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May 24, 2018



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SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

This time of year is one of celebration and reflection. As we take time to celebrate the growth that our children and teachers have made over the course of this academic year, we also begin planning for changes in the next academic year.

This summer will bring some key changes in leadership at the Louisiana Department of Education. Next month [Jenna Conway](#) will leave her position as Assistant Superintendent for Early Childhood. Jenna Conway has led the state's early childhood efforts for the last six years, since the passage of Act 3. In that time, Jenna has worked with every parish to bring together the fragmented pieces of the early education system in Louisiana and has set an enduring bar for quality in the process.

Jenna will be leaving the Department to return to Virginia, her home state, where she will work for Governor Ralph Northam on his early education ambitions. Assistant Superintendent Jessica Baghian, who leads assessment, accountability and improvement, will now oversee early education improvement efforts, including oversight of early childhood networks, local enrollment systems, and the CLASS quality rating system. Lisa Brochard will continue to oversee the office of early childhood operations, including licensure and eligibility. Jenna has been an indispensable source of vision and thoughtfulness in her time with our team, and I wish her and her family the best as they work for the children of Virginia.

Next week, we will mark the end of another successful school year by learning from each other at the 2018 Teacher Leader Summit. The Summit will be held in New Orleans at the Morial Convention Center from May 30-June 1. An Early Childhood track will feature over 70 interactive sessions focusing on improvement efforts at the classroom, program, and community level. Sessions will be offered by teachers, program directors, coaches, trainers, and other critical members of Louisiana's early childhood community. In all, more than 600 early childhood teachers and leaders are expected to attend.

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

John

John White

Louisiana Department of Education

Twitter @LouisianaSupe

UPCOMING EVENTS AND DEADLINES

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- CCDF State Plan Public Hearing - May 29 at 10:00 a.m.
- Louisiana Teacher Leader Summit - May 30 - June 1
- Lead Agency Office Hours - Lead Agencies only: June 5 and June 12
- Important Updates for Searching the State Central Registry for Child Care CBCs Webinar - June 6 at 12:00 p.m. and June 20 at 10:00 a.m.
- Next Steps for GOLD in 2018-2019 Webinar - June 12 at 12:00 p.m.
- Updates to Pre-K Eligibility Webinar - June 13 at 12:00 p.m.

UPCOMING DEADLINES:

- Early Childhood Family Satisfaction Survey - Complete by May 31
- Early Childhood Lead Teacher Survey - Complete by May 31
- GOLD Spring Checkpoint - complete by May 31

TEACHING AND LEARNING

2017-2018 EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY SATISFACTION SURVEY

To better understand the perspective of Louisiana families, the Department of Education, in [continued partnership](#) with United Way of Southeast Louisiana and the Louisiana Association of United Ways, released the third annual statewide [Early Childhood Family Survey](#). All families with children in early childhood programs served through public funds are encouraged to complete a brief online survey.

In addition, a sample of publicly-funded programs will receive paper surveys to distribute to select families. The survey is optional but we ask for your help in encouraging families to participate. To assist you, we have prepared a [one page letter](#) for families. Surveys must be completed by **May 31**. Contact [Nasha Patel](#) if you have questions.

2018 GOLD SPRING CHECKPOINT - MAY 31, 2018

The 2018 spring GOLD checkpoints should be finalized by Thursday, May 31st. Programs may be out for the year before that time, so teachers should begin the finalizing process about 2 weeks prior to the last day for the children to be enrolled.

AEPS TO TS GOLD TRANSITION DEADLINE AND SUPPORTS

As of July 1, 2018, Teaching Strategies Gold (TS GOLD) will replace AEPS as the assessment tool used to measure the progress and growth of 3-5 year old children with disabilities. In order to ensure timely and accurate communication regarding the transition from AEPS to TS GOLD, all Special Education Directors should complete [this form](#) by **Wednesday, May 30**, using information for the 2018-2019 school year.

For more information, consider attending one of the AEPS to TS GOLD transition sessions at the Teacher Leader Summit **May 30 - June 1** in New Orleans, Louisiana. If you missed the *Transitioning from AEPS to TS GOLD* webinar on Monday, May 7, you can access the recording at [here](#). If you would like to have a copy of the FAQs from the webinar, the PowerPoint or any of the step sheets referenced in the webinar, please email [Patsy Palmer](#).

For more information, please e-mail specialeducation@la.gov

WEBINAR - NEXT STEPS FOR GOLD IN 2018-2019 WEBINAR

This webinar will discuss lessons learned from the GOLD Abbreviated Pilot and the plan for GOLD implementation in 2018-2019. Users of GOLD in 2018-2019 will be under one license but will continue to have the flexibility to use an abbreviated item set as well as a more comprehensive version. This webinar will detail the different options and supports available for users in 2018-2019. If you have any questions, contact [Taylor Dunn](#).

Note: this webinar will be offered as a session at Teacher Leader.

Meeting Name: Next Steps for GOLD in 2018-2019

Date and Time: Wednesday, June 12, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

Join the meeting at: <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/earlychildhood/>

FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

CHANGES TO CHILD CARE QUALITY BONUSES FOR 2018

In February 2018, centers received the last bonus payment based on 2017 star ratings as well as the last payment for the Quarterly CCAP Pilot Bonus. The first Unified CCAP Quarterly Bonus based on 2018 ratings will be paid to centers in May 2018. More information about the 2018 SRTC can be found in the [School Readiness Tax Credits Guide](#).

For additional questions, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.

PROGRAM PARTNER ASSURANCES FOR 2018-2019 ACADEMIC APPROVAL

Each year early childhood community network program partners must sign and submit [Program Partner Assurances](#) indicating that they will comply with Bulletin 140, the Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Network. Bulletin 140 requires that each publicly-funded program in Louisiana participate in its community network, the early childhood care and education accountability system, and the coordinated enrollment process. In addition, renewal of Academic Approval for Type III early learning centers is contingent upon submission of these assurances.

On April 4, the Department sent instructions for signing and returning Program Partner Assurances to all child care centers with a Type III license, school districts, and NSECD schools. This information was sent to the email address for each site that is on file with the Division of Licensing and the Office of Early Childhood.

Program Partner Assurances were due to the Department by **Friday, May 4**. In order to remain in compliance with Bulletin 140, and receive the center's Academic Approval Certificate for 2018-2019, these assurances should be submitted to the Department as soon as possible.

Please contact ECAssurances@la.gov if you have any questions.

WEBINAR - NEW ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES FOR PRE-K PROGRAMS

In April 2018, the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, in an effort to align the "at-risk" definition for Early Childhood programs to K-12's "economically disadvantaged" definition, approved a change to Bulletin 140 that increases the income limit for school-based pre-K programs to Medicaid income limits. This change will go into effect in August. In order to provide guidance on how this change should be implemented, the Department will present an updated eligibility webinar. If you have any questions, contact [Lindsey Bradford](#).

Meeting Name:

Updates to Pre-K Eligibility Guidelines

Date and Time:

Wednesday, June 13, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.

Join the meeting at:

<https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/prekeligibility/>

CHILD SAFETY AND WELFARE

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Department would like to remind centers to be prepared for hurricanes and other regional disasters. The center shall have an evacuation pack, the location of which is known to all staff, that at a minimum shall contain all of the items list in §1921-C.1-8. [Bulletin 137](#). A center shall maintain important documents for its continued operation following an emergency, consider packing these documents in waterproof containers with duplicates at another location.

If an emergency occurs and your center is impacted, please inform the Division of Licensing immediately.

The Department will closely monitor conditions out of concern for your safety and for the safety of the children and families, you serve.

Please visit the Department's [Emergency Preparedness page](#).

For all questions, please call your Licensing Consultant at 225-342-9905 or e-mail LDELicensing@la.gov.

REMINDER ABOUT WARM WEATHER AND CHILDREN IN VEHICLES

Warm weather is here and temperatures inside vehicles rise quickly. Licensed early learning centers are required to conduct visual passenger checks of all vehicles used to transport children to ensure that no child is left in the vehicle. A staff person must physically walk through the vehicle and inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats, and in all enclosed spaces and recesses in the vehicles interior.

The visual inspection should be completed for the vehicle(s) that are provided by the center, contractual arrangement, or parent provided. §2107. Motor Vehicle Passenger Checks [Bulletin 137](#) . If you have any questions, please contact your Licensing Consultant at 225-342-9905 or email LDELicensing@la.gov .

WATER PLAY ACTIVITY VS. WATER ACTIVITY

Water play activity is defined as a water-related activity in which is there no standing water. Examples of water play include but are not limited to fountains, sprinklers, water slip and slides, and water tables.

Water activity is defined as a water-related activity in which children are in, on, near, accessible to, or immersed in, a body of water. Examples of water activities include but are not limited to a swimming pool, wading pool, and water park.

Parental authorizations shall be obtained for a child to participate in any water activity. A minimum of two staff shall be present when children are engaged in water activities. §1711 - L.1. [Bulletin 137](#) . Children under age three shall not engage in water activities. §1913. Water Activities [Bulletin 137](#).

IMPORTANT UPDATES FOR SEARCHING THE STATE CENTRAL REGISTRY FOR CHILD CARE CBCS WEBINAR

Two webinars will be given to provide updates on how the fee for the State Central Registry will be collected as a mandatory component of the Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC). These webinars will be given on **Wednesday, June 06 at 12:00 p.m** and **Wednesday, June 20 at 10:00 a.m** . These webinars will include the same information. Please keep in mind, the fee to search the State Central Registry will be applied **July 1, 2018**.

Please use the following information to join the webinars:

Meeting Name: Important Updates for Searching the State Central Registry for Child Care CBCs

Date and Time: Wednesday, June 6, 2018 at 12:00 p.m. / Wednesday, June 20, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

Join the meeting at: <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/earlychildhood/>

CHILD CARE CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK FINGERPRINT UPDATE

Louisiana State Police will no longer take fingerprints for Child Care CBC applicants after May 15, 2018. There is an alternative location in East Baton Rouge. You can view [Fingerprint Locations](#) , [FAQs](#) , and find many forms in the CBC download list, all of which can be found on the Department's [website](#) . For the most updated forms please be sure to delete your browser history and refresh your page. For more information about Child Care CBCs, please email [Valerie Black](#) .

LEAD AGENCY SUPPORT

OFFICE HOURS FOR LEAD AGENCIES

The Early Childhood Team is holding weekly webinar/conference call question and answer sessions for lead agencies. The sessions are held on **Tuesdays from 3:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.** and all lead agency staff are invited to join. The Early Childhood team will provide updates and reminders. Additional topics covered will be determined by caller questions. A meeting invitation containing the connecting information has been sent to all lead agency contacts. Contact [Kaye Eichler](#) if you have questions.

Upcoming Schedule for Office Hours

- June 5
- June 12

OTHER

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT FUND STATE PLAN

A public hearing for the draft Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan will be held on **Tuesday, May 29, 2018, at 10 a.m.** at the Claiborne Building, Louisiana Purchase Room, 1201 North 3rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. A copy of the draft State Plan can be found [here](#) . A streaming link to the public hearing is provided [here](#).

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP ACADEMY - PRESENTATION AT SAUL ZAENTZ EARLY EDUCATION INITIATIVE

As you may know, the Department has been developing a model of a Leadership Academy for child care center directors. The model has been selected as a finalist for an Innovation Challenge at the [Saul Zaentz Early Education Initiative](#) at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. On June 4, Emmy O'Dwyer will pitch the idea at a live event that will be livestreamed [here](#) .

She will be accompanied by team members Erin Carroll, Paula Polito (Bear-y Cherry Tree) and Monique Rouege (Carlie Care Kids). Read more about the opportunity, and the other finalists [here](#) . If you have questions about the Louisiana Early Childhood Leaders Fellowship, please send them to [Emmy O'Dwyer](#) .

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES SURVEY

You are invited to complete the ACE Initiative Survey. The purpose of the survey is to determine current awareness, perceived needs, and resources to address childhood adversity in Louisiana.

This survey is conducted on behalf of the Louisiana ACE Initiative, a statewide partnership that promotes ACE-related education, engagement, advocacy, and research. Members of the ACE Initiative and faculty from University of Louisiana at Lafayette's (UL Lafayette) Tulane's Infant Institute, LSUHSC Dept. of Psychiatry are collaborating on this project.

The results will inform the actions of the ACE Initiative and may serve as a basis for future ACE-related efforts. The survey will be open until May 25, 2018. It should take 10-15 minutes to complete.

To complete the survey please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ACESLA2018>

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