



# EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER

July 15, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you had a restful Fourth of July holiday. Just as it matters that we are “all in” for children during our work time, it's equally important that you take advantage of opportunities to rest and recharge. It's good for you, for your family and friends, and for your school or center family.

Last week, The Advocate ran a [guest column](#) I wrote, looking back at your heroic efforts over the past year and looking ahead at what's possible as we continue to work together. I hope you are able to take a few minutes to read it online. Everyone in the state should know what we (all of us) accomplished for children this past year and what plans we have for the road ahead. As I closed within the column, *"We should do these things because they must be done. We can do these things because they must be done. We will do these things because they must be done."*

I believe in us.

Dr. Cade Brumley  
State Superintendent of Education

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## Upcoming Deadlines

- August 6: Performance Profile Data Certification completion

## Upcoming Events

- July 16: [New Director Webinar](#)
- July 30: [Monthly Office Hours for New Directors](#)
- August 5: [Early Childhood Provider Updates Webinar](#)
- September 13-17: [Teachstone Webinar: Back to School with Meaningful Interactions](#)

## More Important Dates

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

## Monthly Mental Health

"I make it a point to practice self-care. I make an appointment with myself." - Manisha Singal, MD, internal medicine physician on the frontlines of the battle against COVID-19.

What self-care activities are you practicing every day? How are you modeling this for your staff?

## Updates for COVID-19

### NEW: Upcoming Early Childhood Provider Updates Webinar (August)

The Department will be hosting monthly webinars for early childhood providers. These webinars will include important updates related to COVID-19 and reminders for all provider types.

Providers can access the next provider webinar using the information below:

**Webinar Date and Time:** August 5 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

## Updates for Teaching and Learning

### NEW: Teachstone CLASS® Back to School with Meaningful Interactions

Teachstone is hosting a free, week-long virtual series focused on what matters the most — meaningful classroom interactions. The webinar series, *Back to School with Meaningful Interactions*, will be held September 13-17 from 1-1:45 p.m.

Designed with educators in mind, this series is an opportunity to prepare for the school year with brief, daily sessions that highlight strategies teachers can use immediately to build stronger, more equitable relationships with children and their families.

Applicable for teachers of infants, toddlers, or pre-K students, these sessions, also available in Spanish, will offer practical strategies to strengthen the key teacher-child interactions proven to impact child learning and development.

Registration will open soon! [Sign up today](#) to be notified as soon as registration opens!

### NEW: FREE Upcoming GOLD® Webinars

In Louisiana's publicly-funded early childhood classrooms, GOLD® by TeachingStrategies is used to measure each child's growth and development for multiple purposes. The Department supports

programs and educators in using assessments to strengthen the learning and development of young children.

Teaching Strategies offers a variety of [free webinars](#) to provide professional learning opportunities to support early childhood leaders and educators in navigating their system.

- [GOLD® Getting Started Support for Teachers](#)
- [GOLD® Getting Started Support for Administrators](#)

Any questions can be directed to [ECAssessment@la.gov](mailto:ECAssessment@la.gov).

## **Updates for Funding and Enrollment**

### **NEW: Survey for LaCAP Grant Recipients**

The Department is conducting a survey related to Louisiana Child Care Assistance Provider (LaCAP) Relief Grants. The LDOE has partnered with Postlethwaite and Netterville (P&N) to collect information regarding the use of LaCAP grant funds, to report to the Office of Child Care, legislators, BESE, and other stakeholders. The LDOE will also use this information to direct future technical assistance. Within the coming month, recipients of the LaCAP grants will receive a unique link to complete the online survey. Prior to the unique link being sent, recipients will receive a separate communication with information about the survey opening date.

*All recipients of the LaCAP grants will be required to participate in the survey. Failure to complete the survey may impact the provider's future relief grant funding opportunities, and the provider will be automatically chosen for an audit of the LaCAP grants.*

Questions regarding this communication can be directed to the Provider Help Desk at 225-252-9543 or via email to [providercertification@la.gov](mailto:providercertification@la.gov).

### **NEW: Louisiana Child Care Assistance Provider (LaCAP) Relief Grant Audit**

The Department has contracted with Postlethwaite and Netterville (P&N) to conduct random audits of LaCAP grants. As indicated in the assurance statements in the LaCAP grant applications, records of expenses must be available for the LDOE and/or authorized personnel. Contact will be made by the LDOE and the P&N for the providers selected to be audited.

For additional information, please contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 or via the [Provider Ticket System](#).

### **NEW: Louisiana Child Care Assistance Provider (LaCAP) Relief Grant Payment for CCAP Certified Providers - Round 6**

Grant payments are anticipated to be issued the week of July 19, 2021. The supplemental CCAP portion of the grant will be issued the week of July 26, 2021.

*Note: Grant payments for providers who have not signed and returned their 2021 Provider Agreement will be delayed.*

Any questions can be directed to [Jackie.Droddy2@la.gov](mailto:Jackie.Droddy2@la.gov) or [LDECCAP@la.gov](mailto:LDECCAP@la.gov).

**NEW: Accountability Participation Grant**

Grant payments for full participation in 2020-2021 accountability are anticipated to be issued the week of July 19, 2021.

Any questions can be directed to [pheriche.perkins@la.gov](mailto:pheriche.perkins@la.gov).

**NEW: Louisiana Child Care Assistance Provider (LaCAP) Relief Grant for Non-Certified Providers - Round 2**

Grant payments are anticipated to be issued beginning July 31, 2021. If providers change types and enroll CCAP eligible children, the supplemental portion of the grant will be released beginning August 7, 2021.

Any questions can be directed to [Jackie.Droddy2@la.gov](mailto:Jackie.Droddy2@la.gov) or [LDECCAP@la.gov](mailto:LDECCAP@la.gov).

**NEW: Pre-K Program Payment Update: LA 4/NSECD**

The final LA 4 SGF and NSECD payments have been issued. The final LA 4 TANF payment will be released shortly.

- QTR 1 LA 4 State General Fund payments (for March, April, and May)) were issued on June 17.
- The final LA 4 TANF payment (May) was issued July 15.
- May NSECD payments were issued June 18.

Any questions regarding LA 4 or NSECD can be directed to [pheriche.perkins@la.gov](mailto:pheriche.perkins@la.gov).

**Reminder: Child Care Assistance Payments and Attendance Tracking**

While CCAP has extended payments based on enrollment until December 31, providers are still required to use either the Tracking of Time Services (TOTS) Point of Service (POS) device or Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system to track attendance.

Failure to properly track child care attendance may jeopardize provider payments based on enrollment. As future grants become available, providers failing to use TOTS or IVR will not be considered for the grants.

Any questions can be directed to [Jackie.Droddy2@la.gov](mailto:Jackie.Droddy2@la.gov) or [LDECCAP@la.gov](mailto:LDECCAP@la.gov).

**Reminder: CCAP on the Road**

In the upcoming months, CCAP will conduct statewide forums designed to support providers in strengthening quality services to families. Updates will be provided on Provider Payments, Child Care Rates, Tracking of Time Services (TOTS), Provider Certification, CCAP and Licensing Overview, and general support for providers. The provider forums are slated for September through November.

For additional information, please contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543 or via the [Provider Ticket System](#).

**Updates for Licensed Centers, Family Child Care, and In-Home Providers****NEW: Supervision**

As child care providers know, quality care is essential to keeping children safe and ready to learn, and quality care begins with good supervision. Supervision should include strategies that promote care to

create a safe environment for children. LDOE continues to receive serious incident reports where children are being left alone and therefore unsupervised.

In an effort to reduce the number of children being left unsupervised, below are some tips:

- Know the number and names of children present
- Have clear and simple rules for children
- Identify children before and after transitioning
- Conduct name-to-face counts on a regular basis and as needed throughout the day
- Be able to see and hear children at all times, including children using the restroom

All incidents involving children being left alone and unsupervised must be reported immediately to the parent, within 24 hours to DCFS Child Welfare, and to the LDOE Division of Licensing on the [critical incident form](#). If there is ever any doubt, please report the incident to the LDOE Division of Licensing.

Questions can be directed to your licensing consultant at 225-342-9905 or [ldelicensing@la.gov](mailto:ldelicensing@la.gov).

#### **Reminder: Level One Notice**

With the beginning of hurricane season, the Department would like to remind providers to be prepared if a hurricane or other disaster occurs in their area or parish.

If an emergency covers a large geographical area such as a parish or region of the state, the Department will closely monitor conditions out of concern for the safety of staff, children, and families. Should a disaster occur and the center or location is in a parish or area that the LDOE determines as impacted by the disaster, the provider's license or certification may be suspended until post-disaster approvals are obtained and the required Reopening Request is submitted to the LDOE.

In the event of a potential disaster, take the following steps to prepare:

- Stay up-to-date with the status of any storm or other potential natural disaster and its impact on the provider's area.
- Ensure that LDOE has a current cell phone number and email address.
- Review and update evacuation and safety plans.
- Practice evacuation and reunification plans.
- Let families know how communications will be made if the provider is unable to reopen following a disaster.
- Review the Frequently Asked Questions below and be ready if a disaster declaration is made for the provider's parish:
  - [Child Care Assistance Program \(CCAP\) – Before, During and After a Disaster](#)
  - [Reinstatement of a Child Care Center License Following a Disaster](#)
- Pay close attention to the messages from local officials.
- Obtain the appropriate parish's [Emergency Preparedness Contact](#) phone number.
- Review the useful links below:
  - [Get A Game Plan](#)
  - [Emergency Louisiana](#)
- Be Safe.

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

## Updates for Directors

### Reminder: Early Childhood Substitute Directory

The Department is launching the Substitute Directory on a monthly basis by [region](#), based on the number of early learning centers within each community. This directory will connect early learning providers with individuals interested in working as a substitute in early learning centers within each [region](#).

CCR&R and Regions	Target Month for Directory Launch
Volunteers of America - Regions 5, 6 & 7	July
Northwestern State University - Regions 7 & 8	August
Children's Coalition for Northeast Louisiana - Region 9	September
Volunteers of America - Regions 2 & 3 On Track by 5 Alliance - Region 10 Pointe Coupee Early Childhood Coalition - Region 11	October

The launch of this pilot involves three key activities in each region:

- Recruiting substitutes who are interested in working in early learning centers
- Re-engaging former teachers who are interested in working in early learning centers as substitutes
- Training child care directors to utilize the Substitute Directory

The Substitute Directory will launch in the [regions](#) served by Volunteers of America Regions 5, 6, & 7 this month. LDOE staff will present at the Volunteers of America Director's Meeting in July.

If a local [CCR&R or region](#) is not listed, refer to the regional Child Care Resource and Referral Agency communications over the next few months for information about training opportunities on how to use the Substitute Directory.

For more information, contact Cheryl Russell at [ECSubstitutes@la.gov](mailto:ECSubstitutes@la.gov).

### Reminder: New Director Webinar

New directors are encouraged to attend this opportunity to better understand Louisiana's approach to quality teaching and learning. Held every other month, 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:** July 16 at 12:30 p.m.

**Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/95677667452>

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

**Meeting ID:** 956 7766 7452

Questions can be directed to [emmy.odwyer@la.gov](mailto:emmy.odwyer@la.gov).

#### **Reminder: Monthly Office Hours for New Directors**

Every month, the LDOE team will hold a webinar that focuses on a topic related to early childhood quality, 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 will be an overview of Louisiana Pathways and functions of the database system, professional development, and the availability of scholarships.

**Webinar Date and Time:** July 30 at 10 a.m.

**Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/99928176003>

**Webinar Phone Number:** 1-346-248-7799

**Meeting ID:** 999 2817 6003

Please contact [tella.henderson@la.gov](mailto:tella.henderson@la.gov) with any questions.

### **Updates for Lead Agencies**

#### **Reminder: Weekly Webinar for Lead Agencies**

The Early Childhood Team holds Office Hours every Tuesday for lead agency contacts. The purpose of the webinars is to provide updates and answer questions for lead agencies.

The following is the upcoming schedule for Weekly Webinar for Lead Agencies:

- July 20 - General Updates
- July 27 - General Updates
- August 3 - General Updates

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

### **Resources**

#### **TIKES Mental Health Consultation**

Tulane offers TIKES Mental Health Consultation via telephone or secure video platform to Louisiana caregivers in need during the COVID-19 crisis. Type I, II, & III child care centers, parents, respite care center caregivers, and others caring for young children can request a consultation by completing a [request form](#).

For more information visit the [TIKES](#) webpage.

### **Other**

**NEW: Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council - Meeting Recap, July 14**



The Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council met on July 14. [Presentation slides](#) and [meeting materials](#) can be found online.

For additional information regarding the [ECCE Advisory Council](#), please email [leslie.doyle@la.gov](mailto:leslie.doyle@la.gov).

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## **Early Childhood in the News**

[\\$1 Million Raised and \\$1 Million Gained for Caddo Parish Children](#) (Shreveport Times)

[An Oral History of Early Childhood Educators During the Pandemic](#) (EdSurge)

[Study of Louisiana's Unique QRIS Suggests Improvements in Early Ed Quality](#) (New America)

[To Get Every Kid in Pre-K, Baton Rouge District Turns to Private Providers for Help](#) (The Advocate)



### **Contact**

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 [leadagency-support@la.gov](mailto:leadagency-support@la.gov).

For all questions regarding child care criminal background check processing, please contact [LDEccbc-processing@la.gov](mailto:LDEccbc-processing@la.gov).

For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact [earlychildhood@la.gov](mailto:earlychildhood@la.gov).