



Overview of the Regional Micro-Enterprise Credential

(Updated: August 1, 2018)

The objective of the Regional Micro-Enterprise Credential is to provide Louisiana students with the fundamental skills and knowledge they need to be effective small business employees and (perhaps one day) small business owners / entrepreneurs.

This collection of resources is a collaboration. BRAC has set the standards for the credential. Courageous teachers taught the initial Micro-Enterprise Credential classes – a pilot program in the Spring of 2016, and then the first years of implementation in 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. The Department of Education now works with teachers statewide to implement the Micro-Enterprise Credential (both the Regional Micro-Enterprise Credential and the new Statewide Micro-Enterprise Credential).

The sections of this overview are:

- Inspiration of the Micro-Enterprise Credential
- Student Objectives
- Available Instructional Resources
- Implementation Goals

Inspiration of the Micro-Enterprise Credential

The development of the Regional Micro-Enterprise Credential was inspired by three observations:

- 1) employer feedback from businesses of all sizes indicates that far, far too often Louisiana high school graduates don't have the workplace behaviors and communication skills they need to be effective on the job;
- 2) data from the Louisiana Workforce Commission shows most Louisiana jobs are in small businesses, and that young people today are more likely to change jobs repeatedly than past generations;
- 3) the Jump Start program lacked a credential to prepare students to be effective small business employees, and (one day) successful small business owners / entrepreneurs.

BRAC brought these observation to the attention of the Jump Start Leadership Team, which was only too aware of the requests from employers to help students master employment “soft skills.” Collaborating for almost a year, BRAC and the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) developed resources and mastery exercises to help students demonstrate the employability skills that would help them attain entry-level positions.

BRAC and the LDOE agreed the Micro-Enterprise Credential had to be attainable by students of all academic backgrounds and career interests. Whether a student is interested in cosmetology or IT . . . plumbing or cooking . . . Louisiana youth are most likely to be employed by a Louisiana small business. That's why BRAC and LDOE determined that the Micro-Enterprise Credential was going to help students of all capabilities understand and master the workplace behaviors and communications skills they need to be effective small business employees and successful adults.

BRAC wanted to make sure that high school graduates have the skills necessary to “earn while they learn.” ***The Micro-Enterprise Credential will give students the workplace skills they need to succeed on the job, and the academic foundation they need to continue their education.***

Finally, BRAC and the LDOE developed a credential that is low-cost for schools to implement and gender-neutral, making the Micro-Enterprise graduation pathway an opportunity that all Louisiana high schools offer their students.



Student Objectives

The Regional Micro-Enterprise Credential will help students achieve four critical objectives:

- 1) master critical workplace behaviors and communication skills – the Self-Assessment and Self-Assessment Presentation modules will help students practice and master key workplace “soft skills” that *all* employers believe are essential to students attaining entry-level employment and succeeding on the job;
- 2) learn how to access credit, and what different types of credit cost – the Credit Application module will help students learn about different types of business capital, how to apply for different types of loans, and the cost of different types of small business loans;
- 3) learn how to process critical small business forms and paperwork – the Company Registration module will give students a hands-on experience on how to register a start-up company with the Louisiana Secretary of State, using the student version of the *geauxBIZ* portal; and
- 4) learn essential financial concepts and terms, the “language of business” – scoring a passing score on the final Certification Exam will demonstrate that students have mastered financial concepts and terms essential to small business success. Students will learn the “language of business,” something that will help them no matter what type of employment they seek after high school.

BRAC has provided careful guidance to make sure the resources created for each of these objectives will help students master the essential concepts in each area.

All teachers who successfully completes the Regional Micro-Enterprise Credential training will add their comments and suggestions as we continue to upgrade these instructional resources based on their experiences to help future students attain this credential.

Available Instructional Resources

There are four sources of instructional resources teachers can use to help students earn the Regional Micro-Enterprise Credential:

- 1) updated Micro-Enterprise Credential resources can be downloaded from the *All Things Jump Start* web portal: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/courses/all-things-jump-start>
- 2) Teacher Guides referenced in this manual that include teacher guides / answer keys can be downloaded from the www.microenterprise.blog website *once a teacher registers on that website*;
- 3) during the school year BRAC and the LDOE will sponsor regional training opportunities where additional resources will be provided; and
- 4) Micro-Enterprise Credential teachers will create a professional learning community that develops additional teacher resources. Teachers will send these resources to JumpStart@la.gov. The “best in breed” resources will be posted on the *All Things Jump Start* web portal. (For example, some of the teachers who have implemented this credential have suggested using the *Entrepreneurship Ideas in Action* textbook by Cengage Publishing is a useful resource and supplement.) You can print out these new resources and insert them in the section of this binder entitled *Additional Resources*.

As the community of Micro-Enterprise Credential teachers continues to grow, we are confident that the number, quality and effectiveness of available instructional resources will grow exponentially.



Implementation Goals

Over 4,000 students attained the Regional Micro-Enterprise Credential in 2017-2018, surpassing our very ambitious goal.

The pass rate for students on the culminating Questionmark exam was 70%. (Remember: Questionmark voucher pricing gives students the ability to take up to three re-tests at no additional cost, with no required waiting period.)

Moving forward, our goals are:

- 1) To sustain and enhance the value of the Micro-Enterprise Credential, enabling students to “learn the language of business” while enhancing their workplace communication skills by engaging with unfamiliar workplace adults;***
- 2) To fully launch the Statewide Micro-Enterprise Credential, enabling students to master increasingly sophisticated small business leadership and entrepreneurial skills that lead to post-secondary studies.***

Beta Implementation Schools	CTE Supervisors / Principals	Teachers
Ascension Parish School Board: Dutchtown High School East Ascension High School St. Amant High School	Ronda Matthews Carli Francois Traci McCorkle Mia Edwards	Emily Smith Monica Caillouet Rae Broussard
East Baton Rouge Public School System: Woodlawn High School	Martha Sealy Scott Stevens	David Wilburn (and colleagues)
St. Landry Parish School Board: Washington Career and Technical Center	Therese Ellender Tracy Beard	Dana Luna

BRAC and the LDOE are both very grateful for the dedicated educators who helped develop the original Regional Micro-Enterprise Credential resources.

The Micro-Enterprise Credential Teacher Hall of Fame	
Monica Caillouet – Ascension Parish Stephanie King – Caddo Parish Dana Luna – St. Landry Parish	Jason Mercer – Winn Parish David Wilburn and colleagues – East Baton Rouge Parish