



EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER

December 9, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Please accept warm holiday wishes from our team at the Department and from me. It's my sincere hope that both our team and yours will be spending this holiday with family, relaxing, reflecting, and recharging.

We are – all of us – so greatly blessed to serve this sacred mission of educating the next generation. I feel gratitude for that blessing most intensely this time of year. And I am grateful to serve that mission alongside each of you.

Dr. Cade Brumley
State Superintendent of Education

Upcoming Deadlines

- December 17: LA 4 and NSECD Quality Grant Applications
- December 31: Louisiana Pathways Career ladders, new credentials and certifications
- January 5: Teacher Support Grant Application (round 2) opens
- January 12: Teacher or Leader of the Year application deadline
- January 12: Teacher Support Grant Application deadline

Upcoming Events

- December 14: Lead Agency Office Hours
- December 14: [Teacher of the Year Informational Webinar](#)
- December 15: [Teacher of the Year Informational 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 December 2, the Department hosted a webinar for early childhood providers that included important updates related to COVID-19 along with a presentation from LDH's Child Care Health Consultants.

[Presentation](#) slides and a [recording of this webinar](#) are available on the [COVID-19 Landing Page](#) on the Louisiana Believes website.

There will not be a provider webinar for January. The next provider webinar will be February 3, 2022.

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.

UPDATES FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

NEW: Last Chance to 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 before December 31, 2021, should submit renewal or initial application through [Teach LA Live!](#) immediately. Applications must be typed and submitted within the [Teach LA Live!](#) Portal. Handwritten copies and mailed copies are not accepted.

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. The application guidance and materials can be found in the [Louisiana Believes Awards Library](#).

The [Application Portal for Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year](#) opened on the Awards page on December 1. The application is due by midnight on January 12 (before 12:01 a.m. on January 13). There will be two optional webinars for any interested applicants and/or their support teams on December 14 and 15. These webinars will be a deep-dive into the portal itself and will provide questions and answers for participants on the application materials.

Webinar Topic: Teacher of the Year Informational Session (Optional)

Meeting Date/Time: Tuesday December 14, 2021 from 12-1 p.m.

Meeting URL: <https://doe.zoom.us/j/96724012202>

Meeting ID: 967 2401 2202

Meeting Passcode: none

Webinar Topic: Teacher of the Year Informational Session (Optional)

Meeting Date/Time: Wednesday December 15, 2021 from 3-4 p.m.

Meeting URL: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93262323628>

Meeting ID: 932 6232 3628

Meeting Passcode: none

Any questions about the application process can be directed to 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. 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 December:

- [GOLD Documentation, Planning, and Engagement Support](#), December 10 at 12:00 p.m.
- [Teaching Strategies Community Call](#), December 16 at 12:30 p.m.

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.

NEW: 2020-2021 Performance Profiles Released

Sites may view their updated performance profiles for 2020-2021 at [Louisiana School and Center Finder](#).

Questions about school and center finder can be sent to earlychildhood@la.gov.

NEW: Save the Date - Early Childhood State Conference for Child Care Providers and Teachers

Please save the date for the first Early Childhood State Conference. The tentative dates are July 22 - 24, 2022 in New Orleans. The audience for this conference will be child care owners, directors, teachers and families. More information coming soon.

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

REMINDER: Coordinated Enrollment Planning

Community networks will begin preparations for the 2022-2023 Coordinated Enrollment process. On December 14, the 2022-2023 Coordinated Enrollment Plan Word template will be released for lead agencies and program partners to use for planning.

- Lead agencies will submit the final plan and program partner signatures via Jotform by **February 28, 2022**.
- The Department will host an informational webinar with more details on **December 14** during
- Lead Agency Office Hours at 3:00 p.m.

Contact amanda.colon@la.gov with questions.

REMINDER: CCAP Family Redetermination Extensions

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: Teacher Support Grant Round 2

To support the recruitment and retention of a qualified child care workforce, the Louisiana Department of Education is funding a second grant opportunity for open, center-based Type III early learning centers to provide financial support to child care teachers and staff, in the form of stipends, bonuses, or wage supplements. This grant will provide funding for open Type III early learning centers to provide financial support to child care lead teachers, assistant teachers, and support staff that are not center directors (e.g., bus drivers, cooks, custodians, front desk staff, etc.), in the form of stipends, bonuses, or wage supplements. Payment will be \$3,200 per classroom. Classrooms must remain open for the spring semester and receive observations once funds are received.

The application will open January 5, 2022 and the deadline for submitting the Teacher Support Grant is January 12 at 11:59 p.m. This grant opportunity is non-competitive, meaning that every eligible center that applies will receive funds.

The Department anticipates that payments will be issued February 2022.

Please email pheriche.perkins@la.gov with questions.

NEW: LA 4 and NSECD Quality Grant

The Department is funding a grant opportunity to assist LA 4 and NSECD child care providers. This grant opportunity will assist LA 4 and NSECD child care providers in their efforts to offer a full-day of high-quality pre-K, as they continue to recover from the financial impacts of COVID-19. It will provide an additional \$1,000 per child served by LA 4 or NSECD in a licensed child care setting only.

To qualify for this grant, providers must be

- a Type III early learning center **and**
- a current BESE-approved LA 4 or NSECD program participant **and**
- open and serving children at the time of the application.

Eligible NSECD and LA 4 providers received the grant application December 6 and the deadline to apply is Friday, December 17.

For questions regarding the LA 4 and NSECD Quality Grant contact kishia.grayson@la.gov.

NEW: America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant - Round 2

The Department is planning the final round of ARPA Grants. The formula may be tweaked based on previous distribution of funds and in an effort to promote underserved populations. The base amount will not be any less than the first round. The Department plans on releasing the grant application in mid-March 2022 with payments being released on a rolling basis beginning April 2022.

Please note that for all grants, providers must keep receipts and documentation of expenditures for the items paid from these funds. Also, providers must complete audit documentation upon request even if the provider has closed.

NEW: Annual CCAP Provider Forums

The Department is planning a series of Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Provider Forums for providers and families at locations around the state. Attendees will receive CCAP updates, submit new CCAP applications (including applications for homeless and clients seeking employment), and consult with CCAP staff about their various questions. The forum schedule will be shared in next month's newsletter.

REMINDER: CCAP Underutilized Authorizations for Families

CCAP conducts a monthly review of underutilized authorizations of children who have not attended child care within the previous month. Authorizations must be utilized by families at least once within a 30 day period each month to maintain CCAP certification. The Tracking of Time Services (TOTS) Point of Service (POS) and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) attendance records are examined as part of the underutilization review.

If CCAP children are not attending, the Department will contact families to assess the need for continued child care services. If families are not reached during this period, their CCAP authorizations will be discontinued at the end of the month, and they will need to reapply for CCAP.

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

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

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 you have not received a current inspection and approval from those agencies and submitted documentation of their approvals to the Division of Licensing.

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

- Louisiana OSFM by telephone at (504) 568-8506 for New Orleans/Shreveport/Monroe regions and (225) 925-4911 for the Baton Rouge/Alexandria/Lafayette/Lake Charles regions or via [region contacts](#)

- LDH may be contacted by emailing Melissa Drescher (Melissa.Drescher@la.gov) or by telephone at (225) 342-8954
- New Orleans Fire Prevention Division by telephone at (504) 658-4770

NEW: Critical Incidents and Required Notifications

The Department continues to note a significant number of deficiencies cited for failing to make critical incident notifications.

Providers must make immediate notification to parents, emergency personnel, law enforcement as applicable, and other appropriate agencies within 24 hours for the following types of critical incidents involving children in care:

1. death;
2. serious injury or illness that required medical attention;
3. a child left unsupervised for any amount of time;
4. use of prohibited behavior management as described in Section 1509.A.8.b.;
5. allegations or suspicion of child abuse or neglect by center staff;
6. an accident involving the transportation of children; or
7. any other significant event relating to the health, safety, or well-being of any child, including but not limited to a lost child, an emergency situation, fire or other structural damage, or closure of the center.

If you have any questions, please contact your licensing consultant at (225) 342-9905.

REMINDER: CPR/Pediatric First Aid (PFA) Vendors

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) Division of Licensing is assisting licensed child care, family home and in-home providers with obtaining Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Pediatric First Aid (PFA) certification for early childhood staff. The LDOE approved CPR/PFA vendor will be authorized to be paid a rate up to \$65 per licensed child care staff member or registered and certified in-home provider. If a CPR/PFA vendor has not been approved by the LDOE and added to the LDOE Division of Licensing's roster, the CPR/PFA vendor will be unable to receive payment. 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.

Instructions to become eligible as a LDOE CPR/PFA vendor:

- Verify you are a registered vendor with the State of Louisiana and have a LaGov vendor number. (<https://wwwcfprd.doa.louisiana.gov/OSP/LaPAC/vendor/srchven2.cfm>)
- If not registered as a vendor, register prior to entering the LaGov PO. (Link to instructions: <https://www.doa.la.gov/media/gewlb4nk/lagov-vendorregistration.pdf>).
- Submit an Initial Proposal (quote) to the Louisiana Department of Education, Division of Licensing to Idelicensing@la.gov.
- The quote should include at a minimum the vendor number, a description of the training, the names of participants, and total dollar amount for training.
- Once the official quote is approved, a detailed statement will be required for each payment. The detailed statement should include:
 - Vendor Number
 - Description of the training
 - Names of the participants (Center Name, Address, Director's Name, and Phone Number)
 - Invoice Number
 - Quantity for the training (number of individuals to whom this vendor will be providing

services. Up to 300 center staff can be trained at a rate of up to \$65 per staff).

- Total dollar amount
- Accepted method of payment (P-card payment-credit card or check)
- Ensure you are able to provide a live demonstration and receive a live demonstration from the early childhood center staff.
- Certification documentation will need to be submitted.

If the trainer is having trouble obtaining a vendor number, please contact the Vendor Help Desk at (225) 342-8010.

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

UPDATES FOR DIRECTORS

REMINDER: Director Levels for School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTCs)

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, to Louisiana Pathways. Parent School Readiness Tax Credit forms will be mailed to Type III centers this month.

For more information about School Readiness Tax Credits contact demita.walker@la.gov.

NEW: Child Care Management Software Initiative (CCMSi)

The Child Care Management Software (CCMS) Initiative has now launched! If Type III and CCAP-eligible family child care providers purchase a new subscription to an approved CCMS identified in the LDOE [CCMS Guidebook](#), they are eligible for a reimbursement of up to 80% (for a maximum reimbursement of \$1,000). CCMS purchases are made directly from the provider to the vendor and reimbursements are processed through the local [CCR&R](#). This funding is only available for **NEW** CCMS annual subscriptions.

To support this launch and future initiatives, the Department asks that providers of all license types (I, II, III and FCC's) fill out this [short survey](#) regarding CCMS so we can better understand CCMS usage throughout the state.

For more information about the CCMSi, contact shallan.jones@la.gov.

REMINDER: Tax Consultation

Child care providers have experienced changing finances that directly impact their taxes. The LDOE has contracted with tax professionals to provide support services to licensed early learning providers. These early childhood-trained tax professionals will provide up to two hours of tax consultation to a limited number of early learning providers of all license types (I, II, III and FCC's). Consultation can help you:

- Understand how loans and grants have impacted or can impact your taxes
- Use or understand payroll systems and bookkeeping software such as QuickBooks
- Proactively prepare for the upcoming tax season
- Handle or develop a plan to handle any tax concerns or questions you might have

Interested providers can complete this [interest form](#) to schedule their consultation.

For more information contact Shallan.Jones@la.gov.

REMINDER: Early Learning Center Business Training

The Department is offering business trainings through First Children's Finance through March 2022 for all licensed child care types and CCAP-eligible family child care providers. Additionally, business consultation hours are available through June 2022.

These business training and consultation offerings are intended to help you grow your business, stay on top of your finances, increase your earning potential, and so much more. The one-on-one consultation hours offer providers a unique and valuable opportunity to ask even more in-depth questions about their individual business.

Training and consultation participants surveyed by the Department have reported 100% overall satisfaction in the content knowledge received and have noted that "without a doubt this knowledge has helped" them to be "better leaders" of their programs and "better business operators."

[Registration](#) is now open for these Louisiana Pathways approved training opportunities. For more information on these business trainings, contact shallan.jones@la.gov.

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:

- December 14 - General updates

Contact amanda.colon@la.gov with questions.

NEW: Developmental Screening Initiative Office Hours

A monthly Office Hours is hosted on the second Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m. to learn about developmental screening initiative updates and best practices. Local Developmental Screening Coordination Teams are invited to attend to assist with the planning of the universal screening initiative and to provide an opportunity to collaborate.

Meeting Date/Time: January 13 at 10:30 a.m.

Zoom Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97616125681>

Meeting ID: 976 1612 5681

Meeting Passcode: 627043

Contact charleen.long@la.gov with any questions.

OTHER

ECCE Commission - Meeting, November 17, 2021

The next meeting for the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission will be Friday, December 17, at 10 a.m. in the Claiborne Building, located at 1201 N. Third Street in Baton Rouge. An overview of the ECCE Commission and meeting materials are available [online](#). For additional information, please email leslie.doyle@la.gov.

ECCE Advisory Council Meeting

The Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council met on November 17. The meeting [agenda](#) and [presentation slides](#) can be found online. An overview of the ECCE Advisory Council and meeting materials are available [online](#). For additional information, please email leslie.doyle@la.gov.

Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) Review Committee

The Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) Review Committee met on Monday, November 21. The Committee was presented with revised standards in the domains of Language and Literacy, Social and Emotional Development, and Mathematics. The Committee is anticipating that drafted standards will be ready for public comment in February 2022. Meeting materials can be found in the [Standards Review Library](#) under "Early Learning and Development Standards Review Process

IN THE NEWS

[Staffing and compensation are at the heart of building a better early childhood system](#)

[Professionalizing the Child Care Workforce: Links between Teacher Outcomes and the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate](#)

[Family Engagement in Early Childhood: Building a Foundation for Long-Lasting Parent-Teacher Partnerships](#)

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding COVID-19, school closures, or other concerns, please contact LDOFCOVID19@la.gov.
- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For questions regarding lead agencies, please contact leadagencysupport@la.gov.
- For all questions regarding child care criminal background check processing, please contact LDEcccbcprocessing@la.gov.
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.

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