LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Assessments, Accountability, and Analytics

CLASS® Third-Party Observation Appeal Guidelines

Early Childhood CLASS® Third-Party Observation Appeals

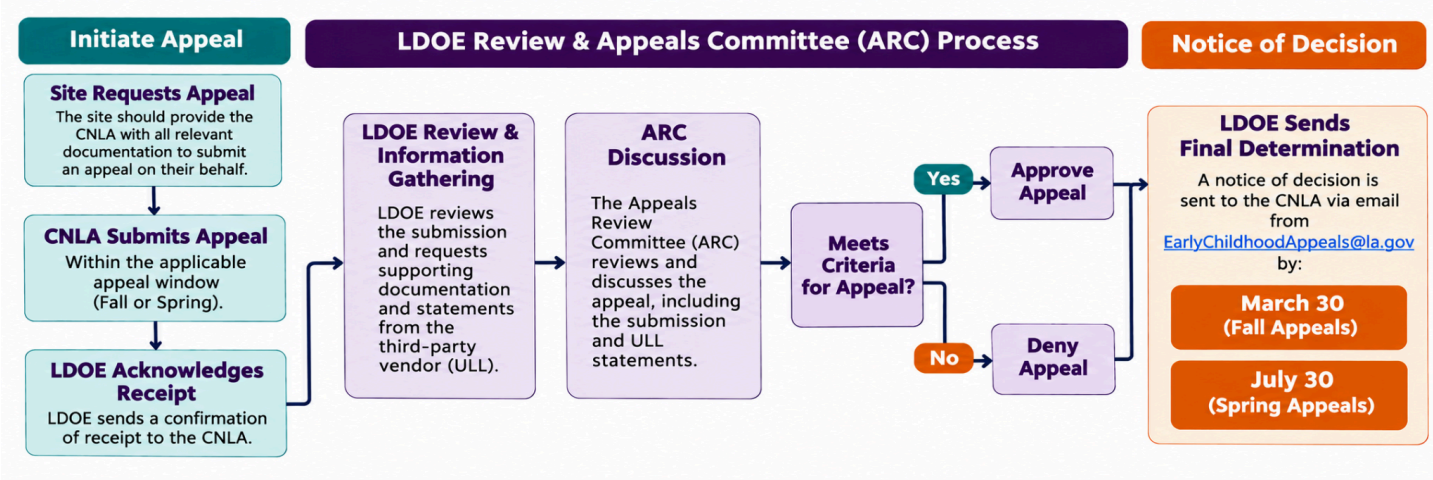
To appeal a third-party CLASS® observation, Community Network Lead Agencies (CNLAs) must submit an appeal form on behalf of the individual or site requesting the appeal. Appeals submitted by individuals other than Community Network Lead Agency staff will not be considered, and the individual will be instructed to work with the Community Network Lead Agency to re-submit the appeal.

Submitting an appeal form does NOT guarantee that the appeal will be approved. Appeals of scores based on the quality of the classroom or teacher not reflected in the score received may not be approved. Please review the Early Childhood CLASS® Observation Error Correction and Appeal Guidelines to assist in determining if an observation should be appealed.

To ensure appeals are submitted within the semester in which the observation occurred, the following timeline will be implemented:

- **Fall Appeals** must be submitted between August 1 and 11:59 p.m. on January 15 of the academic year in which the observation occurred.
    - Community Network Lead Agencies are strongly encouraged to submit appeals within 30 days of the contested observation to allow for a thorough review of the appeal.
    - The LDOE will notify Community Network Lead Agencies of the final appeal determination via email from EarlyChildhoodAppeals@la.gov no later than March 30 of the academic year in which the observation occurred.
        - In the event a re-observation is recommended, the LDOE will notify Community Network Lead Agencies of the final Appeal Determination via email from EarlyChildhoodAppeals@la.gov no later than July 30 of the academic year in which the observation occurred.
- **Spring Appeals** must be submitted between January 1 and 11:59 p.m. on June 15 of the academic year in which the observation occurred.
    - Community Network Lead Agencies are strongly encouraged to submit appeals within 30 days of the contested observation to allow for a thorough review of the appeal.
    - The LDOE will notify Community Network Lead Agencies of the final Appeal Determination via email from EarlyChildhoodAppeals@la.gov no later than July 30 of the academic year in which the observation occurred.

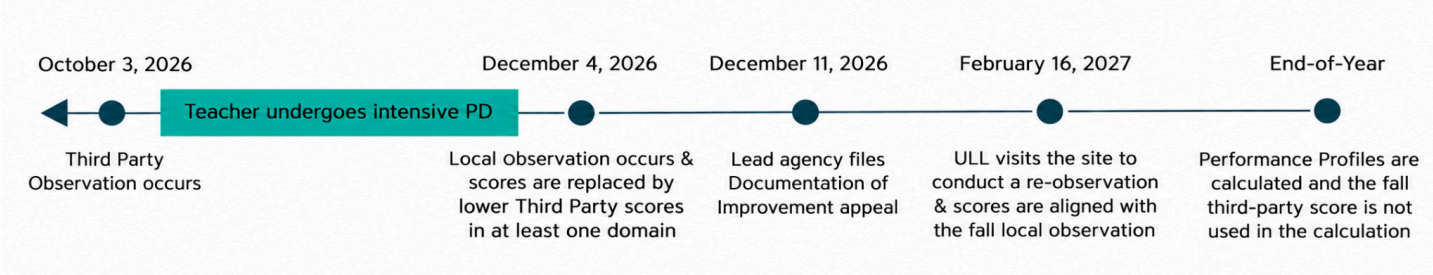
Appeal Flow Chart



Documentation of Improvement (DOI) Appeal

Documentation of Improvement appeals may be requested to demonstrate a teacher's significant improvement over the course of a year. In the event that a third-party observation occurs early in the fall semester, the teacher undergoes intensive professional development and receives higher scores in a local observation later that semester, the site and Community Network Lead Agency may request a Documentation of Improvement appeal.

Below is a sample scenario of an approved Documentation of Improvement appeal:



Community Network Lead Agencies may **only** submit a Documentation of Improvement appeal if a third-party observation **meets all** of the following criteria:

- ☐ Third party observation occurred prior to **October 15**
- ☐ The local observation occurred **after** the third party observation
- ☐ There were at least **6 weeks** between the third party and local observations
- ☐ Intensive professional development (likely conducted by the CNLA and/or CCR&R) occurred **after** the observation (documentation must be provided*)
- ☐ The third party observation scores would **replace** the local scores in at least one domain

- Acceptable documentation may include attendance logs from professional development training or written testimony from CNLA or SIP coaches. If attendance logs are submitted, Community Network Lead Agencies should also include descriptions and supporting materials such as training content documents, certificates of completion, informal observation notes, signed debriefing forms, and evidence of classroom implementation.

- If the appeal meets the qualifications for approval, then a third-party re-observation is ordered during the spring semester. The LDOE will make a decision on the appeal based on the third party re-observation.
- The LDOE will notify Community Network Lead Agencies of the final Appeal Determination via email from EarlyChildhoodAppeals@la.gov no later than July 30 of the academic year in which the observation occurred.

Typical Appeal Types

There are six types of typical appeals, and CNLAs may select more than one type when submitting the appeal form. Each appeal type includes a specific description that must be followed during submission and adhered to throughout the appeals review process.

CNLAs are encouraged to include relevant supporting documentation, when applicable, with the appeal form. References to a teacher's prior scores or past performance history should be avoided.

Typical Appeal Types	LDOE Review Steps	Conditions for Appeal Approval
1. CNLA disagrees with third party observation scores and/or feedback. Ex. The observation scores and feedback do not align with the lowest scores and feedback identified by the observer. The lowest scores are in Quality of Feedback and Concept Development; however, the observation feedback references concerns with Productivity and Concept Development. A further review of the observer's scores reveals a potential discrepancy in how these dimensions were scored.	Review the observation score booklet(s), consult with The Picard Center, and obtain additional information from the observer as necessary. If applicable, conduct an additional third-party observation. This third-party observation may be used to supplement existing data and provide additional context for final determinations.	The observation scoring summary sheet and notes do not support the recorded observation scores. The additional third-party re-observation score does not align with the original third-party observation score.
2. CNLA cites potential violation of protocol by the observer. **Protocol can be viewed on the Louisiana Believes Early Childhood CLASS Observations webpage* Ex. The observer observed for 12 of the 20 minutes during the third cycle of the observation.	Consult with The Picard Center and obtain additional information related to the measures taken to remain within protocol. Review the observation score booklet(s) and supporting documentation, including schedules, communications, and all other relevant information. If applicable, conduct an additional third-party observation. This third-party observation may be used to supplement existing data and provide additional context for final determinations.	The observation scoring summary sheet and notes do not support the recorded observation scores, indicating a potential violation of protocol by the observer. A review conducted with The Picard Center indicates a violation of protocol. The additional third-party re-observation score does not align with the original third-party observation score.

3. CNLA cites concern about what teacher was present in the classroom during the observation. Ex. The teacher observed was a substitute and had not been in the classroom for 10 consecutive days.	Confirm with The Picard Center which teacher was present during the observation. Verify with The Picard Center whether the teacher observed has been in the classroom for at least 10 consecutive school days. Review the observation score booklet(s) and observation notes. If applicable, conduct an additional third-party observation. This third-party observation may be used to supplement existing data and provide additional context for final determinations.	The observation scoring summary sheet and notes do not support the observation scores, indicating that the wrong teacher was present in the classroom during the observation. A review with The Picard Center indicates that the observer observed the incorrect teacher, as the teacher had not been present in the classroom for at least 10 consecutive days. The additional third-party re-observation score does not align with the original third-party observation score.
4. CNLA cites potential conflict of interest on the part of the observer. Ex. The observer is a member of the site's executive board and has a direct financial interest in the site.	Confirm with The Picard Center the extent of the observer's prior involvement with the site and the teacher. Review the observation score booklet(s) and observation notes. If applicable, conduct an additional third-party observation. This third-party observation may be used to supplement existing data and provide additional context for final determinations.	The observation scoring summary sheet and notes do not support the observation scores, indicating a conflict of interest. Review with The Picard Center indicates that the third-party observer has prior involvement that violates the conflict of interest policy, which can be found on the Louisiana Believes Early Childhood CLASS Observations webpage. The additional third-party re-observation score does not align with the original third-party observation score.
5. CNLA cites a disaster/extenuating circumstances occurred during observation. Ex. During the third cycle of the observation, a fire alarm caused a significant disruption at the site, resulting in a full evacuation that lasted approximately 30 minutes. After the teachers and students returned to the classroom, the observer informed the teacher that they would be given 10 minutes to readjust before resuming the third cycle of the observation.	Review with The Picard Center what the observer witnessed, and documentation of the disaster or extenuating circumstances. Available evidence should indicate whether such circumstances impacted the observation. Review the observation score booklet(s) and observation notes. If applicable, conduct an additional third-party observation. This third-party observation may be used to supplement existing data and provide additional context for final determinations.	The observation scoring summary sheet and notes do not support the observation scores, indicating a disaster/extenuating circumstances impacted the observation. The additional third-party re-observation score does not align with the original third-party observation score.

6. CNLA cites other concerns not captured in previous appeal categories. Ex. The site emailed The Picard Center by the 02/24/24 deadline with the dates that were not ideal for an observation. When the observer arrived on one of those dates, the site explained the situation; however, the observer stated that she could observe a different class. The selected teacher had two children who were not typically in her class, which impacted the classroom environment.	Review the observation score booklet(s), consult with The Picard Center, and obtain additional information as necessary. If applicable, conduct an additional third-party observation. This third-party observation may be used to supplement existing data and provide additional context for final determinations.	The observation scoring summary sheet and notes do not support the observation scores, indicating the appeal should be approved. The additional third-party re-observation score does not align with the original third-party observation score.