



# EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER

**November 12, 2021**

Dear Colleagues,

This Thursday is Veterans Day, a moment for us all to honor and remember our U.S. Veterans and reflect on how our lives have been impacted by their service. Every Veterans Day, I am reminded of the countless educators in Louisiana who are not only serving our children today but who have also previously served their country through the military.

To our educators who have previously served -- thank you for your service and sacrifice. The gift you have given this country is one that can never be repaid. To our educators who have a spouse, family member, or child who is a Veteran or is in active duty-- thank you for supporting them as they serve our country.

Please join me in taking a moment this week to recognize the Veterans and active duty service members in your life. It is thanks to their courage and willingness to serve that we are able to live in a free, secure, and prosperous nation.

Dr. Cade Brumley  
State Superintendent of Education

## **Upcoming Deadlines**

- November 17: LaCAP Grant survey deadline
- November 30: ECCE Advisory Council Membership [Application](#) due
- January 12: Teacher or Leader of the Year application deadline

## **Upcoming Events**

- November 12: New Director Webinar
- November 17: ECCE Advisory Council Meeting

## **More Important Dates**

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

## **In This Issue**

- [Updates for COVID-19](#)
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## UPDATES FOR COVID-19

### **NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar**

On November 4, the Department hosted a webinar for early childhood providers that included important updates related to COVID-19 along with a presentation about the state's 2021 Performance Profile Release. [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 December provider webinar using the information below:

**Webinar Date and Time:** December 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

### **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.

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## UPDATES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

### **REMINDER: 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 November or December 2021, should submit renewal or initial application through [Teach LA Live!](#) immediately. Allow 4-5 weeks processing time for each submission.

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 Pre-K through 12 counterparts. On October 12, the Department

released application guidance for the 2021-2022 Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year. Guidance documents and supporting materials can be found in the [Louisiana Believes Awards Library](#). The application portal is expected to be live on the Awards Library page in early December.

Any questions about the application process can be directed to [devon.camarota@la.gov](mailto: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.

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](mailto: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 November:

- [Everyday Decisions: Empowering Children's Decision Making](#), November 17 at 3 p.m.
- [A Strong Commitment to SEL with AI's Pals](#), November 18 at 2 p.m.
- [GOLD® Getting Started Support for Administrators](#), December 1 at 3 p.m.
- [How do I meet the academic needs of all my students? Early childhood differentiation made manageable!](#) On-demand (previously recorded)

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## **UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT**

#### **REMINDER: 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 and NSECD Payments**

For the period of August 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, school systems and sites will receive LA 4 or NSECD payments equal to the school system allocation as approved by BESE in spring 2021. All systems and 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 January 2022, a shift will be made so that school systems and sites will be paid based on actual enrollment (including students enrolled in virtual pre-K). Due to funding constraints, school systems and sites are not guaranteed payment for students enrolled in excess of their allocation. LA 4 September and October 2021 payments are pending.

NSECD September 2021 payments were released October 27-29, 2021, and October 2021 payments are pending.

For questions regarding LA 4 or NSECD please contact [kishia.grayson@la.gov](mailto:kishia.grayson@la.gov).

**NEW: LaCAP Grant Survey Non-Compliance**

CCAP certified child care providers that received LaCAP Relief Grant funding (rounds 1-5) are required to complete a survey from Postlethwaite and Netterville (P&N). Even if your CCAP certification has ended, providers must still comply with the survey requirement. Failure to submit the survey may result in recoupment of all LaCAP grant funding, impacts to future grant opportunities provided by the LDOE, and the suspension of CCAP payments. Providers should check their spam/junk folder for the survey link with subject “LDOE LaCAP Grant Survey Unique Link” or email [info@ldoe-pnsurvey.com](mailto:info@ldoe-pnsurvey.com) for assistance. Surveys must be submitted by close of business Friday, November 17, 2021.

**NEW: ARPA Stabilization Grant for Head Start Providers**

On October 4, the Department released the ARPA Stabilization Grant Round 1 application to CCAP Certified Head Start providers. Grant funds were based on CCAP enrollment as of October 1, 2021. ARPA grant fund disbursement will begin this week.

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

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

**NEW: BESE Waivers Updates**

The waiver of [Bulletin 137, 1707\(D\)](#) that provides for in addition to a person age 17, allows a person age 16 years to be included in the child-to-staff ratio if the person works under the direct supervision of an adult staff member person, has been **extended** to August 31, 2022, unless terminated sooner by the State Superintendent.

The waiver of Bulletin 139, 515(A) that provides for Family Child Care Providers and In-Home Providers to receive the same state maximum payments of Type III CCAP providers will expire on December 31, 2021.

**REMINDER: Annual Required Inspections by the Office of State Fire Marshal, Louisiana Department of Health, and City Fire of New Orleans.**

Bulletin 137, Section 713, Renewal and Other Inspection Procedures, requires providers to obtain current approvals by the Louisiana Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM), Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), and City Fire of New Orleans, if applicable, before the expiration of an existing license and the issuance of a renewed license.

Each provider must timely request and receive their annual inspections from the OSFM, LDH, and City Fire of New Orleans, if applicable.

**Licenses will not be renewed if sites have not received a current inspection and approval from those agencies and submitted documentation of their approvals to the Division of Licensing.**

To address the required licensed child care renewal inspections, please contact the following agencies:

- Louisiana OSFM by telephone at (225) 806-0803 or via [region contacts](#)
- LDH may be contacted by emailing Melissa Drescher ([Melissa.Drescher@la.gov](mailto:Melissa.Drescher@la.gov)) or by telephone at (225) 342-8954
- New Orleans Fire Prevention Division by telephone at (504) 658-4770

### **NEW: Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Online Mandated Reporter Training Requirement**

Any person in an early learning center who provides or assists in the teaching, training, or supervision of a child is considered a mandated reporter. All early learning center staff must report any allegations or suspicion of abuse or neglect even if they do not believe it to be true. A report should be made to the Louisiana Child Protection Statewide Hotline at (855) 452-5437.

To reinforce the importance of being a mandated reporter, each staff member must complete the [DCFS Online Mandated Reporter Training](#). Child care providers must work to ensure all staff complete this training. New staff must complete the training within seven calendar days of the first day present at the center and prior to assuming sole responsibility for any children. Each staff member must then complete the training annually by August 31 of each year.

For more questions, please contact your licensing consultant.

### **REMINDER: CPR/Pediatric First Aid (PFA) Vendors**

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) Division of Licensing is assisting licensed child care and CCAP certified family home and in-home providers with obtaining CPR and PFA certification for all early childhood staff. The LDOE approved CPR/PFA vendor will be authorized to be paid a rate of up to \$65 per licensed child care staff member or CCAP family home and in-home provider. The list of LDOE [approved CPR/PFA vendors](#) that can be reimbursed by the LDOE is listed here along with details of how one can apply to be an LDOE approved CPR/PFA vendor. Please note, under no circumstance can a vendor, who is a director or owner of a center, be paid for training the staff employed at their center.

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

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## **UPDATES FOR DIRECTORS**

### **REMINDER: Director Levels for School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)**

The Department sent email notifications of star ratings 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. Forms and supporting documentation can be mailed to Louisiana Pathways, 1800 Warrington Place, Shreveport, LA 71101 or emailed to [cowanj@nsula.edu](mailto:cowanj@nsula.edu). 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](mailto:demita.walker@la.gov).

### **REMINDER: 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 a **new** annual CCMS subscription with an 80% reimbursement for a maximum of \$1,000.

For more information about the CCMSi, contact [shallan.jones@la.gov](mailto: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 providers, to better understand each provider's current tax situations and needs. All providers (Type I, II, III, and family child care providers) (for-profit and nonprofit) are eligible to participate in this opportunity.

Consultation ends June 30, 2022 (or until contract hours have been expended). 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](mailto: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 all licensed early learning centers (Type I, II, and III) 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](mailto:shallan.jones@la.gov).

**NEW: New Director Webinar**

New directors are encouraged to attend this opportunity to better understand Louisiana's approach to quality teaching and learning. The New Director Webinar is designed to provide an overview of early childhood quality initiatives including the role of community networks, the CLASS® observation tool, Pathways scholarships, School Readiness Tax Credits, and additional resources to help new directors better understand Louisiana's system.

**Webinar Date and Time:** November 12 at 12:30 p.m.

**Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/96997152822>

**Webinar Phone Number:** 1-312-626-6799

**Meeting ID:** 969 9715 2822

Questions can be directed to [tella.henderson@la.gov](mailto:tella.henderson@la.gov).

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## UPDATES FOR LEAD AGENCIES

### Reminder: 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:

- November 16: General updates and Believe! App Q & A Session
- November 23: Canceled due to Thanksgiving
- November 30: General updates and Believe! App Q & A Session

Contact [amanda.colon@la.gov](mailto:amanda.colon@la.gov) with questions.

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## OTHER

### NEW: ECCE Advisory Council - Vacancy Announcement

The Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Louisiana Department of Education is seeking applications for membership on the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Advisory Council. The ECCE Advisory Council is composed of representatives and stakeholders within the field of early childhood care and education, as described in the Early Learning Center Licensing Act (Act 868 of the 2014 Legislative Season).

Currently, there are two vacancies in the following roles:

- Parent of a child currently enrolled in publicly-funded early learning center
- Representative of Type I early learning center

Applications will be reviewed for demonstrated relevant experience and commitment to the field. **The deadline for submitting an application is November 30, 2021.** Applications must be submitted [online](#). If you have further questions, please contact [leslie.doyle@la.gov](mailto:leslie.doyle@la.gov).

### NEW: ECCE Advisory Council - Upcoming Meeting, November 17

The Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council met on October 20. [Presentation slides](#) and a [recording](#) of this meeting can be found online. The next meeting for the Council will be Wednesday, November 17, at 1 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](mailto: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](mailto:leslie.doyle@la.gov) at least three business days in advance of the meeting describing the assistance that is needed.*

## **NEW: November is National Family Engagement Month!**

Governor John Bel Edwards issued a state proclamation acknowledging November as **Family Engagement Month in the State of Louisiana**. This is a time to recognize and celebrate the important role of families in the education and well-being of their children. It is an opportunity for families, schools, and the community to reflect upon how to promote and strengthen family engagement. In celebration of Family Engagement Month, the Louisiana Department Of Education has launched the BE ENGAGED Initiative, which consists of a number of activities and initiatives to ignite and support family engagement.

Three ways that LEAs can continue to promote Family Engagement during the month of November is:

- 1) Share the requested/provided videos on various platforms such as social media or school websites to encourage families to BE ENGAGED. (Remember to get necessary permissions.)
- 2) Promote “Tell Us Something Good” and invite families to share an experience on social media or with a local newspaper about their child’s teacher/school that highlights their welcoming attitude and enthusiasm in working with families to create a positive experience for students.
- 3) Post parent and family engagement pictures on social media/school websites and use the hashtag BE ENGAGED.

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## **IN THE NEWS**

[Access to Early Childhood Education Vital to Future Success, but it Costs](#) (*Lafayette Daily Advertiser*)

[Louisiana Department Of Education Launches the BE ENGAGED® Initiative](#)

[Jefferson Ready Start Network Launches Fundraiser for the Future of Jefferson Parish](#) (*Biz New Orleans*)

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## **CONTACT US**



- For questions regarding COVID-19, school closures, or other concerns, please contact [LDOECOV19@la.gov](mailto:LDOECOV19@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 questions regarding child care criminal background check processing, please contact [LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov](mailto:LDEccbcprocessing@la.gov).
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact [earlychildhood@la.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@la.gov).

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