Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council

February 4, 2016

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

Louisiana Believes

Amendment to the Current Child Care Development Fund Grant State Plan

State Plan Amendment – Current Plan Ending May 31, 2016

Revisions reflect policy changes that have already been reviewed by the Advisory Council and approved by the State Board.

1. Eligibility Period

- Families remain eligible for at least one year regardless of life changes

2. Subsidy Rates , Sliding Scale, Part-time, and Absence Days

- Infant/toddler max rate increases from $18.50 per day to $22.50 (Type III Centers and Military Centers only)
- PreK max rate increases from $17.50 per day to $21.50 (Type III Centers and Military Centers only)
- Change Sliding Scale to 0%, 135%, and 165% of the Federal Poverty Level
- Part-time rates paid per hour rather than 6 minute increments
- Absent days paid change from 2 days to 5 days per month

3. Co-Pay

- Co-pays change from the 40%, 60%, 80% structure to minimal flat amount per week ($15, $10, or $0) based on household income

Child Care Development Fund Grant State Plan
Effective June 1, 2016 – September 30, 2018

Background on the State Plan

State Plan outlines how CCDF funds will be used to provide access to and improve the quality of child care in Louisiana.

What is a CCDF State Plan?

- Primary mechanism by which the federal Administration of Children and Families (ACF) determines State compliance with requirements of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014
- Every state is currently completing a State Plan

What time period does the State Plan cover?

- Covers June 1, 2016 – September 30, 2018
- Revisions may be made at any time

What is the role of the Advisory Council?

- Advisory Council shall receive and have opportunity to make recommendations on plan and/or revisions prior to submission to ACF
- Recommendations made by the council shall be reported to the state board

Highlights of the New Law

New law includes multiple changes in how states oversee and administer child care assistance, licensing and quality improvement.

What are the most significant changes required by the new law?

- Higher health and safety standards for all types of child care providers including criminal background checks, group size requirements, and more monitoring requirements.
- Families must be able to easily access important health and safety information about providers, including via website
- CCAP eligibility determinations must be for at least 12 months, even if work or school status changes, and there must be a gradual phase out once families are no longer eligible
- CCAP policies must promote access for homeless families
- Set-aside threshold for quality improvement is higher, with expectations for supporting infants and toddlers, establishing learning and development standards and enhancing professional development

For more information, go to
http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/occ/summary_of_s1086.pdf

Process for Developing Louisiana's State Plan

State must consult with multiple stakeholders in planning process.

What is the process and timeline for producing the State Plan?

1. Share draft plan with stakeholders and offer survey for feedback
   - *Release – December 18, 2015*
   - *Webinar – January 13, 2016*
   - *Suggested deadline for feedback – January 22, 2016*
   - *Final deadline for feedback – February 5, 2016*

2. Conduct Public Hearing – February 4, 2016 in the morning

3. Share with Early Childhood Advisory Council – February 4, 2016 in the afternoon

4. Submit Final Plan – March 1, 2016

Specific Engagement on the State Plan Draft

The State Plan was submitted to multiple parties for comments beyond what was required by the grant.

Louisiana Municipal Association	LDE – Child and Adult Care Food Program
Early Childhood Advisory Council	LDE-McKinney –Vento State Coordinator
Chitimacha and Coushatta Indian Tribes	DCFS – Child Welfare
DHH – IDEA Part C DHH – WIC, Nutrition and Childhood Obesity	DCFS – TANF
DHH – Maternal and Child Home Visitation	Child Care Association of Louisiana
DHH – Medicaid/Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment	The Policy Institute for Children
DHH – Mental Health	The Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families
Louisiana Board of Regents	STAND
LDE – Head Start Collaborative Office	Resource and Referral Agencies

Request for feedback was shared with over 10,000 recipients of the Early Childhood Newsletter on 1/7/2016 and 1/21/2016.

Areas Covered by the State Plan

State Plan uses set template that covers 8 areas.

1. Define CCDF Leadership and Coordination with Relevant Systems
2. Promote Family Engagement through Outreach and Consumer Education
3. Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families
4. Ensure Equal Access to High Quality Child Care for Low-Income Children
5. Establish Standards and Monitoring Processes to Ensure the Health and Safety of Children in Child Care Settings
6. Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce
7. Support Continuous Quality Improvement
8. Ensure Grantee Program Integrity and Accountability

State Plan Section by Section: 1 and 2

- **Section 1 - Define CCDF Leadership and Coordination with Relevant Systems**
  - Identifies the Department of Education as CCDF Lead Agency
  - Details State Plan process, including extensive consultation with stakeholders
  - Describes how the Department will work with public and private partners at state and local level, highlighting the new state Early Childhood Advisory Council and local coordination efforts of Early Childhood Community Networks
  - Outlines timeline and approach for developing disaster and emergency preparedness plans for child care

- **Section 2 - Promote Family Engagement through Outreach and Consumer Education**
  - Highlights coordinated enrollment, specifically how the efforts of local Community Networks are making it easier for families to apply and enroll in child care
  - Describes how the Department will use its website to provide families with information about program health and safety (licensing) and program quality (performance profiles) as well as referrals for other key resources such as food, healthcare and public assistance
  - Includes plan for how the Department will work with partners to increase referrals for developmental screening

State Plan Section by Section: 3 and 4

- **Section 3 - Provide Stable Child Care Financial Assistance to Families**
  - Provides extensive detail about eligibility policy and procedures for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)
  - Highlights new policy for providing at least 12 months of CCAP eligibility, regardless of changes to work or school status, and reducing co-payments
  - Includes plan for making adjustments based on income and providing gradual phase out of the program for families that are no longer CCAP eligible
  - Describes strategies for ensuring access and quality care for the most vulnerable families, including very low income families, families needing protective services and families experiencing homelessness

- **Section 4 - Ensure Equal Access to High Quality Child Care for Low-Income Children**
  - Describes how the Department will provide information via performance profiles and oversee local coordinated enrollment to ensure families have equal access to choose the program that best meets the needs of their children
  - Highlights the use of the Market Rate Survey and Early Childhood Funding Model to inform policy and ensure access
  - Details the CCAP payment rates, tiered bonus system and payment procedures, including recent increases to support improvements in interaction and instruction quality

State Plan Section by Section: 5 and 6

- **Section 5 - Establish Standards and Monitoring Processes to Ensure the Health and Safety of Child Care Settings**
  - Provides comprehensive detail about licensing, health and safety standards for licensed and registered providers, including ratios, training and monitoring
  - Describes employment criteria for licensing specialists and plan for establishing standards for ratio of specialists to providers
  - Identifies plan and timeline for including group size and strengthening criminal background checks in licensing and registration laws and regulations.

- **Section 6 - Recruit and Retain a Qualified and Effective Child Care Workforce**
  - Describes Louisiana's professional development system, including the trainer approval process, professional registry, articulation agreements and supports for teachers to pursue credentials and continuing education
  - Explains role of Child Care Support Organizations in providing high-quality professional development aligned with the new rating and improvement system
  - Details recent cross-sector efforts to align on teacher competencies, articulation and preparation as part of building a Birth to Kindergarten Professional Pathway
  - Highlights Louisiana's new Early Childhood Ancillary Teaching Certificate, the requirement for all publicly-funded teachers to obtain this credential and resources to support teachers to do so such as *Believe and Prepare*

State Plan Section by Section: 7 and 8

- **Section 7 - Support Continuous Quality Improvement**
  - Explains how funds will be used to support child care improvement including:
    - *Implementing a new unified rating and improvement system with performance profiles for programs and networks*
    - *Funding Child Care Support Organizations to provide training and technical assistance*
    - *Funding Mental Health Consultation to offer in-depth coaching and technical assistance to child care providers*
    - *Funding Pathways, scholarships and Believe and Prepare to prepare child care teachers to be successful in Louisiana classrooms*
    - *Supporting School Readiness Tax Credits to incent providers to make improvements and families to choose quality*
    - *Providing specific set-asides to support teachers of infants and toddlers*

- **Section 8 - Ensure Grantee Program Integrity and Accountability**
  - Describes Department practices to ensure program integrity and to identify fraud or other program violations, recognizing that significant programmatic changes such as changes to eligibility policy are being implemented
  - Details how the Department will train staff on new policies and procedures, oversee contractors and address fraud, administrative error and auditing

Feedback Received and Incorporated into the Plan

We Heard:	*Revised Plan Will Reflect:*

This slide will be updated by February 4

Final Steps

State must submit the Final Plan by March 1 2016.

The State will conduct a webinar to share all final changes to plan that will be submitted.

The CCDF State Plan webinar will take place on **Thursday, February 11 at 11am.** The webinar will be recorded and posted on the LDE Early Childhood Library.

The webinar can be accessed here:
https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/ccdfstateplan

State Plan can be revised as needed at any point after it is submitted, within 60 days of substantial change.