



October 25, 2018



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

As we are preparing for the new Early Childhood Performance Profile ratings, which will be released on November 8, we wanted to provide a few reminders for the 2018 School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC).

The [2018 School Readiness Tax Credits](#) will reflect several key changes, all designed to support child care teachers and directors in Louisiana's unified early childhood system. These [revisions](#) were made in March 2017 to strengthen and preserve these invaluable tax credits while aligning them with the unified rating system and new expectations for child care teachers. These revisions include:

- For the Director SRTC, increased credits may be available based on the [2018 star rating](#) their center received. Directors can still qualify based on education and professional service, no director will lose their current credit level as a result of these changes.
- For the Teacher SRTC, tax credits now support and reward teachers for earning their [EC Ancillary Certificate](#) and for demonstrating that they have worked in child care for multiple years. Teachers must have been working at the same Type III child care center for at least six months and for an average of 30 hours/week.
- Star ratings are awarded to sites based on the unified rating system through [Early Childhood Performance Profiles](#). These ratings are used for the Provider, Family, and Business tax credits. For 2018 taxes, stars will be based on the rating a center had as of July 1, 2018. Providers must have been open on July 1, 2018. A list of the 2018 star ratings can be found [here](#).

With this policy transition, there are a few key things for child care providers, teachers, and staff to know:

- Directors and teachers must be enrolled in Pathways with their updated credential information in order to benefit from the 2018 changes taking effect.
- Teachers that are applying the EC Ancillary Certificate will be able to enroll in Louisiana Pathways by submitting a complete EC Ancillary Certificate Application.
- In order to qualify for increased tax credits, teachers should return a complete and original copy of their tax form to [Louisiana Pathways](#) each year.

For questions on School Readiness Tax Credits, please contact [Demita Walker](#).

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

John

John White
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UPCOMING EVENTS AND DEADLINES

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- [2017-2018 Performance Profile Release Statewide Webinar](#) - October 30 at 12:00 p.m.
- [School Readiness Tax Credit \(SRTC\) Webinar](#) - November 14 at 1:00 p.m.
- Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council Meeting - November 28 at 1:00 p.m.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

PERFORMANCE PROFILE RELEASE STATEWIDE WEBINAR

The Department is hosting a statewide webinar that all stakeholders, early childhood program partners, and families are invited to join. This webinar will announce the 2017-2018 Performance Profiles and provide an overview of the results.

The Administration for Children & Families (ACF) Office of Child Care and the U.S. Department of Education has released a new application for states for the Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Birth to Five (B-5). The PDG grant will be awarded as four one-year opportunities, with the first year structured as a planning grant and with 3 subsequent renewal grants that include seats.

The Department hosted a statewide webinar on October 22 to inform stakeholders about Louisiana's application for this grant. You can view slides from the deck [here](#). If you have any questions, contact [Nasha Patel](#).

RELEASE OF SCHOOL AND CENTER PERFORMANCE COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKITS

The Department released a toolkit to help Lead Agencies, schools, and early childhood centers communicate the release of their 2018 performance scores in the Louisiana School Finder. The toolkit includes resources such as:

- School and Center Finder flyer, poster, website button, and social media graphics;
- Sample early childhood center and Community Network performance rating news release;
- Early Childhood Center Parent Night Presentation; and
- Animated early childhood performance profile video.

All resources are available [here](#). Email ideocommunications@la.gov with questions.

FALL CHECKPOINT FOR GOLD® - OCTOBER 31

Teachers should finalize checkpoints for all children in *TeachingStrategies GOLD®* by October 31, 2018.

TeachingStrategies GOLD® Guidance:

- [2018-2019 GOLD® Guidance](#)
- [2018-2019: Next Steps for Early Childhood GOLD® Users](#)
- [GOLD® Administrator Guide](#)
- [GOLD® Teacher Guide](#)

If you have any questions about using GOLD® in 2018-2019, contact [Taylor Dunn](#).

2018-2019 INFANT CLASS® PILOT

Beginning in 2019-2020, all infant classrooms will be observed using the Infant CLASS® tool, and beginning 2020-2021, Infant CLASS® observations will be included in the calculation of site and network performance ratings.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the Department will pilot the Infant CLASS® tool in a select number of classrooms in order to understand best practices for use of this tool in Louisiana classrooms and to help sites prepare for full implementation of Infant CLASS®. Due to limited resources, pilot participation will be offered only to a limited number of sites and classrooms. For more information, please review the [2018-2019 Infant CLASS® Pilot](#) informational document. Email [Taylor Dunn](#) with any questions.

To participate in the Infant CLASS® Pilot, please complete [this survey](#) by November 16, 2018.

SCHOOL READINESS TAX CREDIT (SRTC) WEBINAR

To support Type III early learning centers and staff to understand School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC), the Department is hosting a webinar. During this time, we will review the credits, their benefits, the changes for the 2018 tax year, and the impact of profile release on 2019 SRTC. Lead agencies, providers, staff, R&Rs, and community members are welcome to join.

Webinar Date and Time: November 14 at 1:00 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/151602227>

Webinar Phone Number: 1-646-876-9923

Meeting ID#: 151-602-227

If you have any questions, contact [Demita Walker](#).

LOUISIANA CLASS® VIDEO LIBRARIES

To support Louisiana's publicly funded early childhood programs, the Louisiana Department of Education, along with the Cecil J. Picard Center at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, has developed two video libraries featuring Louisiana classrooms that we now want to make available to you and your communities. These videos libraries are designed to promote deeper understanding of the Pre-K and Toddler CLASS® tools.

Video Library	Description	Supporting Materials
Louisiana Believes CLASS® Video Library	Available at the Louisiana Believes website, these short-format video clips for teachers are quality examples of CLASS® domains and dimensions from the Pre-K and Toddler versions of the CLASS® tool.	A focus text of each clip relating to the categorized CLASS® dimension is hyperlinked below the video.
Early Childhood CLASS® Portal Calibration Videos * A CLASS® Portal login is required to access these videos.	Full video lessons used as calibration activities to promote a deeper understanding of the Pre-K and Toddler CLASS® tools	Each video has a hyperlinked code-book that provides the correct scoring for each dimension, with notes and descriptions of the interactions at the indicator level.

If you have any questions about the CLASS® Video Libraries, contact [Taylor Dunn](#).

LETTER TO DIRECTORS- EARLY CHILDHOOD ANCILLARY CERTIFICATE

Last week the Department emailed a [letter](#) to all Type III early learning center directors. This letter provided information about the [Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate](#). The letter provided a reminder that beginning July 1, 2019, all lead teachers working in Type III child care centers will be expected to have the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate as a minimum credential within 24 months of their start date as a lead teacher. Information can be found in the [October 2018 Letter to Directors](#) and the [Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate FAQs](#).

If you have any questions, contact [Erin Carroll](#).

FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

OCTOBER 1 CHILD COUNT

[Bulletin 140](#) requires that all publicly-funded children are counted as they were enrolled on October 1, and that the count must be submitted to the Department by October 31. For the purposes of these counts, children are considered part of the age cohort they belong to on September 30, for the entire 2018-2019 school year. For example, if a child is three on September 30, but turns four on November 22, that child is counted as part of the three-year-old age cohort for the 2018-2019 school year. Please work with your Lead Agency to submit accurate October 1 child counts.

To provide support and training to complete the child count, the Department conducted a webinar on September 26. The recorded webinar can be found [here](#). For questions please contact [Lindsey Bradford](#).

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FORUMS FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

The Department is hosting a series of forums across the state. The forums began at the end of September and cover several topics across divisions within the Department. Such topics include *Child Care Assistance Program Waiting List*, *Provider Payment Calculations*, *TOTS*, *Provider Help Desk and Provider Certification Merge*, *Registration Fees/Graduated Phase Out*, and *the Complete Application Process*. For more information, contact the Provider Help Desk at (225) 342-1879 or (225) 342-7414.

CCAP REGISTRATION FEE PAYMENT

The Louisiana Department of Education Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), in accordance with Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) Final Rule and State Bulletin 139, will begin to pay registration fees for CCAP children. Registration fee payments will be made to providers on behalf of all eligible households once per annual certification period. Allowable registration fees are based on the amount recorded in the Provider Certification Agreement or the current market rate, whichever is lower. If no fee is listed by the provider in the agreement, no fee will be paid. Changes to the provider agreement must be completed through the Provider Help Desk and Provider Certification. Please visit this [link](#) on the Department website for rate agreement information

The federal regulation at §98.45(l)(3)(ii) limits the required payment to mandatory registration fees, which includes initial and annual registration fees, rather than including other types of fees such as school field trips, fundraisers, diaper fees, etc.

Registration fees have begun being paid. When a family changes providers, during the certification period, another fee will not be issued to the new provider until the next annual registration fee date. When changes occur during a certification period, including the addition of new children, another registration fee will not be paid until the annual date of the certification period. For additional questions, or to complete any changes, providers should contact their regional specialist or the Provider Help Desk at (225) 342-1879 or (225) 342-7414.

CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

ANNUAL FLU NOTICE

Child care providers are encouraged to begin implementing preventative measures to prepare for flu season. Licensed child care centers are required to make information concerning the influenza immunization available to each child's parent or legal guardian to assist parents in taking precautionary actions.

The Center for Disease control has provided several online resources that can be printed and distributed to families:

- [Guide for Parents](#)
- [Preventing the Flu: Good Health Habits Can Help Stop Germs](#)
- [2018-2019 Flu Information](#)

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS CCCBC REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Independent Contractors are defined in Bulletin 137 as individuals who are not employees of the center, but who render professional, therapeutic, or enrichment services within an early learning center.

A CCCBC-based determination of eligibility is required for independent contractors who perform services at an early learning center when children are present. If an Independent Contractor is not added on an early learning center's roster, the Provider shall complete a "Check Eligibility" every time the Independent contractor comes to the center. The Provider shall print the screen of the results from the "Check Eligibility" and place a copy in the file. These results shall correspond with the attendance log for the Independent Contractor.

If the contractor is added to the early learning center's roster, the Provider shall pull up that roster for the Licensing staff to observe.

A daily attendance record for all extracurricular personnel, therapeutic professionals and other independent contractors, to include the first and last name, date of visit, arrival and departure times, and purpose of the visit.

The following information shall be maintained for all independent contractors: an information form that includes the person's name, address and phone number, a list of duties performed while present at the center and documentation of a CCCBC-based determination of eligibility for child care purposes from the department. [Bulletin 137](#), §1717.1.-3.

If you have questions, please contact your Licensing Consultant at 225-342-9905 or email LDELicensing@la.gov.

CRITICAL INCIDENTS AND REQUIRED NOTIFICATION

Critical incidents and required notification shall be completed in a timely manner. An Early Learning Center shall make immediate notification to the Division of Licensing, the parent of the child or children involved, Child Welfare, emergency personnel, law enforcement and other appropriate agencies as applicable for the following types of critical incidents involving children: [Bulletin 137](#) (This is not an exhaustive list.)

- Death
- Serious injury or illness that requires medical attention
- Use of corporal punishment
- Suspected abuse and/or neglect by staff members
- Any child given the wrong medication
- Any child given an overdose of the correct medication
- Fire on the child care premises
- Any serious and unusual situation that affects the safety and/or well-being of a child or children in the care of the provider.

The Division of Licensing shall be notified by written report within 24 hours of the incident or the next business day of the critical incident. Detailed written notification shall be made on the Division of Licensing's critical incident report form and shall contain all information requested. [Bulletin 137](#) §1103.D.

WEBINAR: THE PROCESS FOR REIMBURSEMENTS OF CHILD CARE CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

Reimbursement for CCCBCs applies only to CCCBC applications completed by September 30, 2018. Please read our [FAQ](#) for details on who qualifies for reimbursement. [Reimbursement forms](#) were released October 1, 2018. The slides from the reimbursement webinar are available [here](#), and you can access the webinar recording [here](#).

Questions regarding the CCCBC reimbursements can be directed to [Erica Aguillard](#).

CHOOSE SAFE PLACES FOR EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

The Louisiana Department of Health's Section of Environmental Epidemiology and Toxicology (SEET) has partnered with the federal Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to reduce children's risk of being exposed to dangerous chemicals during their care through a program called Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education (CSPECE). The goal is to protect children in early care and education programs from potential exposure to chemicals such as arsenic, lead, pesticides, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). By educating child care professionals about the risks of exposure and by providing guidance to child care professionals, we hope to prevent exposures. SEET has developed a [questionnaire](#) for child care providers to use as they consider possible locations for their facility. Please click on the [link](#) to access the survey.

LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

WEEKLY WEBINAR/CONFERENCE CALL FOR LEAD AGENCIES

The Early Childhood Team holds weekly webinar/conference call question and answer sessions for lead agencies. The sessions are held on most Tuesdays from **3:00 p.m. to 4:00 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](#) if you have questions.

Upcoming Schedule for Weekly Webinar/Conference Call for Lead Agencies

- October 30
- November 6

COORDINATED FUNDING REQUEST

Bulletin 140 requires that each Lead Agency submit a Coordinated Funding Request on behalf of their Community Network, requesting funding for LA 4, NSECD, and existing pre-K Expansion Grant seats. To provide support and training to complete the Coordinated Funding Request, the Department conducted a webinar on Wednesday, October 17. The recorded presentation can be found [here](#). You can also access the 2019-2020 Coordinated Funding Request Guide [here](#). Any questions should be directed to [Lindsey Bradford](#).

OTHER

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL - NOVEMBER 28

The next meeting of the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council has been changed to Wednesday, November 28 at 1:00 p.m. in the Claiborne Building, located at 1201 N. Third Street in Baton Rouge. For a council overview and a list of the 2018-2019 meeting dates, click [here](#). For additional information, please email [Leslie Doyle](#).

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