



EARLY CHILDHOOD NEWSLETTER

June 9, 2022

Last week, the Department hosted 5,500 Louisiana educators in the 10th annual Teacher Leader Summit. The event took place at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans bringing together birth through 12 educators from across the state for an energy-filled, inspiring event closing out one school year and inspiring attendees in their planning for the next. Early childhood leaders and teachers, representing every community network in the state, spent the week attending and delivering professional development training, collaborating with peers, and learning how they can play an active role in shaping the future of early childhood education in Louisiana.

In addition to last week's Summit, the LDOE is hosting the inaugural [Early Childhood Conference – Powering Up Early Childhood](#). The conference will take place from July 22-24, 2022, at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center (NOENMCC). The conference will provide opportunities for education and training for child care providers, teachers, and families in all aspects of Early Childhood. The content and breakout sessions will support the following LDOE Believe to Achieve educational priorities:

- Provide the highest quality teaching and learning environment.
- Remove barriers and create equitable, inclusive learning experiences for all children.
- Cultivate high-impact systems, structures, and partnerships.
- Enhance Communication and guidance for family engagement and support.

The LDOE is hoping that these professional development and networking opportunities inspire Louisiana's early childhood educators as they prepare for the upcoming school year.

Upcoming Deadlines

- June 11: [Teacher Leader Advisors application](#) closes at 5 p.m.
- June 17: [Family Child Care Program Partner Assurances for Academic Approval](#) due
- June 30: Teacher Supplemental Pay Two-Year Grant application closes at 5 p.m.
- June 30: [Powering Up! Early Childhood Conference Registration](#) closes

Upcoming Events

- June 16: [Teaching Strategies® GOLD Upcoming Webinar](#)
- June 24: [Monthly Office Hours for New Directors](#)
- July 7: [Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar](#)
- July 13: [Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council](#)
- July 22-24: [Powering Up! Early Childhood Conference](#)
- August 11: [Early Childhood Investigations Webinar](#)

More Important Dates

Please see the [LDOE School System Support Calendar](#).

In This Issue

- [Updates for COVID-19](#)
 - [Updates for Teaching and Learning](#)
 - [Updates for Funding and Enrollment](#)
 - [Updates for Licensed Centers, Family Child Care, and In-Home Providers](#)
 - [Updates for Directors](#)
 - [Updates for Lead Agencies](#)
 - [Other](#)
 - [Early Childhood in the News](#)
 - [Contact Us](#)
-

UPDATES FOR COVID-19

NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar

There will not be a provider webinar for June. The next provider webinar will be July 7, 2022. Providers can access the upcoming July provider webinar using the information below:

Webinar Date/Time: Thursday, July 7 at 1 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93597745872>

Phone Number: 1-312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 935 9774 5872

Passcode: 641464

REMINDER: TIKES Mental Health Consultation

Tulane offers TIKES Mental Health Consultation at no-cost 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: Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year (TOY/LOY) Finalists

The LDOE Early Childhood team has reviewed all Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year applications and narrowed down both categories to five finalists each.

The five finalists for Louisiana's Early Childhood Teacher of the Year are Janie Clement (Napoleonville Primary Head Start), Kayla Joseph (St. James Parish Head Start in Vacherie), Melissa Loucks (Riverside

Educational Development Center in New Roads), Annie Richardson (Caneview K-8 Head Start in Port Allen), and Natalie Sullivan (Lafourche Parish Head Start in Thibodaux). The five finalists for Early Childhood Leader of the Year are Charli Beall (Busy Bees Academy of Learning in Shreveport), Cindy Bennett Beatty (Riverside Educational Development Center in New Roads), Jennifer Kelsay (The Garden of Knowledge in Bogalusa), LeeAnn Price (Foundations Christian Learning Center in Pineville), and Rochelle Wilcox (Wilcox Academy in New Orleans).

All Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Finalists and Semifinalists will be honored at the 16th Annual Excellent Educators Awards Gala that will be held at the World War II Museum in New Orleans on the evening of July 30, 2022. The overall winners will also be named at this time.

For questions about the Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year programs, email Devon.Camarota@la.gov.

NEW: Waterford Upstart Summer Learning Path

[Waterford Upstart Summer Learning Path](#) is an at-home pre-K learning program enrolling Louisiana's children right now. The program is entirely free, and a laptop and internet access are provided to qualifying families. This free online program helps children build foundational reading, math, and science skills in just 15-20 minutes a day. Waterford Upstart is designed to help families prepare their children for kindergarten. The adaptive programming gives each child an individual experience and focuses their learning at just the right level. Parents know where their child is excelling and where they need more practice. Interested families can register on the [Waterford Upstart website](#).

NEW: Free LDOE Virtual Therapy through Ochsner for Educators (birth – 12)

Ochsner Anywhere Care is a secure virtual visit tool offering appointments with licensed psychologists or therapists through your smartphone, tablet or personal computer—so you can get care where and when you need it! All Early Childhood workers are eligible. Schedule an appointment with the provider of your choice.

Convenient virtual therapy appointments are available Monday – Friday until 8 p.m., with additional appointment times on Saturdays.

Sign up at ldoe.ochsneranywherecare.com and enter Service Key: LDOE; Coupon Code: TEACH.

Please contact rachel.bunch@la.gov with questions.

NEW: Talking with Children about Traumatic Events

Talking with children about traumatic events can be challenging. Whether it's addressing concerns about images of war, natural disasters, or community violence, it can be difficult to know where to start. [ChildCare Education Institute](#) shares information to support teachers in looking for signs that a child may be experiencing fear or anxiety about traumatic events and strategies to build resilience.

Below you will find a number of resources for providers and families that include more details about talking

to children about traumatic events.

- [Helping Children Cope After a Traumatic Event – Child Mind Institute](#)
- [Nine Tips for Talking with Kids about Trauma – The Greater Good Science Center At the University of California, Berkeley](#)
- [Talking with Children about Tragedies and Other News Events – American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Talking to Kids about Traumatic Events with Tips and Videos – Child Care Resource Center: Strengthening Families](#)
- [Supporting Young Children after Crisis Events – National Association for the Education of Young Children](#)

NEW: Early Childhood Investigations Webinar

Play is the heart and heartbeat of early childhood programs, and it's our job to offer environments and opportunities for healthy play. In this webinar, early childhood expert and author Mike Huber will help ensure all children engage in play and find a sense of belonging. Objectives for this session include:

- Shifting your focus for children from the idea of independence to autonomy
- Identifying physical, informational, attitudinal, and cultural barriers in the play environment
- Planning to create environments where all children feel challenged and supported
- Implementing strategies to remove barriers and facilitate play for all children

The [Removing Barriers in Play to Include ALL Children](#) webinar will be held August 11 at 1 p.m.

NEW: Teaching Strategies® GOLD Upcoming Webinars

Register for webinars supporting Teaching Strategies® GOLD implementation. Select the link to explore available dates and times or view recorded webinars:

- [Thinking About Our Thinking: The Important Role of Reflective Thinking in Facilitating New Learning](#), June 16 at 1 p.m.
Join for a free webinar to explore strategies for integrating reflective thinking into daily teaching practices.

Please contact ECAssessment@la.gov with questions related to Teaching Strategies® GOLD.

UPDATED: 2022-2023 Type III Program Partner Assurances for Academic Approval

2021-2022 Academic Approval certificates will expire on June 30, 2022. Type III centers must renew their Academic Approval every year. 2022-2023 Academic Approval certificates were automatically generated following the successful submission of the assurances and have been emailed to the email address provided in the online form. Providers should retain these copies for their records as well as post their 2022-2023 Academic Approval certificates at their sites starting July 1, 2022.

If you have any questions regarding the submission of these assurances, please email Kishia.Grayson@la.gov.

REMINDER: 2022-2023 Teacher Leader Advisors

The Department is now accepting applications for [2022-2023 Teacher Leader Advisors](#). Teacher Leader

Advisors (TLAs) are a group of exceptional educators from across Louisiana who play an influential role in raising expectations for children and supporting the success of teachers. The 2022–2023 TLAs will use their robust knowledge of teaching and learning to review and create the next wave of high-quality instructional materials and training tools that will be used by thousands of teachers across the state. All interested birth through grade 12 Louisiana educators should complete the application by 5 p.m. on June 11.

Please contact ClassroomSupportToolbox@la.gov or Leslie.Doyle@la.gov with questions.

REMINDER: Teachstone®–The CLASS Learning Community

[The CLASS Learning Community](#) is a group of educators dedicated to helping every child reach their full potential by measuring and improving teacher-child interactions. Join for free and browse the available resources. Resource documents, recorded webinars, discussion boards, and blog posts are available.

REMINDER: Early Childhood State Conference for Child Care Providers and Teachers

The Department is excited to announce that registration is open for the inaugural Early Childhood Conference - *Powering Up Early Childhood!* Join us in New Orleans July 22-24, 2022, for exciting speakers, informational sessions, and a wealth of training opportunities. The audience for this conference will be child care providers, directors, teachers, and families.

Keynote speakers include 2020 National Teacher of the Year (an Early Childhood teacher), [Tabitha Rosproy](#), [Louis Finney, Jr.](#), CEO/Executive Director of Smart Start of Forsythe County, Inc, and [Master Caleb Stewart](#), world's youngest motivational speaker on reading.

More information can be found on the [Powering Up](#) webpage.

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

NEW: Early Childhood Guides Pilot Program Highlighted for National Podcast

The PDG B-5 TA Center spotlighted Louisiana's Early Childhood Guides Pilot Program in their [Early Childhood Policy Matters](#) podcast series. The podcast explores this innovative pilot program which provides individualized support to families seeking child care assistance. The podcast can be listened to through the [Soundcloud](#) platform.

REMINDER: Child Care Criminal Background Check Fees and CCAP Copayments

In response to COVID-19, the Department has been covering Child Care Criminal Background Check fees and family copayments. Beginning July 1, 2022, these fees will be reinstated as they were prior to the pandemic.

As a reminder, copayments listed on the "CCAP 12 - Provider Notice of Payment" correspondence are the parent's portion of the State daily rate which is deducted prior to issuance of regular weekly provider payments.

Example: State daily rate for child age birth to 11 months is \$68.00. Parent's co-payment of State rate is \$2.00. State will pay \$66.00/day resulting in a weekly payment to the provider of \$330.00.

REMINDER: Teacher Supplemental Pay Two-Year Grant

The Louisiana Department of Education is offering a teacher supplemental pay two-year grant to improve teacher pay to learn what type of funding is most effective in retaining teachers. Eligibility is open for Type III licensed and CCAP-certified early learning centers, with the exception of Head Start and Early Head Start centers. LDOE will provide funding for this study for two years, from August 2022 through July 2024. Centers will be paid in August of each year and will be responsible for administering the funds to teachers monthly.

The pilot program includes three potential cohorts, which will be chosen through a randomization process. The first cohort will provide sites with a \$2080 payment for each teacher, to be paid out to each teacher evenly across each year. The second cohort will provide teachers with supplemental pay equal to 10% of their base salary prior to the start of the pilot. The third cohort will receive no additional funding for teachers; however, sites will be responsible for completing important follow-up surveys, and centers in this cohort will receive a stipend for ongoing participation.

To be eligible for this funding, the center must be operational and serving children by June 1, 2022. To qualify teachers must work 30 hours or more each week. Note: not all teachers must work 30 hours per week, but those in the grant will only include those teachers working 30 hours or more each week.

[Applications](#) are due by June 30, 2022, at 5 p.m. Notification of approval will be sent by the Department in July.

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

NEW: Child Care Crisis and Disasters

With the recent school shooting at Robb Elementary in Uvalde, Texas, we encourage you to revisit and practice your lockdown procedures. We also recommend that you ask your local [Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness](#) to review your emergency preparedness plan. In addition, [Child Care Aware](#) has good resources and training for a variety of crisis and disaster situations. The [Institute for Childhood Preparedness](#) has resources on active shooter preparedness as well.

REMINDER: 2022-2023 Family Child Care Program Partner Assurances for Academic Approval

Family Child Care sites can now opt into Academic Approval by submitting the [2022-2023 Program Partner Assurances](#) to the Department. To qualify for certain benefits as early as 2023, interested family child care providers must complete assurances by June 17, 2022.

Signed Program Partner Assurances may only be submitted using the 2022-2023 Program Partner Assurances [online form](#); no paper forms are accepted. 2022-2023 Academic Approval certificates will be automatically generated following the successful submission of the assurances and will be emailed to the email address provided in the online form. Providers should retain these copies for their records as well as

post their 2022-2023 Academic Approval certificates at their sites starting July 1, 2022.

If you are a Family Child Care provider and would like to learn more about the benefits and requirements of Academic Approval, please contact Felicia.Jackson3@la.gov.

REMINDER: Annual Level 1 Notice - Be Prepared: Know What To Do If a Hurricane or Other Disaster Occurs in Your Parish

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) would like to remind you to be prepared if a hurricane or other disaster occurs in your area or parish. This [memo](#) contains easy-to-use information to assist you with becoming prepared.

The time to prepare is now. Providers are encouraged to contact the [Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness](#) with questions or concerns regarding their site's emergency plan.

If an emergency covers a large geographical area such as a parish or region of the state, the LDOE will closely monitor conditions out of concern for the safety of our sites and the children and families that they serve. Sites located within a parish or area that the LDOE determines as impacted by disaster may be required to obtain post-disaster approval, and submit the required Reopening Request to the LDOE.

In the event of a potential disaster, take the following steps to prepare:

- Stay up-to-date with the status of any storm or other potential natural disaster and its impact on your area.
- Ensure that LDOE has your current cell phone number and email address.
- Review and update evacuation and safety plans.
- Practice evacuation and reunification plans.
- Let families know how you will communicate if you are unable to reopen following a disaster.
- Review the Frequently Asked Questions below and be ready if a disaster declaration is made for your parish:
 - [Child Care Assistance Program \(CCAP\) – Before, During, and After a Disaster](#)
 - [Reinstatement of a Child Care Center License Following a Disaster](#)
- Pay close attention to the messages from your local officials.
- Obtain your parish's [Emergency Preparedness Contact](#) phone number.
- Review the useful links below:
 - <http://www.getagameplan.org/>
 - <http://www.emergency.louisiana.gov/>
- Be Safe.

REMINDER: Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Planning

All providers must conduct tornado drills at least once per month. These drills shall be conducted in the months of March, April, May, and June at various times of the day; shall include all children; and must be documented. A [sample form](#), titled "Monthly Tornado Drills," can be found in the Licensed Centers' Library.

For more information, contact a licensing consultant at (225) 342-9905 or ldelicensing@la.gov.

REMINDER: Deadlines for LDOE CPR/PFA Vendor Information

Currently all site staff must have CPR/PFA certification.

- June 3, 2022, was the last day approved CPR/PFA vendors could complete trainings and request payment from the Department. Any invoice for training conducted after June 3, 2022, will not be processed.
- June 30, 2022, is the last day invoices will be accepted for trainings. Any invoice submitted to the Department after June 30, 2022, will not be processed.
- After June 3, 2022, we encourage CRP/PFA vendors to share their availability with child care providers and continue to provide CPR/PFA training. Please note that the Department will NOT be responsible for payments for trainings conducted after June 3, 2022.

For more information, please email ldelicensing@la.gov.

REMINDER: Motor Vehicle Passenger Checks

It is imperative that vehicles are adequately inspected for children before staff exit the vehicle, especially as temperatures rise outside. Children can die in a hot vehicle in a matter of minutes. [Heat stroke](#) can happen when the outside temperature is as low as 57 degrees Fahrenheit.

A staff person shall

- physically walk through the vehicle and inspect all seat surfaces, under all seats, and in all enclosed spaces and recesses of the vehicle interior.
- record the time of the visual passenger check and sign the log indicating that no child was left in the vehicle.

Please ensure staff have received proper training and repeated training if needed.

If you have any questions, please contact a licensing consultant at (225) 342-9905 or email ldelicensing@la.gov.

REMINDER: Decrease in Two-Year-Old Child to Staff Ratio for All Center Types

Effective July 1, 2022, the child to staff ratio for two-year-olds will decrease from 11:1 to 10:1. Ensure you have sufficient staff to meet this requirement.

If you have any questions, please contact a licensing consultant at (225) 342-9905 or email ldelicensing@la.gov.

UPDATES FOR DIRECTORS

NEW: Monthly Office Hours for New Directors

Every month, the LDOE team hosts a webinar that focuses on topics related to early childhood quality while also helping to expand directors' network of peers. Office hours are targeted towards new directors. Come

learn about Type III requirements, connect with other directors, and stay up-to-date with upcoming events and deadlines. This month's topic will be an overview of Mental Health Consultation Services.

Webinar Date/Time: June 24 at 12 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/99075363953>

Webinar Phone Number: 1-346-248-7799

Passcode: 126700

Meeting ID: 99075363953

Please contact Tella.Henderson@la.gov with any questions.

NEW: Child Care Management Software Initiative (CCMSi)

Great news! This initiative has been extended an additional year (until June 2023) to make all Type III providers and CCAP-certified family child care providers eligible to purchase a new subscription to an approved Child Care Management Software (CCMS) identified in the LDOE [CCMS Guidebook](#) and receive a one-time reimbursement of up to 80% (for a maximum reimbursement of \$1,000). [Apply online today](#), and contact your CCR&R for reimbursement.

Tracy, the Director at a child care center who is using a CCMS, shared with the Department how utilizing a CCMS has benefitted her center. She says, "Collecting tuition used to be a full time job for my business manager. Now she is able to put energy into other projects because we have streamlined the collection of payments."

For more information about the CCMSi, contact Shallan.Jones@la.gov.

UPDATES FOR COMMUNITY NETWORK LEAD AGENCIES

NEW: Weekly Webinar for Community Network Lead Agencies

The Early Childhood team holds Office Hours every Tuesday at 3 p.m. for Community Network Lead Agency contacts. The purpose of the webinars is to provide updates and answer questions for Community Network Lead Agencies. Presentations from previous Community Network Lead Agency Office Hours are located in the [Community Network Lead Agency Library](#).

The upcoming schedule for Weekly Webinars for Community Network Lead Agencies can be found below:

- June 14: Coordinated Enrollment Trends and Spotlights
- June 21: Data Certification
- June 28: General updates

Note that topics are subject to change.

Please email Amanda.Colon@la.gov with questions.

OTHER

NEW: Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council

The next meeting for the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council will take place on July 13 at 1 p.m. in the Claiborne Building, located at 1201 N. Third Street in Baton Rouge and be [live-streamed](#) online.

For additional information regarding the ECCE Advisory Council, please email Leslie.Doyle@la.gov.

IN THE NEWS

[Louisiana Legislature Makes Historic Investment Towards Early Childhood Education](#) (Louisiana Radio Network)

[Legislature Approves Budget with \\$84 Million Going to Early Childhood Education](#) (KNOE)

[Louisiana Legislature Passes Early Education and Child Care Bills](#) (BRPROUD)

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding COVID-19, school closures, or other concerns, please contact LDOECOVID19@la.gov.
- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For questions regarding community network lead agencies, please contact leadagencysupport@la.gov.
- For all questions regarding child care criminal background check processing, please contact LDEcccpcbprocessing@la.gov.
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.

Subscribe to Our Monthly Newsletter by Completing this Form

The Early Childhood Newsletter is released as a monthly edition. To ensure all subscribers are current, please complete this [form](#) in order to receive our next monthly edition. Please also send this [form](#) to stakeholders who can register as new subscribers.