

## 2020-2021 PRE-K PROGRAM ASSURANCES

**As an authorized representative of the applicant listed, I certify that the following statements are true:**

- I acknowledge that pursuant to R.S. 17:407.26 and R.S. 17:407.23, the Department of Education (the Department) is authorized to regulate the Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program (LA 4) and the Nonpublic Schools Early Childhood Development Program (NSECD).
- I agree to:
  - Participate fully in the Early Childhood Care and Education Community Network as provided in Chapter 3 of Bulletin 140;
  - Participate fully in the Early Childhood Care and Education Accountability System as provided in Chapter 5 of Bulletin 140; and
  - Participate fully in the Community Network's Coordinated Enrollment Process as provided in Chapter 7 of Bulletin 140.

### **Attendance and Reimbursement**

- I understand that both LA 4 and NSECD provide \$4,580 per child, provided the child meets eligibility and attendance requirements as subsequently outlined. Attendance rates will be calculated on a monthly basis for the months of August to May, and the district or site will receive \$458 per month for each qualifying child, paid monthly. If the school year calendar is revised due to COVID-19, attendance will include additional months;
- I understand that funds are available to serve children who meet age and income eligibility requirements, and that families in a temporary living arrangement due to loss of housing or economic hardship (homeless) and children in foster care are considered categorically eligible;
- I will ensure that accurate enrollment and attendance records are kept for each child;
- I will submit monthly enrollment and attendance reports for each child funded with LA 4 and NSECD funds by the 10th day of the month following the enrollment month. Failure to submit timely data may result in a forfeiture of payment that cannot be recouped in subsequent months;
- I acknowledge that the monthly per child rate of \$458 is payable contingent on the child attending 74% of the scheduled school calendar days in a month. For children who do not meet the 74% requirement, payments will be made based on funding availability;
- I assure that individual children are not counted or claimed for reimbursement for full day care by more than one program (example: the same child cannot be counted as both NSECD and/or full-time CCAP);
- I acknowledge that in order to be counted as present, a child must be present a minimum of four (4) hours of the six (6)-hour instructional period, unless otherwise advised by the Department due to COVID-19;
- I will maintain documentation of student eligibility (e.g., DirectMatch, pay stubs, letter from employer, or recent proof of eligibility for means-tested services such as SNAP/Food Stamps);
- I will not deny access, participation or funding to children on the basis of race, color, or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); gender (Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and Title II of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1976); or disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) in education programs;

- I understand that all funds received may only be used for expenditures related to providing pre-K services during the 6-hour instructional day, but may include family engagement activities that might occur outside of the instructional day;
- I understand that the allocation may be amended if the number of awarded slots is not filled or if the number of slots is exceeded, provided funds are available.

### **Curriculum and Assessment**

I agree to:

- Select and provide access to a high-quality Tier I pre-K curriculum which is aligned to the Louisiana Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards and promotes kindergarten readiness, or an alternative curriculum with prior approval from the Department;
- Provide the Tier 1 curriculum and materials to teachers and principals with adequate time to prepare for the upcoming school year;
- Eliminate from classrooms any materials that are not aligned to Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards;
- Ensure principals and/or directors can articulate 1) the name, tier, and approach of the chosen curriculum; 2) the next steps they will take to ensure a quality implementation; and
- Ensure that all publicly-funded children receive completed assessments in October, February, and May (unless the school year schedule is altered due to COVID-19 and additional guidance is given by the Department) using *GOLD*<sup>®</sup> or another state-approved assessment tool that is developmentally appropriate, valid, reliable, and culturally sensitive. Publicly funded sites shall obtain approval from the Department prior to using child assessment tools different from the assessment tool provided by the Department.

### **Program Performance**

I agree to provide high quality, developmentally appropriate programs to at-risk, four-year-old children eligible to enter public school kindergarten in the following year pursuant to R.S. 17:151.3, which will include:

- An instructional setting that includes learning centers outfitted with appropriate materials and equipment that support whole, small and self-selected groupings;
- Effective learning experiences that build on what children already know and can do that help them reach challenging and achievable goals;
- Differentiated instruction to meet the academic, social/emotional, linguistic, and other developmental needs of children;
- Lead teachers who meet all certification criteria as required by program type;
- Qualified teacher assistants;
- All staff must have appropriate criminal background checks and comply with all hiring procedures required by the program prior to the first day of work;
- All classrooms must be adequately staffed in the event of staff absence;
- An orientation provided for all administrators and staff before commencing the program;

- A student-to-lead teacher ratio of no more than twenty-to-one and a student-to-adult staff member ratio of no more than ten-to-one, pursuant to R.S. 17: 407.26;
- A schedule that contains a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities with a minimum of 63,720 instructional minutes in public schools and 57,750 minutes in nonpublic schools, pursuant to Bulletin 741 (public) and Bulletin 741 (Nonpublic), respectively, during the calendar year;
- A minimum of eighteen hours of ongoing professional development relevant to early childhood is provided to both the lead teacher and teacher assistant, and based on data (child and program assessments), the instructional needs of children, and is tailored to support staff improvement;
- A professional development plan that addresses each teacher’s specific needs throughout the year and includes objectives and strategies, and coaching for lead and assistant teachers;
- Following health and safety regulations as defined by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE);
- Ensuring that no form of demeaning language or corporal punishment, including but not limited to paddling, striking, or hitting shall be used with any child enrolled in a prekindergarten class or an enrichment class;
- Vision and hearing screening for each child within 90 calendar days of entrance into the program, and appropriate referrals should the need for follow-up be present;
- Documentation indicating that all students entering school for the first time have received all age-appropriate immunizations against vaccine-preventable diseases according to a schedule approved by the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), Office of Public Health (OPH), or receiving from the parent a signed statement of exemption from such immunizations pursuant to R.S. 17:170; and
- Appropriate nutritious meals and snacks for every child.

### **Family Engagement**

I agree to provide:

- Parent conferences (at least two per year);
- Opportunities for families to volunteer or participate in program activities;
- Written information about the program including policies related to abuse/neglect, non-discrimination, complaint/grievance procedures, behavior management, etc. provided to families upon admission;
- An orientation process that may include a tour, opportunities to meet administrators and staff, and review written material such as curricula and special events, which should occur no later than 20 working days after the program commences;
- Linkages to services such as G.E.D., adult literacy training, and referrals for medical, housing/utilities assistance, etc.;
- Family engagement activities that involve parents/caregivers in their child's education;
- Additionally I agree that when it is requested that children are to be dressed in uniforms, they are not denied enrollment because of a family’s inability to purchase such; and
- Families are not required to financially support extracurricular activities or fundraisers unless they choose to do so at their cost.

### Quality Assurance

As an authorized representative of the applicant listed, I certify that the following statements are true:

- I agree to adhere to policies and regulations to ensure that the health and safety requirements of all children are met, including those with disabilities and specifically identified health needs;
- I assure that any LA 4 or NSECD Program located in a child care center will only be placed in those centers that have a valid and current Type 3 license, and meets all other program-specific criteria;
- I will participate in any required improvement planning process approved by BESE and implemented by the Department;
- I assure that any child who is identified as eligible or who is suspected to be eligible for special education and/or related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) through Louisiana Bulletin 1706 and Louisiana's IEP Handbook for Students with Disabilities, will not be denied access or removed from the program without following the appropriate referral and Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Services Plan process. (See Louisiana's IEP Handbook for Students with Disabilities and Bulletin 1706, Subpart A, Regulations for Students with Disabilities Act,); and
- I agree to address any areas of noncompliance or deficiencies related to this program within required timelines.

### Data Management

As an authorized representative of the applicant listed, I certify that the following statements are true:

- I agree to submit any additional information and/or documentation requested by the funding program prior to final approval by BESE;
- I agree to report data documenting the effectiveness of the program and the progress toward attaining program goals, and I understand that program must also submit a report detailing exactly how the allocated funds are spent;
- I agree to submit all required information records/reports, programmatic and fiscal, as required by the Department and BESE;
- I agree to maintain documentation of program implementation and effectiveness and submit any reports, data, or other pertinent information as requested by the Department and BESE and R.S. 17:3913 and 3996(B)(34);
- I permit the Department, the Legislative Auditor, and all other required personnel to have access to the records and financial statements as necessary according to regulations issued by the Office of Management and Subpart F of the Uniform Grant Guidance (2 CFR, Subpart F);
- I assure that funds for the program will be expended according to all regulations as required by each funding source; and
- I agree to maintain all records, and other documents for at least (3) federal fiscal years after the final payment or as described in 2 CFR 200.333, whichever is longest.

I, the undersigned, am authorized to sign and submit this application on behalf of the public, charter, nonpublic school and/or child care center. I assure and certify that the agency site(s) will comply with the assurances, regulations, policies, guidelines, and/or requirements, as they relate to the application, acceptance, and use of funds for the program(s) for which this application is made.

INITIAL HERE \_\_\_\_\_

This agreement, including the assurances contained herein, is binding on the institution, its successors, transferees, and assignees as long as it receives financial assistance to fund the program(s) for which this application is made. This agreement, including the assurances contained herein, is given in consideration of and for obtaining any and all financial assistance to operate the program(s) for which this application is made.

The information in this agreement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, including the name and mailing address. I understand that this information is hereby given in connection with the receipt of funds for the program(s) for which this application is made. I understand that State Agency personnel may, for cause, verify information; and that deliberate misrepresentation may subject me to prosecution under applicable Federal and State criminal statutes.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Authorized Representative

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Name of District or School/Center