



EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER

October 12, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

October is National Book Month. One of the ways you can celebrate with the children you serve is by taking advantage of our Louisiana Literacy resources. The parent is a child's first teacher, and we have an entire library dedicated to [family literacy engagement](#). There are support resources, grab and go activities, and one-pagers with easy tips for building literacy skills at home. Along with being available for various age groups, many of these resources are also available in multiple languages in order to support all Louisiana families.

It's never too early to build literacy skills and help children learn to read. Take advantage of this month to continue our state's reading revival.

Thank you for serving Louisiana children and families,
Dr. Cade Brumley

Upcoming Deadlines

- October 31: Deadline for Community Network Lead Agencies to submit October 1 Child Count via the [Child Count Portal](#)
- October 31: Fall TS GOLD® Checkpoint Deadline
- November 1: [2023 Louisiana Child Care Parent Poll Deadline](#)

Upcoming Events

- October 12: Fall Collaboratives for Community Network Lead Agencies and CCR&Rs - Rapides Parish
- October 17: [CCAP Payment Resources Webinar](#)
- October 18: [Louisiana Child Care Parent Poll](#) opens
- October 18: Fall Collaboratives for Community Network Lead Agencies and CCR&Rs - East Baton Rouge Parish
- October 24: [CCAP Payment Resources Webinar](#)
- October 25: Fall Collaboratives for Community Network Lead Agencies and CCR&Rs - St. Tammany Parish
- October 27: [New Director Webinar](#)
- November 2: [Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar](#)

More Important Dates

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

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Provider Updates

NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar

The next monthly provider update webinar will be held November 2, 2023. Providers can access the upcoming November provider update webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date/Time:	Thursday, November 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

The October 5 presentation slides are available in the [Quality Providers Library](#) on the Louisiana Believes website.

NEW: 2023 Parent Poll Opening October 18

The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Education, is administering its annual survey to help further understand the child care needs of Louisiana families with children under the age of 5.

The [2023 Louisiana Child Care Parent Poll](#) opens Wednesday, October 18, and can be shared [in English](#), [Spanish](#), and [Vietnamese](#).

This survey is for parents, guardians, or caregivers raising children under the age of 5. Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary and will not affect families' eligibility for child care or any other services. Families do not need to complete this survey to continue participating in any public program, including the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). All answers will be kept confidential, and participants can answer the survey without giving their name. The survey will take less than 15 minutes to complete.

Please share the survey with families in one of the following ways:

- Download printable flyers (available in [English](#), [Spanish](#), and [Vietnamese](#)) with the survey link and post them on a parent information board.
- Share the survey on Facebook and Twitter. This [social media toolkit](#) has several templates and graphics for Facebook posts and Twitter posts to help promote the survey.
- Send a letter about the Parent Poll (to be released by the Department on October 16) home to families.
- E-mail the content of the Parent Poll letter to families.

NEW: Market Rate Survey

The Louisiana Department of Education will issue a survey to providers the week of October 16, 2023, to gather information for the 2023 Louisiana Child Care Market Rate Survey.

The purpose of the Child Care Market Rate Survey is to collect 2023 information about the cost of child care and various site characteristics such as classroom size and site hours, as well as to understand the provider costs

associated with offering high-quality child care. The information gathered will also be used as part of the Department's Child Care and Development Fund State Plan development.

This survey is being sent to Type I, Type II, and Type III centers as well as to CCAP-certified family child care, in-home, and school providers by Emergent Method, a Baton Rouge-based consulting firm that has been hired to help in these efforts. It is critical the Department receive feedback from all provider types and from as many providers as possible.

The information sites provide will help the Department compile a comprehensive profile of early care and education in Louisiana, including the cost of child care and the availability of services in specific regions. The information provided is also used to help set the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) subsidy rates.

Please contact robyn.stiles@emergentmethod.com with any questions.

REMINDER: TIKES Mental Health Consultation

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) is an intervention that teams a mental health professional with early childhood professionals to improve the behavioral health of young children in early learning settings. The TIKES ECMHC provides support at no cost to Type III and Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)-certified Family Child Care sites that have opted into or are interested in opting into Academic Approval. Onsite support and professional development is provided for teachers and other early childhood professionals by early childhood mental health specialists.

Visit the [TIKES](#) webpage for more information or leave a message at 504-264-1287 for additional support.

UPDATES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

NEW: Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year (TOY/LOY) Application Portal Open

Calling all excellent Early Childhood Educators! Eligible candidates for nomination are individuals who work in Type III child care centers, Head Start centers, Early Head Start centers, or CCAP-certified Family Child Care sites. Please share the application with colleagues, friends, family members, community members, or anyone else making a positive impact on the state's youngest learners. Anyone can submit an application, even if they were not a part of the nomination process.

Note: School-based pre-K applicants should apply for the pre-K through grade 12 Teacher and Leader of the Year awards. Please contact excellenteducators@la.gov for more information about the pre-K through grade 12 Teacher and Principal of the Year award.

Please complete [Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Applications](#) by Thursday, January 11, 2024, 11:59 p.m.

For more information reach out to earlychildhood@la.gov or excellenteducators@la.gov.

REMINDER: Fall 2023 CLASS® Observation Period

Community Network Lead Agencies are currently working with sites to schedule local fall 2023 CLASS® observations for the 2023-2024 academic year. Representatives from Community Network Lead Agencies should have reached out to schedule observations for each site.

Third-party observations will also be scheduled and conducted by the Picard Center. Third-party observations are designed to provide an additional level of review to ensure reliability. At least two weeks before the scheduled observations, the Picard Center will send an email providing the site with a four-week timeframe in which the observations will occur.

Questions about CLASS® observations can be directed to the local [Community Network Lead Agency](#).

NEW: Teachstone® – The CLASS® Learning Community

The CLASS® Learning Community is a group of educators dedicated to helping children by measuring and improving teacher-child interactions. Join for free and browse the available resources. Resource documents, recorded webinars, discussion boards, and blog posts are available. New on-demand webinars include:

- [From Curiosity to Clarity: Encouraging Children to Explain Their Thinking](#) (podcast)

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Payment Resources Webinar

The Department will be hosting a series of webinars throughout October to provide information about CCAP payment processes and resources. These sessions will provide an overview of the methods used to pay CCAP-eligible child care providers.

Topics discussed will include:

- How copayments are calculated
- Payments based on enrollment
- Semi-Automated Invoices
- Reporting payment discrepancies
- How Registration fees are paid

All webinars will be held from 10:00 -11:00 a.m. and can be accessed through the links in the dates below:

- [October 17, 2023](#)
- [October 24, 2023](#)

For more information reach out to CCAPPHD@la.gov or contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Semi-Automated Invoices (SAIs)

In order to receive payment for the time period listed on an SAI, providers must submit attendance records along with the completed and signed SAI.

Attendance logs, in accordance with *Bulletin 137*, must include the following:

- The date(s) child care services were provided
- Arrival and departure times
- Child's first and last name
- First and last name of the person who signed the child into care
- First and last name of the person to whom the child is released
- Name and location of services

SAIs and attendance logs should be faxed to 225-376-6056 or emailed to CCAPpayments@la.gov. Contact the LDOE

Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 with any questions.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Verification Request/Client Contact Letter

When clients receive a Verification Request/Client Contact Letter (CCAP 14) in the mail, they must adhere to the dates on the form. All documentation should be returned to the Department by the due date on the form. Please encourage families to reply with the requested information immediately upon receipt.

Please help the Department ensure that cases are processed quickly by returning the information immediately. Adhering to the due dates will assist the CCAP team in meeting case processing deadlines.

All verification documents can be faxed to 225-376-6060 or emailed to LDECCAP@la.gov. Contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 with any questions.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Waitlist Removal Notification

The Department began mailing Waitlist Verification Forms to families determined eligible for the Child Care Assistance Program with an application date of October 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023.

To ensure eligible families are still in need of child care, the Department must evaluate families' continued need for services. The Waitlist Verification Form includes five "YES" or "NO" questions. If the family answers "NO" to any question, a CCAP 10 [Report of Changes Form](#) will also be required. It is important that families complete and return these forms by the deadline listed in the mailouts.

Forms can be faxed to 225-376-6060 or emailed to LDECCAP@la.gov. Contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 with any questions.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Household Redeterminations

The Department continues to process redetermination applications, change reports, email inquiries, and Provider Help Desk tickets as quickly as possible. Please note that cases are being processed in order of receipt. All cases will be processed and notices will be sent to the client and the provider upon determining eligibility and making submitted changes.

For applications or verifications completed more than 30 days ago, send an email to ldeccap@la.gov for confirmation of receipt. The Department is working to increase efficiencies in responding to provider queries more promptly.

Contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 with any questions.

REMINDER: ARPA Stabilization Grant Assessment (Rounds 1 & 2)

The LDOE is conducting a grant assessment related to the ARPA Stabilization Grants and has partnered with Postlethwaite and Netterville (P&N) to collect information regarding the use of these funds.

Participation in the assessment, just like the survey that preceded the assessment, **is required**. Failure to comply with Postlewaite and Netterville requests, during any part of the assessment process, will impact a site's ability to receive future grants and may impact a site's ability to receive CCAP payments.

Contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 with any questions. For technical assistance with completing requests for documents from P&N, contact P&N at info@LDOE-pnsurvey.com.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Eligibility Redetermination for Families

The LDOE CCAP team sends notifications of upcoming redeterminations to providers and families monthly.

As the Department works to streamline its processes, it is still critically important that families respond immediately with a new CCAP [redetermination application](#), check stubs, unearned income, and immunization records. The case will not be extended if documents are not received according to the dates on the CCAP 11RC - Redetermination Notice (to families) and CCAP 11RCP - Provider Redetermination Notice (to providers) or if the case is deemed ineligible.

The Department appreciates providers' assistance in ensuring families submit the redetermination application and all required documents to prevent closure of the family's CCAP case. Once the case is closed, if services are still needed, the family will need to reapply for CCAP and will be placed on the waitlist, if deemed eligible. As a reminder, if the application is not received by the 15th of the redetermination month, the client and the provider will receive a Notice of Terminated Services effective for the last day of the month.

Contact the LDOE Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 with any questions.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) KinderConnect Attendance Tracking System

The Louisiana Department of Education has transitioned to KinderConnect as the mandatory attendance tracking system for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Training and resources are available on the [EdLink Support](#) page.

For KinderConnect time and attendance system questions call 1-888-829-9258 or email supportLA@kindersystems.com. Support staff at KinderSystems are available Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

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

NEW: Minimum Child-to-Staff Ratios

Minimum child to staff ratios shall be met at all times. The following child-to-staff ratios shall apply to Type I, Type II, and Type III centers.

Minimum Child-to-Staff Ratios—Types I, II, and III Centers	
Ages of Children	Ratio
Infants under 1 year	5:1
1 year	7:1
2 years	10:1
3 years	13:1
4 years	15:1
5 years	19:1
6 years and up	23:1

Contact the site's [licensing consultant](#) with any questions.

NEW: Parental Access Policy

Parents must be allowed in the center for full access to their children. Each center must:

- establish in writing,
- prominently post, or show parent's signature of receipt, and

- implement the following policy that allows parents to visit the center anytime during regular hours of operation when children are present.

Contact the site's [licensing consultant](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Provisionally-Employed Staff Members

A staff member may be employed provisionally when all the following conditions have been met:

- Request for a CCCBC-based determination of eligibility for child care purposes
- Receipt by the Department of a satisfactory fingerprint-based Louisiana or federal criminal history information record, pending the Department's receipt of the other CCCBC results and determination of the person's eligibility for child care purposes
- Status determined Provisional in the [CCCBC System](#)

Please note: A staff member with an expired CCCBC does **not** have provisional status.

Contact the site's [licensing consultant](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Upcoming Revised Bulletin 137

Every three years Bulletin 137 requires a review. Earlier this year, that review took place, and several chapters of the Bulletin were revised. To ensure providers are informed of those changes, 5 training sessions have been held for owners and/or directors within the first two weeks of October. This revised Bulletin 137 is scheduled to take effect October 20 and will be e-mailed out to providers that day.

Contact the site's [licensing consultant](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: Renew Your Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) and Initiate Career Ladder Re-Leveling for Eligibility for School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)

Teachers and/or directors with Early Childhood Ancillary Certificates (ECACs) that expire in October, November, or December 2023 should submit renewal applications at least four to six weeks before expiration through [Teach LA Live!](#) Complete initial or renewal applications must be submitted no later than December 1, 2023, to guarantee processing by the processing deadline of December 31, 2023. Incomplete applications or those submitted after December 1 may not be processed by the certification team before the deadline and thus may not qualify for re-leveling and a potential increase in SRTCs for tax year 2023.

Once an application is submitted, please check email regularly for replies from the Department. Applicants can verify application submissions and check for any new messages using the "History" option on [TeachLA 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](#) by choosing "Verify a Certificate" or "Teaching Authorization" on the right side of the page.

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

REMINDER: Motor Vehicle Passenger Checks

As a reminder, the negative consequences of extreme heat are so significant that Louisiana has a [law](#) prohibiting leaving children unattended in a vehicle.

- A first offense for leaving a child under the age of six unattended or unsupervised in a car will net a fine of up

to \$500 or imprisonment up to six months or both.

- Each subsequent offense will result in felony imprisonment for no less than one year and a fine of no less than \$1,000.

As required in [Bulletin 137](#) §2017, Motor Vehicle Passenger Checks, it is imperative that vehicles are adequately inspected for children before staff exit the vehicle: **Children can die in a hot vehicle in a matter of minutes.**

Each vehicle shall have a vehicle passenger check and a face-to-name count conducted at each of the following times:

- prior to leaving center for destination
- upon arrival at each destination
- prior to departure from each destination and
- upon return to center

A staff person shall

- physically walk through the vehicle and inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats, and in all enclosed spaces and recesses of the interior of the vehicle
- record the time of the visual passenger check and sign the log, indicating that no child was left in the vehicle

Contact the site's [licensing consultant](#) with any questions.

REMINDER: EdLink Licensing System and Training Opportunities

All providers must use the EdLink system to submit new Licensing applications, submit renewal Licensing applications, submit Licensing request changes, and access the Department's new attendance system, KinderConnect.

Please note:

Renewal applications

- must be submitted prior to the first day of the month in which the current license expires in order to ensure that there is no interruption of service and authorizations are not dropped
 - For example, if the center's license expires October 31, 2023, the renewal application must be submitted by no later than September 30, 2023.
- can be started up to 90 days prior to the expiration date
- must include all required documentation

The Department is offering multiple [EdLink trainings](#) where providers will be given instructions for accessing and navigating the system. For the months of October and November, training is scheduled for Thursday mornings only. In-home and Family Child Care provider sessions are available upon request.

It is highly recommended that providers attend each session in the order in which they are listed. All sessions require [registration](#). Register early since space is limited.

- Accessing EdLink, 8:00 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.
- Completing Type I, II, and III New and Renewal Applications, 9:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.
- Completing Entity Change Applications, 10:20 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
- Staff Management, 11:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

For questions regarding EdLink, please submit a ticket in the [EdLink Support Ticket System](#) or visit the Department's [EdLink Training](#) page to access training videos and training manuals at any time. For detailed guidance and screenshots on how to register in EdLink and for access to other resources, please visit the Department's [EdLink Support](#) page.

REMINDER: Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) 5-Year Renewal and Fingerprint Vendor Transition

Child Care Criminal Background Check determinations began expiring in March 2023. Providers and applicants who were fingerprinted in 2018 are contacted via email to initiate the fingerprinting renewal process within 90 days of the CCCBC determination expiration date. The renewal process must be initiated by the provider, through the LDOE CCCBC system.

Providers should ensure rosters are up-to-date, with all current employees listed, or providers will not receive an email notification to initiate the renewal application for employees. CCCBC determinations will expire if not renewed in time. As a reminder, fingerprint resubmission is required for renewal applications. A hard identification card, such as a state-issued driver's license or state identification card, is required to submit fingerprints; LA Wallet or a digital driver's license is not acceptable.

In addition to providers monitoring all staff members' expiration dates to ensure timely renewal, please also remind therapists, contractors, and other recurring visitors to renew CCCBCs in a timely manner in order to provide continued services and notify visitors about the new fingerprinting vendor and new fingerprinting sites.

To prevent delays in the processing of Child Care Criminal Background applications, please follow the steps below, in the following order:

1. Create a new hire or renewal application in the [CCCBC System](#)
2. Verify the applicant's email address and date of birth are entered correctly
3. Upload
 - a. a current [initial consent and disclosure form](#) and
 - b. a valid driver's license in the CCCBC System
4. The applicant will then receive an email containing a link from IDEMIA to pre-enroll and schedule a fingerprinting appointment.

As a reminder, applications returned for corrections should be resubmitted once the correction is completed. Applications successfully returned from corrections status will update to "In Progress." "In Progress" status informs the CCCBC team the requested information has been added and the application is ready for review. The provider and applicant can view status updates in the CCCBC System. Note that CCCBCs cannot be processed until applications are submitted into the CCCBC System and fingerprints are submitted. CCCBC application fees are non-refundable.

Please also note that on Monday, May 8, 2023, fingerprinting for the CCCBC system transitioned from fingerprint vendor Gemalto to IDEMIA. Please view a list of [current fingerprinting locations](#); this list will be updated as new sites are added.

Fingerprinting fees are paid at the time of service. "No Charge Authorization Codes" (NCACs), or business checks or money orders [*per individual fingerprinting applicant and made payable to IDEMIA in the amount of \$55.75 (or \$60.75 at Sheriff's Office locations)*], are acceptable payment options. *Please note that NCACs are no longer entered when scheduling appointments online. Instead, applicants using NCACs are now required to bring their codes with them to their fingerprinting appointment.*

Please view the [detailed instructions](#) to create a No Charge Authorization Code account. NCAC account setup may take up to a week for processing. Completed Authorization forms should be faxed to 952-945-3326 or e-mailed to LAUEPACCOUNTS@US.IDEMIA.com. Cash is **not** an acceptable payment option.

To prevent issues when scheduling fingerprinting appointments, please follow the steps below:

1. Verify the applicant's email address is correct and matches the email used for the CCCBC application.
2. Instruct applicants to view their junk mail for emails from no-reply@uemail.identogo.com.
3. In the event the applicant does not have access to the email containing the link from IDEMIA to schedule an appointment, visit: <https://uenroll.identogo.com/workflows/27N4H8>. Please ensure [LDOE Early Learning Centers Service Code-27N4H8](#) is entered when scheduling a fingerprinting appointment.
4. Instruct the applicant to pre-enroll using their information exactly as it appears in the CCCBC application.

Contact the CCCBC team with any questions or for assistance by emailing LDECCCBCprocessing@la.gov. For IDEMIA finance and NCAC questions, contact 877-512-6962, or for UEID and scheduling assistance, contact 844-539-5543.

UPDATES FOR DIRECTORS

NEW: Monthly Office Hours for New Directors

Every month the LDOE team holds a webinar that focuses on a topic related to early childhood quality or operations 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 is "Understanding the Child Care Criminal Background Check System." Participants will learn recent changes in the CCCBC fingerprinting process, the application renewal process, and troubleshooting tips.

Webinar Date/Time:	Friday, October 27 at 12:00 p.m.
Webinar Link:	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92700204655
Webinar Phone Number:	1-470-381-2552
Meeting ID:	927 0020 4655
Passcode:	212827

Contact tella.henderson@la.gov with any questions.

UPDATES FOR COMMUNITY NETWORK LEAD AGENCIES

NEW: Early Childhood Community Network Fall Collaboratives

Early Childhood Community Network Fall Collaboratives are being held throughout October. As part of these collaborative events, Community Network Lead Agencies and Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies will collaborate and develop strategies to support early childhood care and education sites. These events will be held on the following dates and locations:

- October 12: Alexandria, Louisiana
- October 18: Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- October 25: Mandeville, Louisiana

NEW: Weekly Office Hours Webinar for Community Network Lead Agencies

The Early Childhood team hosts Office Hours most Tuesdays at 3 p.m. for Community Network Lead Agency contacts. The purpose of these webinars is to provide updates and answer questions for Community Network Lead Agencies. Presentations from previous Community Network Lead Agency Office Hours are located in the [Community Network Lead Agency Library](#).

The upcoming schedule for weekly webinars for Community Network Lead Agencies can be found below:

- October 17, 24, and 31: Canceled due to Collaboratives
- November 7: Early Childhood Updates

Note that topics are subject to change. Contact earlychildhood@la.gov with any questions.

Other

NEW: Green Ribbon School Application

In partnership with the [U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools](#) (ED-GRS) program, the LDOE is excited to announce that applications for recognition as a Green Ribbon School for the 2023-2024 school year will open on October 16. Eligibility requirements include that schools, systems, and early learning centers show progress in

- reducing environmental impacts and costs;
- improving health and wellness; and
- providing effective environmental and sustainability education.

More information will be available in the application package posted on October 16 on the [Environmental Education](#) web page.

Please contact environmentaleducation@la.gov with questions.

NEWS

[Department Seeks Applications For Child And Adult Care Food Program Institutions](#) (LouisianaBelieves.com)

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@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.

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