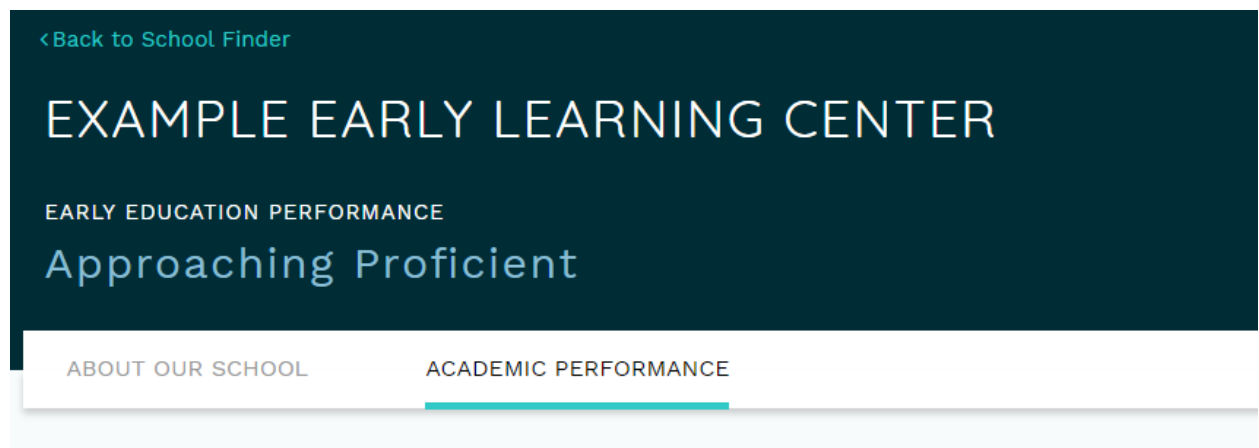


2017-2018 Performance Profiles Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I find my site's Performance Profile?

Both early childhood Performance Profiles and K-12 school performance scores are reported through Louisiana's interactive online tool, the Louisiana School and Center Finder. This website is found at www.LouisianaSchools.com.

The early childhood Performance Profile is found on the "Academic Performance" tab shown below for all early childhood sites.



The screenshot shows a dark teal header with a link "< Back to School Finder" in light blue. Below the header, the text "EXAMPLE EARLY LEARNING CENTER" is displayed in large white letters. Underneath, "EARLY EDUCATION PERFORMANCE" is written in smaller white letters, followed by "Approaching Proficient" in a larger, light blue font. At the bottom, there are two tabs: "ABOUT OUR SCHOOL" and "ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE". The "ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE" tab is highlighted with a light blue underline.

2. What are Performance Profiles?

Performance Profiles measure the quality of publicly-funded early childhood sites serving at-risk children ages birth-five for each academic year. These profiles are required by Act 3 (2012), and include a rating at the top (Excellent, Proficient, Approaching Proficient, Unsatisfactory) and a set of informational metrics at the bottom. These profiles are shared with families to help them make informed choices for their children and support providers to improve the quality of early childhood care and education.

3. Who receives Performance Profiles?

All publicly-funded sites, including Head Starts and Early Head Starts, public pre-K, nonpublic pre-K (NSECD), and child care centers, that were open on October 1, 2017 and February 1, 2018 receive a Performance Profile. Each community network, which includes all of the publicly-funded sites within a geographic region or parish, will also receive a Performance Profile.

4. Which child care centers receive Performance Profiles?

Child care centers that are licensed as Type III centers, which means that they are able to take public funding to serve children, are required to participate in the unified rating system and receive a profile. Publicly-funded child care centers that were open on October 1, 2017 and February 1, 2018 receive a Performance Profile.

5. What is CLASS™?

The *CLASSroom Assessment Scoring System* or *CLASS™* is a research-based, nationally regarded system of 8-10 measures that assesses children’s experiences and interactions within the classroom through observations. Observers must participate in an initial two-day intensive training and pass a reliability test in order to be certified *CLASS™* observers. During an observation, a certified *CLASS™* observer goes into a classroom and observes the teacher-child interactions within the classroom for four 20-minute cycles, for a total of 80 minutes of observation. Between each observation cycle, the observer will use their notes and their manual to score the cycle on the 8-10 measures. Every cycle receives a set of scores, and the four sets of scores are averaged together to create the final observation scores.

Expectation for the Classroom:	PreK Domain	Toddler Domain
<i>Warm, positive environment with trusting relationships</i>	Emotional Support	Emotional & Behavioral Support
<i>Daily routines are organized and disruptions are minimal</i>	Classroom Organization	
<i>Children learn concepts and connect ideas through dialogue and play</i>	Instructional Support	Engaged Support for Learning

The 8-10 measures that comprise the *CLASS™* tool are referred to as dimensions, and they are organized within 2-3 domains:

PreK Domain:	Measures (Dimensions)
Emotional Support	Positive Climate
	Negative Climate
	Teacher Sensitivity
	Regard for Student Perspectives
Classroom Organization	Behavior Management
	Productivity
	Instructional Learning Formats

PreK Domain:	Measures (Dimensions)
Instructional Support	Concept Development
	Quality of Feedback
	Language Modeling

Toddler Domain:	Measures (Dimensions)
Emotional and Behavioral Support	Positive Climate
	Negative Climate
	Teacher Sensitivity
	Regard for Child Perspectives
	Behavior Guidance
Engaged Support for Learning	Facilitation of Learning and Development
	Quality of Feedback
	Language Modeling

6. Which classrooms should be observed using the CLASS tool?

All sites that accept public funding, including sites that can but do not currently have publicly-funded children enrolled, should be observed. This includes all pre-K and toddler classrooms at type III child care centers, Head Start and Early Head Start centers, and schools.

7. Which CLASS tool should be used in mixed-age classrooms?

In mixed-age Kindergarten/pre-K classrooms, the pre-K tool should be used if the classroom is a majority pre-K or if the classroom receives early childhood funding.

In mixed-age pre-K/toddler classrooms, the pre-K tool should be used if the classroom is a majority or at least half pre-K.

In mixed-age toddler/infant classrooms, the toddler tool should be used if the classroom is a majority or at least half toddler. The infant tool should only be used if the classroom is majority under 16 months old.

A classroom that is a mix of infant, toddler, and pre-K children should be observed using the tool appropriate for the majority of the class. If there is a no clear majority among the three age groups, the toddler tool shall be used.

8. How is the overall rating for each site calculated?

Every classroom in a publicly-funded site was required to be observed by local community networks twice, once in the fall and once in the spring. These local observations were audited through a contract with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Picard Center to conduct independent third party observations. Both local and third party observations are used to generate Performance Ratings.

Sites and lead agencies were required to count pre-K and toddler classrooms in publicly-funded sites and enter them into the Department's CLASS™ system in October. In February, pre-K and toddler classrooms were counted again, and the list of classrooms was updated for the spring. Every pre-K and toddler classroom that was open in the fall or the spring was required to be observed by the community network.

Third party audited local observations by observing at least one pre-K and one toddler classroom in each site, and at least 50% of the classrooms in each site. If third party observation domain scores differed by more than 1 point from local observations for comparable classrooms, third party scores replaced local scores for that domain.

The overall rating for each site is calculated by averaging all of the dimension scores for all of these observations together. Dimension scores are first calculated by using the four cycles of raw scores to create an average dimension score. The dimension scores from every domain and every observation count equally in the overall rating. Domain scores are never averaged together to create an overall rating.

Example: ABC site has two classrooms, one pre-K and one toddler. Each classroom was observed twice by local observers, once in the fall and once in the spring. 2 pre-K observations and 2 toddler observations are included in this rating. Each pre-K observation has 9 dimension scores (excluding negative climate) which equals 18 pre-K dimension scores. Each toddler observation has 7 dimension scores (excluding negative climate), which equals 14 dimensions. There are 32 total dimensions that are averaged together for the overall site rating.

Note: For information about how third party scores would be included in the rating, please look at **Question 9**.

9. How is the rating for each individual domain calculated?

The rating for each domain is calculated by averaging all of the dimension scores together for that domain. Dimension scores are first calculated by using the four cycles of raw observation scores to create one average dimension score for each observation. Each dimension score from every observation counts equally in the individual domain rating. Individual domain ratings are separate from the overall rating, and are never averaged together to calculate the overall rating.

Example: XYZ site has two pre-K classrooms. Each pre-K Classroom was observed twice, once in the fall and once in the spring, for a total of four observations. For the Emotional Support domain, there are three dimension scores (excluding negative climate) for each of the four observations, which equals 12 dimension scores. These 12 dimension scores are averaged together for the Emotional Support domain rating.

Note: For information about how third party scores would be included in the rating, please look at **Question 9**.

10. Why is the negative climate dimension not included?

The negative climate dimension is not included in either overall ratings or the individual domain ratings for either pre-K or toddler domains. This helps to ensure that no domain is over-weighted in the calculations. By excluding negative climate, the Emotional Support and the Emotional and Behavioral Support domains are more equally weighted with the other pre-K and toddler domains.

The CLASS tool was co-authored by Dr. Bob Pianta and Dr. Bridget Hamre, both professors and researchers at the University of Virginia (UVA), Curry School of Education.

The formula to determine Louisiana's early childhood education programs' CLASS ratings, which does not include the Negative Climate dimension score, was developed in consultation with Dr. Pianta and Dr. Hamre as well as other researchers at UVA, Curry School of Education.

11. How are third party scores included?

Third party observations may be included in the rating in four different ways.

- A) Third party observations are compared to local observations for the same classroom within the same semester (fall or spring). If the third party observation differs by more than 1 point to the comparable local observation, then the local observation dimension scores within that domain are replaced by the third party observation dimension scores.

Example: A local observation was done in a pre-K classroom in October. A third party observation was done in the same pre-K classroom in November. Since those observations occurred in the same classroom in the same semester (fall), they are compared. The local observation (4.79) was 1.25 points higher in Classroom Observation than the third party score (3.54). For that classroom's fall observation score, the local observation scores are used for the dimensions in Emotional Support and Instructional Support, but the third party observation scores are used for the dimensions in Classroom Organization.

- B) If a classroom was not observed by a local observer for a semester, but was observed by the third party in that semester, then the third party score is used for that classroom for that semester.

Example: ABC site has three toddler classrooms, but only two of them were observed by a local observer in the fall. A third party observation was done in the third classroom in the fall. That third party score is used for the fall observation score for the third classroom.

- C) If a classroom was not observed by a local observer for a semester, and was also not observed by the third party, then the average of third party scores for that age type (pre-K/toddler) is used for that classroom for that semester.

Example: XYZ site has three toddler classrooms, but only two of them were observed by a local observer in the fall. The site received two third party observations over the year in toddler classrooms (one in the fall and one in the spring). The average of those two third party toddler observations is used for the fall observation for the third classroom.

- D) If observation results conducted by community networks are consistently different by more than one point from third party observations, the Department may replace all of the community network's observation results for a site or observer with third party results.

Example: A local observer conducts 6 pre-K observations, 4 of which are checked by third party. All 12 pre-K domains that were checked by third party observers differed by more than 1.00 point from the third party score, resulting in a 100% observer replacement rate. The Department may remove all 18 of her domain scores from the sites at which she observed.

12. How is the community network Measures of Classroom Quality rating calculated?

The community network "Measures of Classroom Quality" rating includes all of the dimension scores used for the individual site ratings, and all of the dimension scores for any observations conducted in the network for sites that did not receive a rating. These dimension scores are averaged together to make a community network rating.

13. For Measures of Classroom Quality, what are the score ranges associated with each rating?

CLASS™ Scores	
Range	Rating
6.00-7.00	Excellent
4.50 -5.99	Proficient
3.00 -4.49	Approaching Proficient
1.00-2.99	Unsatisfactory

14. How is the community network access rating calculated?

The community network access rating is based on the percent of the estimated at-risk four-year-old cohort who is able to access a publicly-funded early childhood seat. This includes Head Start, NSECD, LA 4, other school pre-K programs, and the Child Care Assistance Program. The percent of at-risk four-year-olds served is based on the October 1 child count for each community network that counts all of the publicly-funded children enrolled for that school year. The estimated at-risk four-year-old cohort is based on the number of at-risk kindergarteners. The percent of at-risk kindergarteners compared to the entire kindergarten cohort for a community is used to calculate the percent of at-risk children at each age-level preceding kindergarten, including the at-risk four-year-old cohort.

Example: *Geaux Network has 100 kindergarteners, 85 of whom are considered at-risk (185% Federal Poverty Line). Their network's at-risk percentage is 85%, and the Department estimates that there are about 85 at-risk four-year-olds that could be served in the community. Geaux Network is serving 80 at-risk four-year-olds, so their access rating is 80 at-risk four-year-olds served /85 at-risk K cohort = 94% at-risk cohort served, or Excellent.*

Equitable Access	
Range	Rating
90-100%	Excellent
80-89.99%	Proficient
70-79.99%	Approaching Proficient
0-69.99%	Unsatisfactory

15. What are the consequences for Unsatisfactory sites?

Beginning with the 2016-2017 ratings, if a site receives an Unsatisfactory rating for two years in any three-year period, that site may lose its academic approval and access to public funding. This is true for all site types, including Type III child care, Head Start, and school based pre-K programs.

16. What resources are available for sites that were rated Unsatisfactory, and how do programs access these resources?

Unsatisfactory sites will receive intensive one-on-one partnering with the Field Support Consultant for their region, who will provide assistance to the sites in interpreting the scores and developing a plan for improvement, will connect centers to various available resources, and will provide ongoing support. These sites are prioritized for Mental Health Consultation, which is free for child care centers and available at a negotiated rate for schools and Head Starts. Mental Health Consultants provide six months of support individualized to the site and teachers that is aligned with *CLASS*TM.

The Department has reviewed several pre-K and infant/toddler curricula, and maintains a listing of high-quality curricula on the Louisiana Believes website that can be purchased at a negotiated rate. Through the [Child Care Curriculum Initiative](#), the Department will be supporting child care centers with funds to purchase high-quality curricula, which will support high-quality interactions and improvement in instruction.

Child care centers that are rated Unsatisfactory are prioritized by their local Resource and Referral agencies for coaching and technical assistance, and can contact their local Resource and Referral agencies for specific and targeted support to improve their ratings.

17. What support exists for other low performing sites?

Beginning in the fall of 2018-2019, sites with an overall *CLASS*TM score below 3.75 are required to participate in the Early Childhood Site Improvement Planning process led by the Department. This formal improvement planning process involves working with the Department to complete a needs assessment and develop a plan for site improvement. The plan must involve regular monitoring of implementation and reporting information as requested by the department.

18. How are high performing sites recognized?

There are several incentives for sites to improve their performance as measured by the Performance Profiles. For all program types, there are three Early Childhood Honor Rolls that recognize excellence and improvement in a public, positive way for all programs statewide.

- The Excellence Honor Roll recognizes all Excellent sites with no Unsatisfactory scores at any domain;
- The Birth to Three Honor Roll recognizes sites with high performance for the state’s youngest learners;
- And the Top Gains Honor Roll recognizes sites with more than 1 point of growth from the practice year to this year.

19. What is the relationship between Performance Profiles and the School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC)?

For Type III early learning centers, there is an additional incentive provided through the School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC). The Star Rating system for School Readiness Tax Credits and bonus payments has been revised to be aligned with CLASS™ Performance ratings per the following table. This will go into effect for the 2018 Tax Credits, filed for beginning January 2019.

Provider Tax Credits rewards centers based on their quality rating and the number of Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) or foster care children that are served. Centers become eligible if they participate in the statewide unified rating system, and their benefits increase with the number of at-risk children they serve.

CLASS™ Score Range	CLASS™ Performance ratings	Star Rating for Tax Credit and Bonus Payments	Tax Credit per Eligible Child
6.00-7.00	Excellent	5 Stars	\$1,500
5.25 -5.99	Proficient	4 Stars	\$1,250
4.50-5.24	Proficient	3 Stars	\$1,000
3.75 -4.49	Approaching Proficient	2 Stars	\$750
3.00-3.74	Approaching Proficient	1 Star	\$0
1.00-2.99	Unsatisfactory	0 Stars	\$1,500

In addition to School Readiness Tax Credits, star ratings also provide centers the opportunity to benefit from Unified Bonus payments. The state provides tiered bonus payments at the end of each calendar quarter to eligible licensed Type III centers. These bonus payments are based on the number of children attending the center through the Child Care Assistance Program or are in foster care, and the star rating for that center. The payment is equal to a percentage of all payments from the Department for services provided during the quarter. Providers will begin to benefit from these Unified Bonus payments in 2018, with the bonus for the first quarter, January-March, paid in May 2018.

20. What are the Use of Best Practices for sites and networks?

The Best Practices are the non-rated informational metrics included on the performance profile. At the site level, these metrics include:

- Assessment: assigns up to three stars based on whether teachers are evaluating children's growth and development using *GOLD™*
- Children per Teacher: assigns up to three stars for the quality of the teacher: child ratio
- Curriculum Quality: assigns up to three stars based on the quality of curriculum used
- Teacher Degrees & Certification: shows the highest level of education teachers have completed and the percent of teachers that have an approved teacher certification

At the network level, these metrics also include:

- Equitable Access: shows how many of the community's at-risk 4-year-old children the network serves
- Teacher Support: shows how satisfied teachers in the community are with professional development available to improve interactions and instructions; the levels are Somewhat, Mostly, and Very
- Family Satisfaction: shows how satisfied families in the community are with the application process and with their program; the levels are Somewhat, Mostly, and Very
- Birth to 3 Access: shows how many of the community's at-risk birth to 3 year olds the network serves with public funding

The information for each of these measures is self-reported by providers, verified by lead agency staff during the data certification process, and does not have any impact on the overall rating for the site or network.

21. How was the information for ratings collected and reported to the state?

For the ratings, *CLASS™* scores were entered into the Department's Early Childhood *CLASS* System by local and third party observers. Scores were available to sites and networks through reports generated by the system and exports provided by the Department.

22. How was the data for site and network Use of Best Practices informational metrics collected and reported to the state?

For the informational metrics that are reported on the “Use of Best Practices” section on the Performance Profiles, most of the information was self-reported by providers, teachers, and parents through multiple reporting tools, including *GOLD™*, the October 1 child counts, and surveys distributed by the Department and in partnership with Louisiana State University. The informational metric data are verified by lead agency staff through data certification annually.

23. What was the process for collecting information from teachers and families through surveys?

To better understand teacher satisfaction, the Department released an online survey to individual teachers through their *GOLD™* account, and provided the link to lead agencies to circulate to teachers as well. This survey asked questions about support from the network related to assessment, observations, and professional development.

To understand the perspectives of families, the Department partnered with United Way and Louisiana State University to design and release a survey that asked questions about their satisfaction with both the enrollment process and the programs their children attended. A paper version of the survey was released to a sample of individual sites within each community network, and was mailed directly back to LSU to process and compile. An online version of the survey was also released to lead agencies and sites.

24. How were these ratings and informational metrics verified by lead agencies and sites?

For the ratings, community networks and sites had the following opportunities to verify and correct the information for ratings and informational metrics:

- ✓ Fall *CLASS™* Error Correction Period
- ✓ Spring *CLASS™* Error Correction Period
- ✓ 2017-2018 *CLASS™* Observation Appeals Period
- ✓ Early Childhood Data Certification Process

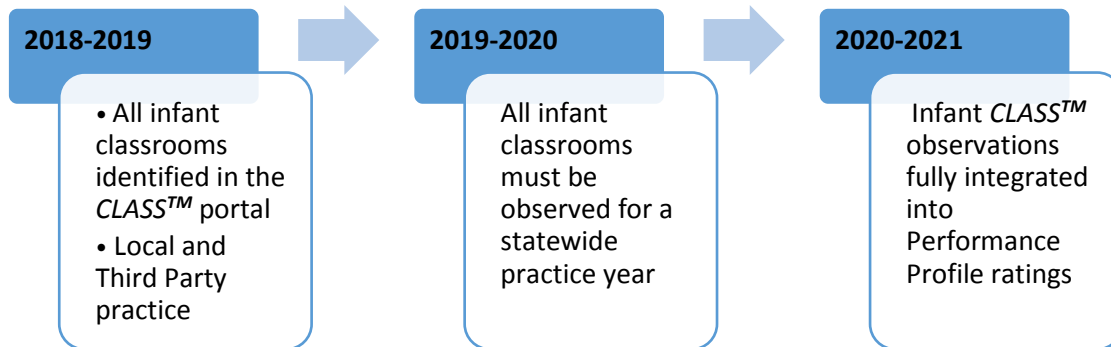
These were opportunities for sites and networks to work with the Department to ensure all information was correctly reported, and request corrections or appeals for information as needed. These opportunities took place over the course of the 2017-2018 school year, and culminated in a month-long data certification process in August. In addition to these formal opportunities, throughout the year, sites and networks were reminded of opportunities to report, verify, and correct information through the Early Childhood newsletter.

25. How can I change something on the profile?

Data Certification precedes the release of Performance Profiles, and after Performance Profiles are released via School and Center Finder, they cannot be changed.

26. How are infant classrooms being included in Performance Profile?

In accordance with Bulletin 140, Infant CLASS™ is being phased into the Early Childhood Accountability System over three years, and Infant CLASS™ observations will be included in the 2020-2021 Performance Profile ratings, released in the fall of 2021.



During the 2017-2018 school year, the Department will pilot the Infant CLASS™ tool in order to understand best practices for use of this tool in Louisiana classrooms. This pilot is optional in 2018-2019, and observations of infant classrooms conducted during this pilot year will not be included in site or network performance profiles.

Sites that choose to participate in the Infant CLASS™ Pilot will lead the way to improve the quality of infant care in Louisiana by providing critical information and feedback during the school year to the Department.

27. What resources are available to help families understand early childhood Performance Profiles?

The Department has released the following resources to assist families in understanding Performance Profiles:

- [Site Performance Profile Key](#) and [Guide](#)
- [Network Performance Profile Key](#) and [Guide](#)
- [Early Childhood Performance Profile Video](#)

28. What are my next steps as a provider?

1. Use the [Five Tips for Sites](#) as a guide.
2. Reference the [Guide to Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessments, and Professional Development for 2017-2018](#).
3. Consider hosting a parent night, using the Department's customizable [Parent Night Presentation](#).