

September 10, 2020



News for Early Childhood Educators

Dear Colleagues,

As Louisiana works to recover from Hurricane Laura, the Department is working alongside communities to aid in the recovery process. I shared disaster recovery guidance with system leaders across our state Friday afternoon. Whether your sites were directly impacted by Hurricane Laura or your network is home to displaced children, this disaster will be felt by educators across Louisiana.

Our disaster recovery guidance provides information on policy and logistic issues needed immediately to meet acute needs and restore learning environments. At this point, the number of displaced children and educators is unclear and the reopening date for several networks is unsure.

Last week, I visited system leaders in Calcasieu and Jefferson Davis. If a picture is worth 1,000 words, boots on the ground are worth 5,000. This recovery is a marathon, not a sprint. It's made more challenging by the fact that we remain in a global health pandemic. While the recovery presents a new set of challenges during a historically challenging year, I'm confident in our ability to keep pushing forward for our children.

Dr. Cade Brumley
State Superintendent of Education

Upcoming Deadlines

- October 30- last day to take the [Market Rate Survey](#)

Upcoming Events

- Fall 2020 Collaboratives for Lead Agencies: Session 1 - September 29 and 30
- Early Childhood Care and Education Commission Meeting - September 28

More Important Dates

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

Please click the image below to read the **Early Childhood Newsletter** in your browser.

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News for Early Childhood Educators

June 4, 2020

The Louisiana Senate unanimously confirmed the appointment of Dr. Cade Brantley to be the next State Superintendent of Education. The state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BSE) appointed Dr. Brantley to lead Louisiana's school system at its May 20, 2020, meeting. His official start date will be June 8, 2020.

BSE President Sandy Holloway issued the following statement following the confirmation:

"I applaud the Senate for their confirmation of Dr. Brantley today. These are unprecedented times, strong leadership will be important to the success of our short- and long-term work to address unfinished learning due to COVID-19 closures and to ensure that students and schools are positioned for a strong start next year. This will be a huge responsibility, but we have the right leader for it. Not only does Dr. Brantley have extensive K-12 experience and a proven track record of success, but he possesses perhaps the number one quality which BSE sought: the ability to effectively and humbly bring all parties to the table to move education forward. Louisiana needs a visionary leader, but more importantly we need an empathetic, cooperative, adaptable and trusting leader."

Please join us in welcoming him and to supporting his transition.

Additionally, Gov. Edwards announced Monday that following continued improvement in Louisiana's COVID-19 metrics and a significant increase in testing capacity and contact tracing, Louisiana schools will be able to resume in-person learning starting on June 5. In order to ensure the health and safety of children and staff, centers must continue to follow the required guidelines detailed in the [Office of Public Health Guidelines for Child Care](#). Sites will be able to increase group size while maintaining current ratios. The Department is continuing to support our child care providers as they become operational again by funding a second round of LACAP Relief Grants. Approximately \$9M in grant funds are expected to be released to eligible publicly-funded providers who submitted an application by the second week of June.

I am also pleased to note the [Louisiana Learning System](#), the [Virtual Learning System](#), and nearly 6,000 educators in attendance. The next will continue through June 5.

[Download the newsletter for Early Childhood Educators](#)

COVID-19 Updates

Louisiana will move to Phase 3 of the White House's reopening strategy on September 11. In order to ensure the health and safety of children and staff, centers must continue to follow the required guidelines detailed in the [Office of Public Health Guidelines for Child Care](#). Sites will be able to return to normal maximum group size and ratio.

Updates for Teaching and Learning

NEW: Teachstone Offers Recertification Extension Program

Teachstone recently announced an opportunity for Certified CLASS® Observers, Affiliate CLASS® Trainers, and CLASS® Group Coaching (MMCI) Coaches with expired certifications to seek recertification. Teachstone has developed a process to make it easier to rejoin these certification programs without the burden of retaking the original training.

All observers, affiliate trainers, and CGC/MMCI coaches whose certifications expired or will expire between January 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021 and who are unable to complete testing within the standard testing window are eligible for recertification.

Request a recertification extension by filling out [this form](#). The cost of recertification remains the same.

Please note, CLASS® Observers, Coaches, and Trainers must maintain active certifications in order to keep collecting CLASS data and offering CLASS® training and coaching.

Questions regarding CLASS® can be directed to meredith.eckard@la.gov.

NEW: K-2 CLASS® Pilot Overview Webinar

The Department hosted a K-2 CLASS® Pilot Overview Webinar on September 9 to provide information around the CLASS® tool, including current pilot updates and future opportunities to join. CLASS® is an observation instrument that measures the effectiveness of teacher-student interactions that promote academic learning, engagement and social development. It is used statewide in publicly funded birth through pre-K classrooms and is now in its fifth pilot year for early elementary.

The [recording](#) of the webinar and [resources](#) for the K-2 CLASS pilot are available.

Questions regarding the K-2 CLASS® Pilot can be directed to lisa.holliday@la.gov.

NEW: Start the Adventure in Reading Free Tutoring

Know a grade 2 or 3 public or charter student could benefit from virtual reading support? Start the Adventure in Reading (STAIR) is providing FREE one-on-one tutoring. STAIR's virtual curriculum helps reinforce decoding, fluency, and comprehension skills. During the fall program, students will participate in a one-on-one, 60-minute virtual tutoring session once a week after school or on Saturday mornings, pre-recorded video lessons, have access to a year-long subscription to a digital library service, maintain a creative writing journal with weekly assignments and gain confidence in



writing. To participate, visit stairnola.org or call 504-202-8187. Registration is closing soon.

Questions can be directed to maya.mclaughlin@la.gov.

NEW: Resources for Supporting Developmental Milestones

[Learn the Signs. Act Early. \(LTSAE\)](#) is a federally mandated program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that encourages parents of children ages birth to 5 years of age and providers who care for them to:

- learn the signs of healthy development;
- monitor every child's early development; and
- act early on possible developmental concerns (i.e., talk with doctors and ask for developmental screening).

The Louisiana Department of Education has partnered with the Louisiana Department of Health to offer early childhood networks the opportunity to co-brand and customize some of the LTSAE materials. Brochures and milestone checklists can include contact numbers for Early Steps and Child Find, as well as a visual logo.

If you are interested in obtaining free materials, please email brittany.braun@la.gov.

NEW: Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules (AFIRM)

The [7 support strategies](#) were designed to meet the unique needs of children with autism during this period of uncertainty. The examples and ready-made resources are included to help caregivers implement these strategies quickly and easily. These materials purposely represent a variety of styles/designs/complexity to model the range of what may be most meaningful across ages and skills, and to demonstrate what can be generated with few materials by busy caregivers.

NEW: Frog Street Pre-K at Home Online Learning Program

Frog Street is now expanding their distance learning solutions and launching a new *Frog Street Pre-K at Home* online subscription-based learning program! This interactive, hands-on program is perfect for home use to help family members be their child's best teacher. Current users of the Frog Street for Young Learners program will be transitioned to the new subscription-based program, beginning September 4.

[Frog Street Pre-K at Home](#) offers:

- 9 Pre-K thematic monthly units with daily family activities aligned with the Frog Street Pre-K Curriculum
- 20 daily activities a week for 36 weeks using easy-to-find household items and digital resources in the program
- Over 250 digital eBooks and eStories available in the Digital Library for use on any device (laptop, tablet, smartphone)
- Ready-to-use tips and ideas to help families develop interactive and purposeful reading strategies
- Learn more about [Frog Street Pre-K at Home](#).

NEW: TeachingStrategies® Back to School Webinar Series

TeachingStrategies is offering a [free, live webinar series](#) that supports early childhood educators during a back-to-school season that is unlike any other. Participants will learn best practices and strategies to use during these unique times, such as ways to strengthen family partnerships and practice self-care.

If participants are unable to attend the live webinar, please still [register](#) to receive the recorded webinars.

Any questions regarding Teaching Strategies GOLD® can be directed to meredith.eckard@la.gov

Reminder: Birth-Grade 3 Assessment Guidance

- Administer the KEA and K-3 literacy screener within the first 30 school days. Please review the [Pre-K to 3rd Grade Assessment Guidance 2020-2021](#) for additional information.
- Due October 31: Deadline for data managers to submit the KEA and K-3 literacy screener data with the [SIS K-3 Assessment Collection](#).
- Due October 31: Fall Checkpoint for GOLD: Early Childhood (ages 3-5). Visit the [Early Childhood \(pre-K\) Assessment Guidance for Various Learning Environments](#) for additional information.

Birth-Grade 3 Assessments has a [suite of resources](#) available to help school systems (and early

learning centers) with assessment administration for the 2020-2021 school year.

As a reminder, children enrolled in a school-based pre-K or Head Start hybrid or virtual learning environments, who will be enrolled in Type III child care on their “non-school” days, should be assessed by their school-based pre-K or Head Start teacher and entered into GOLD®. The school-based or Head Start teacher is responsible for assessing and entering GOLD® data for the child, but is encouraged to stay in communication with the child care provider in order to collect anecdotal evidence and accurately report a child’s checkpoint levels, both preliminary and finalized.

The child care provider will not be responsible for entering GOLD® data for children who only attend the child care center as part of their hybrid/virtual program.

Additionally, the LDOE will work with those districts that are severely impacted by Hurricane Laura. The Department will review BESE policy to ensure alignment with state law and will consider flexibility in timelines for administration and reporting results during times of crisis or natural disaster.

For questions, please contact assessment@la.gov.

Reminder: Strong Start 2020 Instructional Material and PD Vendor Guide Updates

In order to ensure a strong start to 2020-2021, school systems should adapt academic plans for 2020-2021 to include distance learning plans provided by publishers of high-quality instructional materials. The Strong Start 2020 plan includes [Instructional Materials Guidance](#) and [Professional Development Guidance](#), and the Department continues to work with publishers and vendors to update each guide as they build and refine their supports.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Virtual Pre-K Toolkit

Last month, the Department [released a toolkit](#) to provide guidance for how to design and implement a [virtual pre-K program](#) in the 2020-2021 school year.

The [toolkit](#) provides both requirements and recommendations for quality implementation.

- Requirements for virtual settings
- Synchronous and asynchronous definitions
- Sample schedules for teachers and families
- Guidance for completing assessments virtually
- Ideas for providing materials at home
- Tips for publicizing a virtual option

Questions about virtual pre-K can be directed to meredith.eckard@la.gov.

Updates for Funding and Enrollment

Market Rate Survey (MRS)

Every three years the Department requests that child care providers across the state complete the Market Rate Survey (MRS). The MRS helps the Department determine the true costs of high quality child care and provides the Department with localized data used to determine the state’s child care reimbursement rates. You may remember completing this year’s Market Rate Survey. However, due to COVID-19, the Department must collect new data. Therefore, the Department is releasing a new [Market Rate Survey](#) that will close on October 30.

For questions, please contact robyn.stiles@emergentmethod.com or valerie.black@la.gov.

LaCAP Relief Grant Round 3

LaCAP Relief Grant 3 payments to providers are in the process of being disbursed.

Provider Payments

CCAP has extended child care payments to providers based on enrollment through October 30. After October 30, CCAP will begin child care payments to providers based on attendance through January 2021. Additionally, due to many hybrid school schedules, school age children who are normally part-time will remain full-time through January 2021.

NSECD Payment Update

For the period August through October 31, 2020, NSECD providers will receive payments equal to their allocation as approved in Spring 2020.

All providers will continue to report actual enrollment and attendance, as in the past during this period; however, payments will be based on the original allocation amount

Beginning in November 2020, a shift will be made so that providers will be paid based on *actual enrollment* (including students enrolled in virtual pre-K).

For questions regarding NSECD payments, please contact lindsey.bradford@la.gov.

Client Redeterminations

Presently, CCAP client redeterminations are extended as follows:

- June and March redeterminations are extended to September 2020.
- July and April redeterminations are extended to October 2020.
- August and May redeterminations are extended to November 2020.

For questions regarding CCAP, please email the Provider Ticket System at

<https://provider.supportsystem.com>.

Updates for Licensed Centers, Family Child Care & In-Home Providers



Non-Renewal of License for Licensed Child Care Centers

Currently, the CAFÉ webpage is not required to submit renewal applications. A jot form renewal application has been sent to each center that is required to renew their application. Each center should ensure the jot form renewal application is completed and submitted. Timely submission of the jot form is imperative. Renewal applications not received will result in a non-renewal of the license and the provider would need to reapply for licensure.

Reopening Forms for Licensed Child Care Centers

If your center or location is situated in any of the below parishes, the center **MUST** complete a [Reopening Form](#) and submit it to the LDOE by **5:00 p.m. on September 10**. Failure to do so may result in suspension of the center's registration/certification pending the submission of the attached Reopening Form. Any reopening forms submitted on or prior to August 27, 2020 (date of landfall of Hurricane Laura) must be resubmitted.

Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, Acadia, Vermilion, Catahoula, Grant, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Rapides, Sabine, Vernon, Winn, Bienville, Claiborne, Red River, Caldwell, Jackson, Lincoln, Ouachita, Union, Desoto, and St. Mary.

Questions can be directed to a [Licensing Consultant](#) at 225-342-9905 or ldelicensing@la.gov.

TIKES Mental Health Consultation

Tulane offers TIKES Mental Health Consultation via telephone or secure video platform to Louisiana caregivers in need during the COVID-19 crisis. Parents, Type I, II, & III child care centers, respite care center caregivers, and others caring for young children can request a consultation. Requests are typically answered within hours and scheduled for the next day. Complete a [request form](#) to request services.: <https://medicine.tulane.edu/departments/clinical-sciences/psychiatry/research/tikes>

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) is offering FREE testing for lead in drinking water child care programs.

To learn more about the drinking water lead testing program and to submit an application for testing at a particular facility, visit <http://ldh.la.gov/SchoolLeadTesting>

Updates for Child Care Criminal Background Checks

In an effort to support all early learning centers, the Department has extended the LDOE fee waiver for Child Care Criminal Background Checks (CCCBCs) through June 2021. This [waiver](#) applies to the \$15.00 administrative fee and the \$15.00 out of state fee.

Contact LDeccbcprocessing@la.gov with any CCCBC questions.

Updates for Directors

Louisiana Main Street Grant

Criteria for the [Louisiana Main Street Grant](#) has been expanded. Small businesses can apply for up to \$15,000 to cover designated expenses.

Enrollment Tip

Using video tours can be a great strategy to sustain enrollment during COVID-19. Look at this parent-friendly [example](#) from LELA fellow Terry Lyasere's center, United Presbyterian Day School.

Updates for Lead Agencies



Office Hours: Every Tuesday is Weekly Webinar for Lead Agencies

The Early Childhood Team provides a Weekly Webinar for lead agency contacts. The purpose is to provide time each week to collaborate with other colleagues, learn new ideas, review Department updates, and answer questions for lead agencies. These sessions are held on most Tuesdays at 3 p.m. and usually last a half-hour. Contact amanda.colon@la.gov with questions.

Upcoming Schedule for Weekly Webinar for Lead Agencies

- September 15 at 3 p.m.
- September 22 at 3 p.m.
- September 30 - no webinar due to Fall Collaboratives

Recent Lead Agency Resources

- [August 11 Back to School webinar slides](#) and [recorded link](#)
- [August 18 Office Hours webinar slides](#)
- [September 1 Office Hours webinar slides](#)

Early Childhood Fall Collaboratives

- September 29 and 30, "Reopened, Refocused, and Reengaged"
- November TBD, Super App Launch

Other

Early Childhood Care and Education Commission - Upcoming Meeting, September 28

The next meeting for the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission will take place on September 28 at 11:00 a.m. in the Claiborne Building, located at 1201 N. Third Street in Baton Rouge. Participants can also [livestream](#) the event. An overview of the [ECCE Commission containing current members](#) is available online.

For additional information, please email emmy.odwyer@la.gov.

NOTICE: In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance at this meeting please contact leslie.doyle@la.gov at least three business days in advance of the meeting describing the assistance that is needed.

ECCE Advisory Council - September Meeting Canceled

The September meeting for the Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council has been canceled. An [overview](#) of the ECCE Advisory Council and [meeting materials](#) are available online.

For additional information, please email leslie.doyle@la.gov.

Reminder: Monthly Newsletter

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

2020 Virtual Education Manager Institute: Available On-Demand

The [2020 Education Manager Institute](#) is now available on-demand. Viewers can access professional development targeted to their role as early childhood education leaders. The Institute sessions were designed to support Head Start education managers and leaders as they work with staff members, children, and families from a distance, but many topics and resources may also be useful to education leaders in child care settings.

Sessions include considerations for summer programming and supporting school readiness for all children. The On-Demand Institute is a resource-rich experience with many engaging opportunities to explore content and resources from the Office of Head Start (OHS) National Centers.

This was a live virtual event. To access training, participants can [register](#) and watch the sessions and view the resources on-demand until September 2020.

Send questions or comments about this opportunity to the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning at ecdte@ecetta.info or (844)-261-3752 (toll-free).

Early Childhood in the News

[Louisiana Awarded \\$42 Million Federal Grant From US Department of Education to Improve Literacy Outcomes](#) (Louisiana Believes)

[In New Orleans, free coronavirus tests for child care workers](#) (The Advocate)

[Restorative circles, online wellness rooms and grief training: How schools are preparing for the Covid mental health crisis](#) (The Hechinger Report)

[Louisiana will provide 1 million masks for public and private schools and day care centers](#) (The Advocate)

['Learning Hubs' Offer Free Child Care And Learning — But Only For A Lucky Few](#) (NPR)

[Why Are Child Care Programs Open When Schools Are Not?](#) (The New York Times)

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 lead agencies, please contact leadagencysupport@la.gov.
- For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.



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