DIRECTOR SUPPORT

New Directors: Webinar

Learn about Louisiana's Early Childhood System.

Webinar date: November 20

Webinar time: 1:00 p.m.

Webinar location: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/443478443>

Shared Services: Webinar led by Louise Stoney

Do you want to learn more about how to make your early learning center financially viable? Early childhood finance leader Louise Stoney will lead a webinar for Louisiana directors.

Webinar date: November 8

Webinar time: 12:00 pm

Webinar location: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/625747595>



Louise Stoney is an independent consultant specializing in early care and education (ECE) finance and policy, and Co-Founder of both Opportunities Exchange and the Alliance for Early Childhood Finance. Louise has worked with state and local governments, foundations, ECE providers, industry intermediaries, research and advocacy groups in over 40 states. Public and private organizations have sought Louise's expertise to help craft new finance and policy options, as well as write issue briefs on challenging topics. She has helped model ECE program costs, revise subsidy policy and rate-setting strategies, re-visit QRIS standards and procedures, craft new approaches to contracting and voucher management, and more. Louise holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from the State University of New York at Stony Brook

LEADERS'
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Leaders' Lagnaiappe

Learn how [Kathleen Flanagan](#) works with the tribal community at Chitimacha/Yaamahana to strengthen the leadership of her staff.





Kathleen's leadership journey at the Yaamanaha/Chitimacha Child Development Center has helped her realize that community input can help strengthen her program, and that feedback is a gift.

LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

Early Childhood November Collaboration Meetings

This is a reminder that **all early childhood lead agencies are required to be represented at the Early Childhood November Collaboration meetings.** These meetings are specifically for lead agencies and are being held separate and apart from the Super App Launch events that the Department is conducting for local education agencies. Registration is not required for these meetings and lead agency representative may attend at any of the locations noted below.

- November 5- Baton Rouge
- November 6- Harvey
- November 13-Baton Rouge
- November 14-Alexandria

Get Ready Cohort

The Department of Education is excited to share the 27 community networks that are participating in the Get Ready Cohort! These networks will receive \$25,000 to drive early childhood improvement in their communities, learn more about the four pillars of Ready Start Networks, and create a blueprint to prepare for Super App. The Get Ready Cohort includes Allen, Ascension, Assumption, City of Bogalusa, Caddo, Caldwell, Cameron, Catahoula, Iberia, Jackson, Jefferson Davis, Lafourche, Livingston, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, Red River, Sabine, St. Charles, St. James, St. Landry, St. Martin, Tangipahoa, Terrebonne, Vermillion, Webster, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana.

Weekly Webinar/Conference Call for Lead Agencies

The Early Childhood Team holds a weekly webinar/conference call question and answer session for lead agencies. The half-hour sessions are held on most **Tuesdays at 3:00 p.m.** The Early Childhood Team will provide updates and reminders. Additional topics will be determined by caller questions. A meeting invitation containing the connecting information to the new Zoom webinar account has been sent to all lead agency contacts. Contact kaye.eichler@la.gov with questions.

Upcoming Schedule for Weekly Webinar/Conference Call for Lead Agencies

- October 29
- November 5

Bi-weekly Community of Practice Webinar/Conference Call for Ready Start Network Lead Agencies

Every other Tuesday at 2:30 p.m., Ready Start Network Lead Agencies convene to discuss their progress and solve problems. Lead agency contacts who are interested in "listening in" to learn more about what Ready Start Networks are doing, please email kaye.eichler@la.gov to receive the information to connect to the webinar.

OTHER

ECCE Advisory Council- Upcoming Meeting, November 13

The next meeting for the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council will take place on November 13 at 1:00 p.m. in the Claiborne Building, located at 1201 N. Third Street in Baton Rouge. 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.

Early Childhood Care and Education Commission- Upcoming Meeting, November 18

The next meeting for the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission will take place on November 18 at 12:00 p.m. in the Claiborne Building, located at 1201 N. Third Street in Baton Rouge. An [overview of the ECCE Commission and 2019 meeting dates](#) is available online. For additional information, please email leslie.doyle@la.gov

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In Case You Missed It

[This Observation Tool is Helping Teachers Improve Their Interactions with Children](#) (EdSurge)

[Literacy, other public schools programs get \\$115 million in federal grants](#) (The Advocate)

[Babies, preschool kids need millions of words: Parents word pedometer](#) (USA Today)

[NW La. tackles concerns with early childhood education](#) (KTBS)

[The Secret to a Successful Head Start program](#) (The Hechinger Report)

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