



EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER

August 11, 2022

The start of the new academic year is always an exciting time, and each year we strive to continue to expand and improve the learning opportunities available for our youngest learners. We know that every child can learn and that every child deserves to enter kindergarten ready for success in school and beyond.

We are looking forward to returning to a more stable learning year with the relaxing of COVID restrictions and guidelines. We commend the essential work taking place across Louisiana's communities to unify early childhood systems, implement top-tier curricula, prepare teachers, and improve family engagement. We must continue to focus on moving forward to help our children thrive as learners.

Thank you for your very important role in this work—we look forward to another successful learning year!

Upcoming Events

- August 18: [Teachstone's Back to School with Meaningful Interactions Virtual Event](#)
- August 26: [Monthly Office Hours for New Directors](#)
- September 1: [Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar](#)

More Important Dates

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

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UPDATES FOR COVID-19

NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar

On August 4, the Department hosted a webinar for early childhood providers. [Presentation slides](#) are available in the [Quality Providers Library](#) on the Louisiana Believes website.

The next provider webinar will be September 1, 2022. Providers can access the upcoming September provider webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date/Time: Thursday, September 1 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

REMINDER: COVID Vaccine for Children Ages 6 Months and Up

All Louisiana children ages 6 months and older are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, following the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) accepting the recommendation of its Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorization of the three-dose Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and the two-dose Moderna vaccine. More information about this vaccine can be found on the [Louisiana Department of Health website](#).

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 social, emotional, and behavioral health of young children in early learning settings. The TIKES ECMHC provides support at no cost to Type III and registered Family Child Care sites. Onsite support and professional development is provided for teachers and other early childhood professionals by early childhood mental health specialists.

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

UPDATES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

NEW: Act 414: Mandatory Kindergarten Attendance

Beginning in the 2022-2023 academic year, children must attend a full-day, full-year kindergarten program. Qualifying kindergarten programs include:

- Programs that are full-day, for a full school year
- Programs provided by public schools, non-public schools, or an approved home-study program

A parent may opt to defer enrollment of a child in kindergarten for one year if either of the following applies:

- The child is four years of age on the first day of the school year
- The child is enrolled in a pre-Kindergarten program

Please contact EducationPolicy@la.gov with questions

REMINDER: Teaching Strategies® GOLD Upcoming Webinars

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

Upcoming Webinars:

- Back-to-School Support for New Teachers ([Register](#))
Choose from the following dates: August 16 or August 24

- Back-to-School Support for Returning Teachers ([Register](#))
Choose from the following dates: August 17, August 25, or August 30
- Back-to-School Support for Administrators ([Register](#))
Choose from the following dates: August 18, August 23, or August 31
- What Does It Really Mean to Be Trauma Informed? ([Register](#))
Offered on August 18
- Young Children with Disabilities Community of Practice: August 18 @ 2:00. ([Zoom Link](#))

Teaching Strategies also offers several [on-demand recorded webinars](#) for early childhood teachers and leaders.

NEW: Teaching Strategies® GOLD Update Webinar for Site Administrators

The Department hosted a GOLD Update Webinar on August 10 for early childhood network administrators. Information was shared to prepare administrators for the upcoming school year. If you were unable to attend the webinar, you can view a recording [here](#).

For additional information regarding the webinar, please email ECAssessment@la.gov.

NEW: Teachstone® – The CLASS® Learning Community

[The CLASS Learning Community](#) is a group of educators dedicated to helping every child reach their full potential 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 resources include:

- On-demand Webinar: [Staying In-Sync: Creating Positive Interactions Between Teachers](#)
In this webinar, you'll learn about how the CLASS framework can guide interactions between adults, just like it does with children. We'll tackle some common sticky situations that might arise with your co-educator and how to work through them. And, you'll learn a framework for creating a shared team vision that puts you on the path to success this upcoming school year.

REMINDER: Back to School with Meaningful Interactions

On August 18, Teachstone will be hosting [Back to School with Meaningful Interactions](#), a FREE virtual event for early childhood educators and coaches to get energized for back to school.

- [Session agenda](#)
- [Speaker List](#)

NEW: Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year (TOY/LOY) Winners Announced

The inaugural Early Childhood Teacher of the Year is Annie Richardson of Caneview K-8 Headstart in West Baton Rouge Parish, and the inaugural Early Childhood Leader of the Year is Rochelle Wilcox of Wilcox Academy in Orleans Parish! Please keep your eyes and ears open for opportunities to see these incredible educators speak about who they are, what they are doing, and what they will accomplish in the future.

Additionally, the 2022-2023 Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year nomination process has begun. The [nomination](#) form is live, and anyone may nominate as many excellent candidates as they wish. Eligible candidates work in Type III centers, CCAP-certified Family Child Care sites, or Head Start and Early Head

Start centers.

For questions about the Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year programs, email Devon.Camarota@la.gov.

REMINDER: Free LDOE Virtual Therapy through Ochsner for Educators (Birth – 12)

Ochsner Anywhere Care is a secure virtual visit tool offering appointments with licensed psychologists or therapists through your smartphone, tablet or personal computer—so you can get care where and when you need it! All Early Childhood workers are eligible. Schedule an appointment with the provider of your choice.

Convenient virtual therapy appointments are available Monday – Friday until 8 p.m., with additional appointment times on Saturdays.

Sign up at ldoe.ochsneranywherecare.com and enter Service Key: LDOE; Coupon Code: TEACH.

Please contact rachel.bunch@la.gov with questions.

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program 24-Month Certification Period

In an effort to provide continuity of care for children in the CCAP program and to address the large number of new CCAP applications, LDOE will extend CCAP eligibility to 24 months in total.

Pandemic application cases for essential workers will remain at the original 12 month period due to the specific source of funding for these cases. Cases for children already receiving 24 months of service because of their age will not be extended.

Therefore, beginning in July 2022, cases will be extended by 12 months, not to exceed 24 months in total. At the 24 month mark, families will be notified via email that it is time for their redetermination to maintain child care with CCAP, if eligible. Providers are asked to help in notifying CCAP families of their redetermination.

Should there be any questions, please contact the Provider Help Desk at ldeccap@la.gov or by phone at 225-250-7635 or 225-252-9543.

REMINDER: Child Care Criminal Background Check Fees and CCAP Copayments

In response to COVID-19, the Department has been covering Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) fees and family copayments. Beginning August 1, 2022, these fees have been reinstated as they were prior to the pandemic.

As a reminder, copayments listed on the “CCAP 12 - Provider Notice of Payment” correspondence are the parent’s portion of the State daily rate which is deducted prior to issuance of regular weekly provider payments.

Example: State daily rate for child age birth to 11 months is \$68.00. Parent's co-payment of State rate is \$2.00. State will pay \$66.00/day resulting in a weekly payment to the provider of \$330.00.

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

REMINDER: Child Care Emergency Preparedness

We encourage you to revisit and practice your lockdown procedures and recommend that you ask your local [Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness](#) to review your emergency preparedness plan. In addition, [Child Care Aware](#) has good resources and training for a variety of crisis and disaster situations. The [Institute for Childhood Preparedness](#) has resources on active shooter preparedness as well.

REMINDER: 2022-2023 Family Child Care Program Partner Assurances for Academic Approval

Family Child Care sites can now opt into Academic Approval by submitting the [2022-2023 Program Partner Assurances](#) to the Department. If you are a Family Child Care provider and would like to learn more about the benefits and requirements of Academic Approval, please contact FamilyChildCare@la.gov.

REMINDER: Annual Level 1 Notice - Be Prepared: Know What To Do If a Hurricane or Other Disaster Occurs in Your Parish

The Department would like to remind you to be prepared if a hurricane or other disaster occurs in your area or parish. The time to prepare is now. We highly encourage you to contact your [Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness](#) now with any question or to review your plan and get to know your local contact. Do not wait until there is a storm in the Gulf of Mexico. If an emergency covers a large geographical area such as a parish or region of the state, the LDOE will closely monitor conditions out of concern for your safety and for the safety of the children and families you serve. Please know that should a disaster occur and your center or location is in a parish or area that the LDOE determines as impacted by the disaster, your license or certification may be suspended until you obtain post-disaster approvals and submit the required Reopening Request 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 your area.
- Ensure that LDOE has your current cell phone number and email address.
- Review and update evacuation and safety plans.
- Practice evacuation and reunification plans.
- Let families know how you will communicate if you are unable to reopen following a disaster.
- Review the Frequently Asked Questions below and be ready if a disaster declaration is made for your 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 your local officials.
- Obtain your parish's Emergency Preparedness Contact phone number.
- Review the useful links below:

- o <http://www.getagameplan.org/>
- o <http://www.emergency.louisiana.gov/>
- Be Safe.

REMINDER: Motor Vehicle Passenger Checks

It is imperative that vehicles are adequately inspected for children before staff exit the vehicle, especially as temperatures rise outside. Children can die in a hot vehicle in a matter of minutes. [Heat stroke](#) can happen when the outside temperature is as low as 57 degrees Fahrenheit.

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 vehicle interior.
- record the time of the visual passenger check and sign the log indicating that no child was left in the vehicle.

Please ensure staff have received proper training and repeated training if needed. If you have any questions, please contact a licensing consultant at (225) 342-9905 or email ldelicensing@la.gov.

REMINDER: Licensing Application Processing Timeframes

In an effort to ensure Licensing applications and requests are completed in time for services to be provided to children, please note the following time frames for processing of requests. Please also note that if all required documentation is not submitted, there will be additional delays in processing time.

- Application for Licensure or Change of Location — up to 90 days
- Application for Change of Ownership — up to 30 days
- Change Report for Capacity increase — up to 30 days
- Change Report for Age Range — up to 30 days (current process email Consultant)
- Change Report for adding Transportation — up to 30 days (current process email Consultant)
- Change Report for adding a Director/Designee — up to 30 days (current process email Consultant)

If you have any questions, please contact a licensing consultant at (225) 342-9905 or email ldelicensing@la.gov.

NEW: Epinephrine Training Update

Effective August 1, 2022, early learning centers:

- shall adopt a policy authorizing a trained early learning center employee to administer auto-injectable epinephrine to a child who is believed to be having an anaphylactic reaction whether or not such child has a prescription for epinephrine
- distribute the policy to all parents or other legal guardians
- have at least one employee trained
- may maintain a supply of an auto-injectable epinephrine at the center in a secure and easily accessible location but inaccessible to children

Note: The medication administration training completed by staff has the required epinephrine training.

If you have any questions, please contact a licensing consultant at (225) 342-9905 or email ldelicensing@la.gov

UPDATES FOR DIRECTORS

NEW: Monthly Office Hours for New Directors

Every month, the LDOE team hosts a webinar that focuses on topics 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 Engaging Parents, Families & Communities.

Webinar Date/Time: August 26 at 12 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/99075363953>

Webinar Phone Number: 1-346-248-7799

Passcode: 126700

Meeting ID: 99075363953

Please contact Tella.Henderson@la.gov with any questions.

NEW: FREE Tax Consultation for Type III and CCAP- Certified Family Child Care Providers

Are you a type III or CCAP-certified family child care provider who could use free and 100% confidential help with taxes, understanding tax and financial documents, statements or applications from a Certified early childhood trained Tax Accountant? Looking for help managing Quickbooks? If so, contact Andrea Citty at andrea@jwroyston.com with JWRA, inc. for your free consultation.

NEW: FREE One-On-One Business Consultation and Coaching for Type III Early Learning Center and CCAP- Certified Family Child Care Providers

Interested in receiving one-on-one confidential and free business consultation from national early childhood business experts on any child care business topics including but not limited to: finance to policy; marketing to staffing and many other business-related topics? The individual consultation provided by First Children's Finance's very own Kari Stattleman is completely confidential and individualized for the needs of your program. Contact Kari Stattleman at KariS@FirstChildrensFinance.org with questions or to schedule a meeting.

UPDATES FOR COMMUNITY NETWORK LEAD AGENCIES

NEW: Weekly Webinar for Community Network Lead Agencies

The Early Childhood team holds Office Hours every Tuesday at 3 p.m. for Community Network Lead Agency contacts. The purpose of the 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:

- August 9: General updates
- August 16: General updates
- August 23: General updates
- August 30: General updates

Note that topics are subject to change. Please email Amanda.Colon@la.gov with questions.

OTHER

NEW: Family Engagement Support

The Louisiana Department of Education knows that children are at the heart of meaningful family engagement. The release of the “Early Childhood Be Engaged Birth - 5 Framework Guidance” will support early care and education programs to build relationships with families using research-based engagement strategies.

The [Early Childhood Be Engaged Birth - 5 Framework](#) provides the early childhood field with a set of common goals and strategies to engage families. Additionally, the Framework will support early childhood professionals to strengthen current family engagement practices to develop partnerships with families for their children’s development and learning.

REMINDER: Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council

[The Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council](#) met on July 13. [Presentation slides](#) and additional meeting materials can be found on [BESE Board Docs website](#). For additional information regarding the ECCE Advisory Council, please email leslie.doyle@la.gov.

IN THE NEWS

[States Invest Pandemic Relief Funds Into Early Education Workforce](#) (K12 Dive)
[LA Spending \\$84 Million on Early Childhood Education](#) (BRPROUD)

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding COVID-19, school closures, or other concerns, please contact LDOECOV19@la.gov.
- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For questions regarding community network lead agencies, please contact leadagencysupport@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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