



CHILD CARE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE (CCMS) INITIATIVE GUIDEBOOK

July 2022



PURPOSE:

To improve early learning sites in providing efficient operations in high quality settings, the Louisiana Department of Education is supporting administrators of Type III and Family Child Care (FCC's) by reimbursing a portion of their first year's costs of utilizing Child Care Management Software (CCMS).

Child Care Management Software (CCMS) support efficiency in early learning sites by:

- Collecting attendance and enrollment data of families
- Automating bill pay
- Tracking time sensitive information like immunizations and teacher training
- Automating notifications to families
- Providing data reports that strengthen awareness of patterns and trends in operations

[Learn more about CCMS](#) and how they can improve your business.

OUTCOME:

If the LDOE is successful, early learning sites will have the software needed to:

- Operate efficient and potentially solvent businesses
 - Connect to the LDOE's data system to support CCAP subsidy and licensing, with some CCMS systems
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CHILD CARE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE (CCMS) INITIATIVE

STEP 1: SELECT CHILD CARE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE (CCMS) AND PURCHASE A YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION THROUGH THE VENDOR OF YOUR CHOICE.

- ✓ Review the [Guidance](#) on choosing a Child Care Management Software.
 - ✓ Purchase an annual subscription from the list of approved CCMS.
KEEP INVOICE(S) AND RECEIPT(S).
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STEP 2: CONTACT YOUR [LOCAL RESOURCE & REFERRAL AGENCY](#)

- ✓ Complete an [application and sign assurances](#) with your CCR&R.
 - ✓ Provide invoices/receipts for the purchased Child Care Management Software subscription (Only new annual subscriptions can be reimbursed).
 - ✓ Get reimbursed for 80% (*maximum \$1,000*) of the cost of the new subscription.
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STEP 3: FOLLOW UP WITH TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION

- ✓ Participate in a general training on implementing the software through the CCMS company, and any other supports available through the community.
 - ✓ Provide updates and reports as requested by your CCR&R, and the LDOE.
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GUIDANCE FOR SELECTING THE RIGHT CCMS FOR YOUR SITE

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is supporting programs in choosing the Child Care Management Software (CCMS) that best suits their needs. The Department has gathered data from the most frequently used companies to provide information on their products for the purpose of facilitating the decision-making process.

Child Care Management Software companies were invited to provide information regarding:

- Costs
- Necessary equipment
- Cloud-based features (you can access from any device)
- Bill pay features
- Customer service and training
- Software features:
 - **Enrollment support** (examples of such features: forecast how many spots are available, allowing parents the ability to update/add enrollment information regarding their children and allow administrators and teachers to access their enrollment data at any time from anywhere)
 - **Billing support** (examples of such features: sending electronic and automatic billing to parents, automatic fee collection, and online payment methods)
 - **Sign-in and out support** (examples of such features: parents and other designated individuals can use secure features to sign children in and out of care quickly via electronic devices such as phones and tablets)
 - **Parent communication** (examples of such features: the ability to send and receive messages to and from families with the push of a button)
 - **Daily reports form uploads/storage** (examples of such features: ability to upload child and staff records such as immunization records and training certificates)
 - **Payroll support** (examples of such features: tracking and accurate calculation of staff hours worked and streamline payroll services)

Note that early learning sites in Louisiana can choose any CCMS they prefer. However, as part of the **Child Care Management Software Initiative**, early learning sites are only eligible to receive reimbursement for the purchase and implementation of the Tier I CCMS included in this guidebook. These systems are highly recommended because they met all criteria and indicators of quality, and they support strong business operations.

THE LDOE RECOMMENDS THAT CENTER DIRECTORS AND FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS:

1. Read the online reviews and compare unique features of each system.
2. Review the LDOE created [All About CCMS resource](#).
3. Preview the product through demos offered on company websites and via links embedded in product descriptions in this guidebook (see the names and links in the vendor specification section).
4. Assess your readiness to implement new technology in your center by considering:
 - Am I ready to shift from paper and pencil to online, digital records and processes?
 - What supports will help me to shift to using a Child Care Management Software each day?
 - Who in my center or community can support me to implement this change?
 - How will I communicate and support this shift with my staff and families?

For any additional questions or concerns, please contact Shellan Jones at shallan.jones@la.gov.

VENDOR: Alliance CORE, powered by Early Learning Ventures

CONTACT: Malana Miner, mminer@earlylearningventures.org

WEBSITE: <https://www.earlylearningventures.org/>

DEMO WEBINAR: [Alliance CORE Demo](#)

DESCRIPTION OF CCMS PRODUCT IN STANDARD PACKAGE

Alliance CORE child care management system from Early Learning Ventures, a not-for-profit organization, makes running your business easier. We partner with our providers every step of the way through one-on-one client support. Our experienced team works with providers of all technical skill levels, building comfort with the system one step at a time – all with the personal connection that comes from a small team.

Our cloud-based system helps providers by streamlining many of the administrative processes they work through on a daily basis, including:

- **Online enrollment:** Our online enrollment allows for electronic registration. The easy-to-follow process means that providers are able to have their applications out to parents in minutes.
- **Child attendance:** A staple of all child care management systems, the system manages your check-in/out process.
- **Child records/immunization records:** Up-to-date records are important at all times. Our system alerts providers as records are coming close to expiration.
- **Caregiver communications:** Communicate with parents and caregivers through kiosk, email or text messages.
- **Tuition invoicing:** Automate your billing process for each family.
- **Reporting capabilities:** Whether you need a list of all payments received that week or a list of all immunizations required this month, scheduled reporting gives you the information you need in seconds.

Our technology provides a foundation on which providers can save time and money, smoothly run their business, and allow them to focus on why they got into the child care business in the first place – caring for and educating children.

Annual cost of standard CCMS package:	
0-30 Licensed enrollment capacity:	\$300/annually
31-60 Licensed enrollment capacity:	\$600/annually
61+ Licensed enrollment capacity:	\$1200/annually

Enrollment Support	Billing Support	Sign-In and Out Support	Parent Communication	Daily Reports Form Uploads/Storage	Payroll Support
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Other Features
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobile Apps: allowing for easy access to parent billing, touchless sign-in/out, information management, instant messaging, daily reporting, and more• QuickBooks Online (QBO) Integration: allowing providers to automatically push revenue data from Alliance CORE billing to their QBO account to simplify balancing their books• Cloud based system: allowing for access from anywhere you have an internet connection, on any device• CACFP data collection, tracking, and reporting capabilities to help manage Food Program reimbursements.• Live customer support via phone, email, or Zoom available weekdays from 7:00am-7:00pm (CST).

Additional Notes

Our Alliance CORE system is API compatible. Setting up any APIs would come with an additional Development cost of \$150 per hour (time and effort cost).

Once the Controltec API Patch is available for the State of Louisiana, we'll connect our system to it free of charge.

Resources/Costs NOT Included in Basic CCMS Package	Description	Cost
Training Costs (if applicable)	One-time onboarding fee	N/A
Technology Access/Resources	Alliance CORE is a cloud-based system, compatible and accessible on all devices. Google Chrome is the recommended web browser for accessing Alliance CORE.	N/A
Supplemental/Optional Materials	A Merchant Account can be established with a third party Payment Processing Company that we've integrated our Alliance CORE system with in order to process electronic payments.	Service fees tied to Merchant Account and number of electronic transactions, dependent on the payment method used
Cost for Bilingual Editions	N/A (we currently use Google Translate in order to translate our system to a language other than English)	N/A

VENDOR: Brightwheel

CONTACT: Erin Melton, erin@mybrightwheel.com

WEBSITE: mybrightwheel.com

DEMO WEBINAR: <http://www.mybrightwheel.com/why-brightwheel>

DESCRIPTION OF CCMS PRODUCT IN STANDARD PACKAGE

Brightwheel is the #1 rated childcare management software according to [Capterra](#). Our priority is to ensure every early education provider can focus on providing quality early learning to every child. With brightwheel's all-in-one, easy-to-use website and app, you'll be able to:

- **Delight families and grow enrollment** – Share messages, newsletters, milestones, and photos to give families a window into their child's day. Plus, manage your admissions pipeline online, accept digital signatures and forms, message prospective families, and maintain a waitlist.
- **Save each staff 20 hours per month and better retain them** – Give staff an easy tool to lesson plan, track activities and student progress, and eliminate busywork. And, empower staff to showcase their skills, build stronger relationships with families, and receive more appreciation.
- **Simplify billing and get paid on time** – Automate invoicing, bill based on attendance, charge late fees, and get paid in one business day with direct deposit. Plus, enable your families to securely pay online and directly access tax reports.
- **Operate more efficiently, with less stress and time** – Stay safe and COVID-19 compliant with contactless check-in, health checks, and room ratio tracking. Plus, manage staff schedules and student absences, message staff directly, meet state licensing needs, and pull reports to make informed decisions.

When you sign up, one of our onboarding coaches will personally walk you through everything brightwheel can do to help your center succeed. Then, we'll help you get set up easily and quickly—providers are often up and running in 1 or 2 days.

Annual cost of standard CCMS package:					
Brightwheel is offering a special discount to participants of this program. To ensure you receive the discounted rates below, please inform us that you are a Child Care Management Software (CCMS) Initiative participant when you sign up. \$600 to \$1500 annually, based on enrollment					
Enrollment Support	Billing Support	Sign-In and Out Support	Parent Communication	Daily Reports Form Uploads/Storage	Payroll Support
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Other Features					
We go beyond tools, to deliver the best experience. 9 of 10 providers say brightwheel has improved the quality of their program since they signed-up over a year ago. We offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Live chat and dedicated support: Get onboarded with a dedicated coach, access easy-to-follow help content, and contact us via live chat during business hours. We have the industry's largest support team and are here to support you, your staff, and your families.• Professional development resources: Join live weekly webinars for free, and access a library of training videos, and blog articles that are all tailored to help you and your staff stay informed and up to date on how to best deliver quality early education. See below table for more details.• Online provider community: Join the brightwheel customer-only Facebook community group for admins, foster relationships and learn from other early education experts					

Additional Notes

- **Brightwheel is the first all-in-one solution in the cloud**, which means your account information can be accessed anytime and anywhere, from work or home.
- **Brightwheel delivers the highest security and reliability standards**, so you can rest easy with secure account access, 99.9% uptime, and 24x7 monitoring.
- **Brightwheel is 100% focused on early education**, and is designed alongside educators like yourself after 100's of hours of shadowing, innovating, and refining.
- **Brightwheel is constantly innovating to better meet your needs.** With the largest engineering team, we are always adding new features and services based on provider feedback. Please make sure to visit mybrightwheel.com to see the most up-to-date information on our features.

Resources/Costs NOT Included in Basic CCMS Package	Description	Cost
Training Costs (if applicable)	<p>When you sign-up, one of our onboarding coaches will personally walk you through everything brightwheel can do to help your center succeed. This will include dedicated and group-based trainings.</p> <p>You will also have access to easy-to-follow help content, including training videos, articles, and frequently asked questions.</p>	Free
Technology Access/Resources	Brightwheel is compatible with your mobile, tablet, and desktop device. You can download the app from the Apple iTunes or Google Play store. You can also access it via a web browser.	N/A
Supplemental/Optional Materials	<p>Join live weekly webinars and earn a certificate of attendance. See what's upcoming and explore our on-demand library</p> <p>Continue to build your knowledge and help your childcare center succeed with brightwheel's eBooks and in-depth guides</p> <p>Download tools and templates to help you save time while managing your childcare center or preschool</p> <p>Stay inspired through brightwheel's blog that is tailored to help you and your staff to help you run an amazing early education center</p> <p>Leverage this resource center to stay COVID-19 compliant and keep your families and staff healthy</p>	Free
Cost for Bilingual Editions	N/A	N/A

VENDOR: ChildWatch Remarkable Systems, Inc.

CONTACT: Mark Mitchell, mark@remarkable-systems.com

WEBSITE: www.ChildWatch.com

DEMO WEBINAR: www.ChildWatch.com/LDOE

DESCRIPTION OF CCMS PRODUCT IN STANDARD PACKAGE

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Maximum Productivity & Efficiency: This feature set is the root of the ChildWatch program. All key data for Client and Child are managed here including enrollments, waiting list, immunizations and more. Trigger cycle or hourly billings, record payments (or draft electronically*) and print reports.

Feature Highlights

- Client Billing (hourly, fixed, category)
- Attendance Kiosk (touchless option)
- Immunizations & Scheduling

ONLINE SERVICES (ESERVICES)

Parental Engagement Tools: Running a successful childcare business requires staying in close touch with parents. Once a parents drops-off her child, the better informed she is throughout the day, the less problems you'll encounter and the more likely she'll continue to be a valuable client.

The eServices feature set of ChildWatch provides a unique set of tools to help facilitate:

- Tracking of Prospective Clients
- Documenting Daily Child Activities
- Communicating with Parents about Events
- Providing a Useful Parent Portal

ONLINE PAYMENTS

Accept Electronic Payments: To enhance our eServices offerings, ChildWatch brings you the latest in e-commerce. Give customers what they have come to expect - the convenience of electronic payments. ChildWatch ePay offers a secure and cost-effective option for your customers.

CACFP CLAIMING

Child & Adult Care Food Program Administration: The Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is administered by the USDA and is a meals subsidy program for low-income families. States require specific approval to participate in this program as well as staff training. If you are not currently on the CACFP, but wish to learn more, [start here](#).

ChildWatch helps to facilitate the collection and tracking of key CACFP data such as meals & attendance and meal nutrition planning. Quickly process your claim each month with automatic USDA disallowances. Report your claim information for submission to your sponsor or directly to the state.

Feature Highlights

- Central Management for CACFP Centers & Sponsors (homes & centers)
- Meal Nutrition Planning (NEW patterns)
- Meal Production Record
- Electronic Claims Submission
- Mobile Meal & Attendance Capture

Annual cost of standard CCMS package:

Varies depending on plan features (\$49.95 Discounted - \$99.95/mo without discounting. Annual range \$600–1,200. If opting for electronic payments, epay service is required. Rates can vary depending on payment method types opted for (e.G. Echeck, cc). One payment method is \$5/mo; accepting both types is \$10/mo. Mandatory pci fee of \$7.95/mo minimum. Per-transaction rates apply as well (\$0.19 + 1.99% For cc; see website "pricing epay rates" for more details). \$24.95/month, \$299.40/year for home daycares. Discounted "business" plan is limited to 30 families (active/inactive) and includes all regular plan features (attendance, tracking, billing,subsidy integration with Kinderconnect, etc.

Enrollment Support	Billing Support	Sign-In and Out Support	Parent Communication	Daily Reports Form Uploads/Storage	Payroll Support
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Additional Notes

Data Center

State-of-The-Art

Protecting the privacy and security of customer data is vital in our business. That's why we feel you deserve to know how your data are being stored and secured.

As a SaaS provider (software as a service), RSI takes seriously the responsibility entrusted by its customers. Since the program's inception in 2001, absolutely zero customer data have been compromised, shared or sold.

Utilize our services with confidence knowing that all data facilities and network infrastructures are designed to ensure maximum uptime with the highest server performance, best security and scalability. Our servers are protected with the latest in security, firewalls and encryption.

- Tier III compliant
- SSAE No. 16 SOC 1 Certified (Previously known as SAS 70)
- Payment card industry data security standards (PCI DSS) compliant
- 10 Gig backbone network, multiple redundant bandwidth carriers
- 256-bit encryption with multi-layer data security
- Fully redundant network architecture
- Dedicated on-site power substation
- 48-hour on-site generator fuel capacity
- 24 x 7 physical security presence

Resources/Costs NOT Included in Basic CCMS Package	Description	Cost
Training Costs (if applicable)	ChildWatch includes FREE training videos available 24/7. We also offer live group webinars (based on demand) which are free when offered periodically by RSI, but also initially for new accounts as needed. Requested on-demand webinar training is available at \$50 per 30 minutes.	FREE/\$100/hr
Technology Access/Resources	Users provide their own hardware such as computers, phones or tablets. The ChildWatch service provides the software only. ChildWatch is compatible with all Windows, Macintosh, iOS and Android devices.	N/A
Supplemental/Optional Materials	N/A	N/A
Cost for Bilingual Editions	ChildWatch is currently available in English only.	N/A

VENDOR: Smartcare, a Vanco company

CONTACT: Whitney Bach, Smartcare Software Consultant, whitney.bach@vanco.com, salesteam@smartcare.com

WEBSITE: <https://smartcare.com/>

**DEMO WEBINAR: (Center Management): [Smartcare - Center Management \(recording\)](#)
(Classroom Management): [Smartcare - Classroom Management \(recording\)](#)**

DESCRIPTION OF CCMS PRODUCT IN STANDARD PACKAGE

Smartcare's Center Management app is available on the web at my.smartcare.com/center for use on desktops, laptops, and tablets as well as on iOS for use on iPads. The Smartcare Center Management app allows directors to manage the critical operations of the center, including but not limited to:

1. Manage time and attendance for both children and employees: signing children or employees in or out of the center as well as editing attendance/timesheet records.
2. Configure billing statement periods to automate the billing process – parents and agencies are billed on a predictable schedule that providers define so billing becomes automated and consistent.
3. Manage all aspects of accounting, including splitting charges between payers, sending invoices on-demand to parents as well as full-fledged credit allocation for agency remittances.
4. Schedule both children and employees with the capability to setup recurring schedules as well as classroom scheduling templates.
5. Send email and text messages directly to parents or staff within Smartcare, including the ability to target messages to specific subsets of your center's employees or parents.
6. Reporting on the key data that matters most to the providers, including child attendance, employee timecards, parent demographics, payments, account transactions (both charges and credits), Account Receivable (A/R) and more.
7. Manage child immunizations and allergies along with the ability to upload documents to keep your records up to date.

Smartcare's Classroom Management app send visually appealing activity reports, pictures, announcements and emergency text alerts to parents' smart devices, web portal and email. Directors use the dashboard to get a real-time attendance snapshot of their center, to manage lesson planning and to keep parents informed. Additionally, with the Smartcare Classroom Manger you can:

1. Increase parent engagement, staff efficiency and center enrollment.
2. Improve attendance tracking with daily activity reporting, including pictures, videos, and text alerts.
3. Customize dashboards including director approvals, hot-car alerts and name-to-face tracking strengthen security and compliance.
4. Facilitate the sharing of lesson planning from the corporate level to individual providers seamlessly which saves teachers hundreds of hours per week.
5. Stay in compliance with state licensing through a built-in electronic assessment and student portfolio with integration to nationally approved assessment products from Kaplan LAP.

Smartcare's Kiosk app is the initial touchpoint for both parents and employees to interact with the center by powering attendance /timesheet functionality including the ability for:

1. Parents to check their children in and out of the provider center using any of the following uniquely assigned identifiers; Mobile QR code via Parent app, Pin code, Keytag QR code or electronic signature.
2. Employees can clock in or out of the center using either their uniquely assigned PIN code or Keytag QR code.
3. Provider administrators can assign key tags to employees and parents directly from the Smartcare Kiosk.

Annual cost of standard CCMS package:

Smartcare Center Management software \$82/mo
 Smartcare Classroom Management software \$82/mo
 Smartcare Center and Classroom bundle \$150/mo
 Startup fee \$250 – includes 1 kiosk, remote implementation through Learning Management System and ongoing support resources.
 Standard processing fee for payments with Smartcare 2.85% cards; \$0.40 ACH

Family Child Care Pricing:

\$59 one-time Set-up fee per site (you will get online training video access for 30 days, as well as a Customer Success Manager for 30 days to aid in setting up your system)

\$59 per site/per month after that for access to the software. (this is for unlimited number of users and up to 20 children)

Enrollment Support	Billing Support	Sign-In and Out Support	Parent Communication	Daily Reports Form Uploads/Storage	Payroll Support
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Additional Notes

As of 6.8.2021

Enrollment Support

- Parents can only update a child's information if they're submitting a new enrollment form. Once an enrollment form has been submitted, they can no longer make changes, nor can they make changes to the child's profile throughout the year. This can only be done on the admin web portal.
- Teachers can't access enrollment forms, but they can view a child's profile, with no access to edit.

Daily Report form uploads/storage

- Immunizations and staff records are not connected to daily activity reports. Daily activity reports are solely in the classroom management app and will detail what took place for the day. Immunizations and staff records are in the Smartcare center management app and can be uploaded under the document section of one's account. If they want immunizations to live under the designated immunization section an admin would have to manually enter this in. As for staff certifications we don't have a designated field for this, but a custom field could be created to where the admin would manage the entry.

Resources/Costs NOT Included in Basic CCMS Package	Description	Cost
Shipping Charges and Tax (if applicable)	N/A - Shipping fees are included in the implementation fees. Kiosks are sent to the client at no additional charge.	N/A
Training Costs (if applicable)	We do not charge for training. We are happy to offer that service at no cost for the duration of your agreement with us. We do have a \$250 start up fee that we assess to cover the costs of hardware (kiosk) and the migration of basic data into our systems.	\$0.00/\$250 Training/Start Up Fee
Technology Access/Resources	Our clients utilize our Smartcare Help & Resource Center as their one stop shop for all support documentation. We also offer an extensive video library to help support your staff and your parents going forward.	\$0.00
Supplemental/Optional Materials	Smartcare Blog: Our blog offers a variety of articles and resources in support of your daycare, early learning, childcare, and preschool needs.	\$0.00
Cost for Bilingual Editions	At this time, we do not fully support bilingual versions of our solutions. Some users have had success with Google Translate, but we do not currently offer any service level agreements/or custom services that address Google Translate.	N/A