Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council

July 14, 2016

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

ECCE Advisory Council Early Childhood Care and Education Network Workgroup

ECCE Advisory Council Workgroup: Policy Requirements

From Bulletin 140, *Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Network*, a workgroup shall be formed to:

1. *Study the inclusion of additional metrics in the performance rating calculations and review R.S. 17:407 et seq. for potential statutory changes, and shall make recommendations regarding the use of any additional performance rating calculation metrics in §509.D (from §511.H).*

2. *Review the results of the accountability system, including but not limited to the performance of providers on each domain of the CLASS, how the performance profile ratings are calculated, and the observer reliability substitution rates, and recommend policy to BESE for the following school year to improve the system (from §513.C).*

3. *Study the effectiveness of the coordinated enrollment process conducted in the learning year and make recommendations to the council and BESE for changes for implementation in the following school year. This research may include, but not be limited to, defining key indicators of effectiveness, conducting focus groups of all provider types, reviewing data on the placement of new early childhood seats opened statewide, and reviewing other available information (from §705.E).*

The LDE shall also seek recommendations from the Early Childhood Advisory Council on critical data elements and present a report to BESE no later than January 2017.

ECCE Advisory Council Workgroup: Proposed Activities

The workgroup will complete the study and review required by Bulletin 140, *Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Network*.

This workgroup will:

- Complete a study of the inclusion of additional metrics for the accountability system, prior to the start of the 2017-2018 year,
- Develop recommendations on strategies to improve the accountability system based on data and results,
- Complete stakeholder engagement and conduct research the effectiveness of the coordinated enrollment system, and
- Develop and present recommendations to the ECCE Advisory Council.

The LDE shall staff and support the workgroup as needed.

Proposed Workgroup Timeline and Objectives

In order to accomplish the requirements within Bulletin 140, the Department will support the workgroup with a a series of meetings.

Date	Topic	Deliverable
August 2016	**Explore the inclusion of additional metrics in performance ratings** • Study inclusion of additional metrics • Explore critical data elements collected by other states	**Initial list of potential metrics, with additional research needed**
October 2016	**Make recommendations regarding the use of additional performance rating calculations and critical data elements** • Review data on supports for teachers, programs and schools • Review R.S. 17:407.21 et seq. for potential statutory changes	**Recommendations for the November 2016 Advisory Council meeting**
January 2017	**Study the effectiveness of the coordinated enrollment system process conducted, including:** • Key indicators of effectiveness • Conduct focus groups of all provider types • Review data of placement of new early childhood seats	**Recommendations for February 2017 Advisory Council meeting and March BESE**
March 2017	**Review the results of the accountability system and develop recommendations to improve the system based on:** • Performance of providers in each domain of CLASS • How performance profile ratings are calculated • The observer reliability substitution rates	**Recommendations for the May 2017 Advisory Council meeting and June BESE**

Early Childhood Advisory Council Quarterly Report– Q2 2016

Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council

Expectation for Quarterly Reports

From Bylaws:

"The ECCE Advisory Council will receive quarterly reports from the LDE on the implementation and progress, activities, and status of the Early Childhood Care and Education Network, including the creation and implementation of an accountability system for early care and education programs and the transition of the Child Care and Development Block Grant and licensure to the Department of Education."

Early Childhood Community Networks
Key Activities in Quarter 2

The Department and Community Networks have continued to implement the early childhood accountability system.

- **Completed *CLASS™* Observations, Data Collection and Enrollment for Learning Year**
  - Nearly 15,000 *CLASS™* observations were entered into the online system, representing almost 20,000 hours of insights into early learning classrooms
    - 98% of classrooms observed in fall and spring
    - 100% of sites observed by third party observers
  - Teachers finalized their third *GOLD* by Teaching Strategies® checkpoint
  - Sites reported information on teacher:child ratios, lead teacher degrees and certifications, and pre-K or infant/toddler curriculum
  - Programs and families completed enrollment for 2016-2017 using a coordinated plan

- **Reflecting on Lessons Learned and Preparing for 2016-2017**
  - Revisions to Bulletin 140, *Louisiana's Early Childhood Care and Education Network*, were reviewed and endorsed by the ECCE Advisory Council and BESE
  - Lead Agencies for 2016-2017 were appointed by BESE
  - Sites seeking to administer an alternative early childhood assessment submitted applications to the Department
  - Sites signed Program Partner Assurances for 2016-2017

Supporting Teachers to be Successful
Key Activities in Quarter 2

The Department supported professional development and preparation opportunities.

- **Teacher Leader Summit**
  - Nearly 500 early childhood leaders and educators attended a summit in New Orleans
  - Attended two days of sessions focused on interactions and instruction in early childhood classrooms
  - Participants were from child care, Head Start, and pre-K programs
- **Guidance and Professional Development**
  - The Department released guidance to help schools, Head Start, non-publics, and child care centers identify curriculum, assessments, and professional development
  - Cohort 3 programs attended a final series of technical assistance from Teaching Strategies® staff
  - Cohort 1 and 2 programs received access to *Advanced GOLD™ Training*
- **Early Childhood Teacher Preparation**
  - BESE approved four Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs, who will begin offering coursework to child care teachers this fall
  - The Department released an application for Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood Cohort 2 to support additional preparation programs to seek BESE-approval

Supporting Teachers to be Successful
Key Activities in Quarter 2

The Department increased access to instructional supports for child care teachers.

- **Increased Investments in Child Care Supports**
  - BESE approved more than $10 million for supports to early childhood programs
  - Resource & Referral agencies, Mental Health Consultation, Pathways Career Development, and Pathways Scholarships all received a 5% increase in funding to provide increased support to child care programs
  - BESE approved $3 million to help child care centers purchase high quality curriculum
- ***CLASS™* Special Learners Pilot**
  - The Department launched a support opportunity for child care programs serving children with special needs
  - Programs will receive one of three support systems aligned with the *CLASS™* tool
  - The Department will cover the cost of the support system as well as stipends for coaches, instructors and teachers
- **Identifying High-Quality Curriculum**
  - The Department has continued to review of pre-K and infant/toddler curriculum, rated on a three tier scale
  - This fall, the Department will work with Resource & Referral agencies to provide financial support for child care centers purchasing a Tier I curriculum

Child Care and Development Block Grant and Licensure

Key Activities in Quarter 2

The Department has continued the transition of the Child Care Development Block Grant and the implementation of the new licensing regulations.

- **Redetermination Extension for Child Care Assistance Program**
  - Extended the redetermination period for families from May 2016 to September 2016
  - Extension will result in fewer families being terminated from the Child Care Assistance Program in the middle of the school year

- **Continuing to Improve Child Care Assistance Program Responsiveness**
  - The Department, in collaboration with Columbia University, held in-person meetings with providers to share potential strategies to improve CCAP responsiveness and receive input from the field
  - Learnings from this experience led to the design of a summer series of in-person sessions and Provider Helpdesk
  - The Department has expanded staffing and support available within the CCAP team (casework, call center, email response, scanning, processing, and quality control), increasing number of applications process and reversing downward trend in the number of families served

Feedback from Providers and Families
Key Activities in Quarter 2

The Department has collected feedback from networks, providers, and families through roundtable discussions and surveys.

- **Learning Year Results- Roundtable Discussions**
  - The Department completed six roundtable discussions around the state
  - Discussions included updates on the progress from the learning year and proposed revisions to the early childhood accountability system

- **Hearing from teachers and families**
  - The Department, in collaboration with the United Way of Southeast Louisiana, released a Early Childhood Family Survey, that received over 2,600 responses
    - The survey provided valuable insights as to how families select early learning environments for their children.
  - The Department released a teacher survey with over 3,000 responses from teachers in child care, Head Start, and pre-K
    - 96% of found support based on *CLASS™* helpful for their growth and development
    - 85% of teachers are satisfied with the supports they received to incorporate standards, meet expectations of *CLASS™* , and to use curriculum
    - 58% of teachers received coaching based on the *CLASS™* observations

Quality Start Participation
Monitoring Change Over Time

There has been little change in Quality Start enrollment for Quarter 2.

Publicly-Funded Licensed Early Learning Centers
Monitoring Change Over Time

There has been little change in the number early learning centers.

	Type I	Type II	Type III
April 2016	312	149	1067
May 2016	310	156	1058
June 2016	307	161	1053

Proposed Revisions to Bulletin 139, *Louisiana Child Care and Development Fund Programs*

How CCAP Works Now
Overview

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) helps low-income families pay for child care while working or attending school or training.

OVERVIEW OF CCAP

- **Eligibility:** Households must work and/or attend an education or training program for 30 hours per week and meet income requirements.
  - *Households participating in the Strategies to Empower People (STEP) program, serving children in foster care, or experiencing homelessness are categorically eligible.*
  - *Many families find it difficult to demonstrate consistent 30 hours of work or school, especially considering employers have additional obligations (e.g., health care) for employees that work 30 or more hours and that a typical full-time courseload is 12 or 18 credit hours*

- **Subsidy Rates**: The state has a differential rate based on age of child and special needs.
  - *State max rate for infants and toddlers is $22.50 per day.*
  - *State max rate for three-year-olds and up is $21.50 per day.*
  - *State max rate for children with special needs is approximately 26% higher.*

- **Co-Pay**: Most households pay a portion of the child care costs.
  - *Households that are not categorically eligible pay a portion of the state rate for CCAP in addition to any other provider charge.*
  - *Households pay $0, $2 or $3 as the state-required co-pay.*

Recent Improvements

Based on Advisory Council recommendations, BESE has approved a series of changes to CCAP policy to increase access to quality early childhood options.

Eligibility Period	• **Families remain eligible for at least one year regardless of life changes** • *Eligibility may be extended up to 24 months to ensure children are able to attend for a full school year*
Subsidy Rates	• **Infant/toddler max rate increased from $18.50 per day to $22.50** • **PreK max rate increased from $17.50 per day to $21.50 (23% increase)** • **Part-time rates will be paid per hour instead of 6 minute increments** • *Increases was for the school year, before- and after-care, summer, and holidays*
Co-Pay	• **No family in poverty will have a copay** • **Co-pays change from the 40%, 60%, 80% structure to minimal flat amount per week (e.g., $10) based on household income.** • *Providers can charge for the difference between the CCAP subsidy and the provider's rate*
Special Needs	• Child with special needs is any child with IFSP or IEP and qualifies for CCAP • These children are eligible for higher rate (e.g., $27 for PreK)

Continuing Challenges

Due to decline in CCAP participation , the Advisory Council called on the Department to consider expanding eligibility in addition to increasing rates.

	FY 08/09	FY 09/10	FY 10/11	FY 11/12	FY 12/13	FY 13/14	FY 14/15	FY 15/16
Average per Month	39,381	38,207	33,441	25,662	20,180	15,779	14,819	12,719
% Decline from Prior Year		3%	12%	23%	21%	22%	6%	14%

FY 15/16 is 11 month average

Approval rate is comparable to same time period in prior year. Most rejections are due to incompleteness, hours or income requirements.

In July 2015, the Council passed a recommendation to review and reconsider the following priorities for the July 2016 Council meeting :

1. Reduce the training and/or employment activity eligibility requirement minimum average from 30 hours per week to 25 hours per week;
2. Increase the infant toddler daily rate differential; and
3. Transition to a twelve-month flat payment rate.

Proposed Revisions to Bulletin 139 – Related to Family Eligibility

The following revisions are proposed to Bulletin 139 to address the Advisory Council concerns and increase family access to CCAP.

Proposed changes would:

- Reduce work or job training requirement to 25 from 30 hours a week.
- Allow students who are enrolled as a full-time student in an education and/or training program resulting in a degree or certificate designed to promote job skills and employability (Full-time status is determined by the institution, which must be accredited by the State of Louisiana or a national organization).
- Provide an exception to families of children with special needs by reducing their employment and training activity requirements to an average of 15 hours per week.
- Income limits would still be applied to all of these households.

Additional revisions related to changes in federal law:

- Limits the amount of time a homeless family is categorically eligible to one year from 180 days as required by the reauthorization of the federal law.
- Provides for a graduated phase out period of two months for families who are above the income limits when they come up for redetermination.

Proposed Revisions to Bulletin 139 – Related to Provider Requirements

The following revisions are proposed to Bulletin 139 to meet the requirements within the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan.

For Family and In-Home Providers, the revisions:

- Include a pre-service orientation for family child care and in-home providers; and
- Expand the requirements for emergency preparedness disaster plan details for family child care and in-home providers.

For School and Military Providers, the revisions:

- Add a requirement for emergency preparedness disaster plan for school and military providers;
- Ensure the Department can monitor health, safety and transportation requirements; and
- Add a pre-service orientation for school and military providers.
  - Training must include the 10 safety and health topics from the CCDF state plan

Proposed Revisions to Bulletin 137, *Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations*

Proposed Revisions to Bulletin 137 – Louisiana Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations

The following revisions are proposed to Bulletin 137 to meet the new federal requirements committed to within the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan:

- Complies with the federal requirement to expand the emergency preparedness training for staff and volunteers
- Staff and volunteers will need to conduct practice drills at least twice a year
- Practice drills must include all children and must be documented