



Louisiana Believes

GUIDANCE FOR PROGRAM APPROVAL EARLY CHILDHOOD ANCILLARY CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

[Early Childhood Program Approval Process Bulletin 996](#)

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Background

Unifying Early Childhood in Louisiana

Early childhood teachers are the most critical factor to achieve high-quality outcomes for children. All early childhood teachers, whether they work in pre-K, Head Start, or child care, need access to training that prepares them to manage classroom interactions and use high-quality instructional tools to provide excellent educational experiences to children. Louisiana requires that all lead teachers in early learning centers earn an Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate within two years of employment. Programs that wish to become BESE approved must submit a completed application for approval.

What is the need?

Through a unified statewide early childhood network, Louisiana has collected information on the success of adult-child interactions, as measured by the CLASS® assessment, for all early childhood classrooms in publicly-funded sites, including pre-K, Head Start, and childcare. Using CLASS® has provided clear information about what's happening in classrooms and what support is needed for teachers.

CLASS® data demonstrate that early childhood teachers need more intensive training, practice, and ongoing feedback in preparing and providing successful instructional interactions in all program types. Along with supporting meaningful classroom interactions, early childhood teachers must be prepared to use high-quality instructional tools and child assessments.

[Performance Profile results](#) from the 2018-2019 academic year highlight strengths as well as areas for improvement.

- Nearly 15,000 rigorous observations of early childhood classrooms clearly reveal that children are experiencing very different levels of instruction.
- Generally, most teachers are prepared to provide a positive environment that runs smoothly with clear expectations and organization.
- However, lower instructional scores in pre-K and toddler classrooms show areas for teacher growth.
 - *Children need additional activities that encourage analysis and reasoning, with less of a focus on rote recitation (e.g., naming a letter, color or shape).*
 - *More opportunities for back-and-forth dialogue between teachers and children are needed to encourage connections between concepts and ideas.*
- In 2018-2019, 73% of Type III centers were using a highly rated curriculum ([Tier I Curriculum](#)) within their classrooms.
- In 2018-2019, 73% of Type III centers assessed the majority of publicly- funded children.

Information on every communities' CLASS® scores and use of curriculum and child assessment can be found on the Early Childhood Performance Profiles on www.louisianabelieves.com/early-childhood/performance-profiles. To view the performance profile of every site, please visit www.louisianaschools.com.

Approval of Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs (ECAC)

Early childhood teacher candidates must complete all coursework for the CDA certificate, technical diploma, and certificate of technical studies from a program approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). To be approved, programs must provide candidates with coherent foundational coursework, applied practice with children, and opportunities for observation and feedback through the *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®)* framework.

Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) programs can be current providers of training and coaching, community non-profits, institutions of higher education, technical schools, high schools, or early childhood programs. Programs can offer courses that prepare candidates to work in infant/toddler and pre-K classrooms together or as separate classes.

Minimum Requirements for an Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs:

An Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate program must result in one of the following:

- training hours and professional portfolio requirements that can be used to complete a child development associate (CDA) credential, either infant/toddler or preschool, awarded by the [Council for Professional Recognition](#); or
- technical diploma or certificate of technical studies in an early childhood-related field from an accredited technical or community college.

To meet this requirement, ECAC programs will offer:

- a minimum of 120 training hours in early childhood education
- training hours and a professional portfolio that can be used to complete the child development associate (CDA) credential awarded by the [Council for Professional Recognition](#)
- actual practice experiences must be provided in classroom settings; and
- a minimum of two observations using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) per candidate.

Recommended documentation to include in the application for Academic Approval:

Successful applications include:	An application for program approval may include the following:	Tips for Success
Regional accreditation (universities only)	NACAC letter (the program does not need to provide)	LDOE will look up upon receipt of application

<p>Instructors who teach courses or provide direct coaching to a teacher or educational leader candidates must possess sufficient knowledge, skills, training, and expertise.</p>	<p>Please provide evidence that the faculty who teach the course or provide direct coaching to teacher candidates possess sufficient knowledge, skills, training, and expertise (this must include CLASS® observer training, knowledge of child development, and tier 1 curriculum).</p>	<p>Submit resumes and credentials for each instructor.</p> <p>Successful candidates have completed CLASS® observer training, have a background in early childhood curriculum, are familiar with the tier 1 curriculum, and possess the skills necessary for adult learning.</p>
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Quality of Plan for Candidate Selection and Partnership Involvement		
Successful applications include:	An application for program approval may include the following:	Tips for Success
<p>Candidate Selection</p>	<p>Please answer the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How candidates will be recruited into the program? (Recruitment examples may include; newsletter, website, network, community involvement, program partners, mailout, etc 2. How will the program make admission decisions for candidates? (Examples include; enrollment in pathways, letter of support from the director, completing an orientation on the rigors of the program and commitment to the field, an essay, or other criteria.) 	<p>Successful programs include <u>Pathways enrollment</u> as part of their candidate selection process as well as a letter of support from the center director. Programs may also include an orientation session that includes an overview of the course guidelines.</p>

<p>Partnership Development</p>	<p>Please describe the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will you use a formal working partnership with the local early childhood community to support program planning and implementation? (Provide evidence of partnership participation and representation from multiple early childhood program types) 2. Include community partners in the application development (Provide evidence that partners have participated in the application, and a plan for how partners will contribute to the program on an ongoing basis). 3. Include community partners in the planning, operation, and evaluation of the program. 	<p>Community partners help to ensure that your program is meeting the needs of the centers the candidates are and will work in. Community partners will also assist in developing a recruitment plan that addresses local workforce needs within the community.</p> <p>Programs should include how community partners, such as childcare centers, CCR & R's and lead agencies provide information about candidates pre and post-graduation.</p> <p>Community partners include:</p> <p>Local lead agencies Child Care Resource and</p>
		<p>Referral Agencies School and Center Finder</p>

<p>Workforce Needs</p>	<p>Please describe the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will you use information about the local workforce to inform program design and coursework, including instructional needs for candidates based on CLASS data, child assessment data, and use of curriculum (information should include on available options for local childcare workforce, including data on local workforce turnover that may be provided by the CCR & R or Lead Agency). Additional information can be found on the Workforce Data Report). 2. How will you consider local workforce needs in determining the sequence and format of the program (surveys, interviews, data analysis, research)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain how <i>CLASS</i>[®] data, child assessment information, and curriculum usage in the community have informed identified instructional goals for the program ● Explain how the program will use local workforce data to create high-quality programming ● Explain how local workforce needs and available options have informed program format and design (online coursework, evening classes, etc.) ● Describe how community partners contributed to 	<p>Successful programs will obtain information about the community from the network. This may include; third party CLASS data, surveys from child care directors, performance profiles, and the Resource and Referral agency.</p> <p>Programs will define how this data has informed the sequence and format of the program.</p> <p>Additional Resources:</p> <p>CLASS[®] information TS GOLD information Local lead agencies Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies</p>
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	conversations about workforce need	
Plan for Selection	<p>Please describe your plan for selection:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will you recruit and select candidates that are committed to the program? 2. How you will select candidates that meet the workforce needs of the local community (Explain how the selection process will meet the needs of the community as identified by the workforce needs a description) 	<p>Successful programs implement a screening and interview process with both the center director and the candidate to ensure candidates are committed and supported to complete the program.</p> <p>Workforce Data Report Louisiana Believes Center Finder Performance Profiles</p>
<p>Quality of Knowledge and Teaching: <i>Providers should complete multiple course charts as needed to include all required courses/modules.</i> For each course described, answer the following questions in the corresponding rows:</p>		
Successful applications include:	An application for program approval may include the following:	Tips for Success

<p>Learning Objectives</p>	<p>Learning Objectives for each course should include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use a coherent set of learning objectives to drive coursework design (Align content to the CDA Competency Area). 2. Include professional knowledge, pedagogy requirements and knowledge of high-quality instructional tools within learning objectives. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe the knowledge and information candidates will be able to demonstrate upon completion of the courses 3. The use of skill objectives to describe the observable skills and 	<p>Successful program applications align to CDA competency areas, address Tier 1 curriculum, apply Louisiana Early Learning Standards to coursework design, and provide a robust CLASS® background. Candidates will be able to demonstrate knowledge of all of the above through practice-based settings.</p> <p>Links to resources: CLASS® information</p>
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	<p>abilities candidates will gain with each course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate the knowledge gained through each learning objective with an aligned skill objective. ● Describe how candidates will be prepared to effectively use high-quality instructional tools, including Tier I curriculum and <i>GOLD</i>™ by Teaching Strategies, to lead positive instructional interactions and promote children’s learning 	<p>Council for Professional Recognition TS GOLD information Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards Tier I Curriculum</p>
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<p>Skill Objectives</p>	<p>Please describe:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The use of skill objectives to describe the observable skills and abilities candidates will gain within the course (Identify the measurable and observable skills candidates will be able to demonstrate upon completion of the courses). 2. Demonstrate the knowledge gained through each learning objective with an aligned skill objective 	<p>The program coursework must teach skills that will be directly used in the classroom and match children’s developmental needs. Program must be constructed and sequenced to introduce, reinforce, and assess essential knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Quality programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set instructional/learning outcomes ● provide emotional and behavioral support ● manage classroom organization ● provides engaged/instructional support for learning ● uses assessment to guide planning and understanding of child development.
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		<p>Links to resources:</p> <p>Council for Professional Recognition</p> <p>Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards</p>
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Relation to Previous Courses	<p>Please describe the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sequence courses in a coherent logical way that builds candidates teaching competency across the program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explain how the learning objectives and skill objectives are coherent and connected across courses ● Explain how course content is supporting the knowledge and experiences gained in previous courses 	<p>Courses should be designed to build a foundation and basic understanding of child development within the context of an early learning center. The sequence should focus child development, supporting learning in each developmental domain, and working with families to build partnerships. Each experience should be directly aligned to the CDA content areas.</p> <p>Council for Professional Recognition</p>
Delivery Format	<p>What will be your delivery format?</p> <p>Is the course/training lecture, seminar, web-based, field-based, hybrid</p>	<p>Programs may be online, blended, in-person coursework, or a combination of all. Successful programs have a component of in-person support.</p>
Quality of Practice, Feedback and Performance		
Successful applications include:	An application for program approval may include the following:	Tips for Success

<p>Applied Practice</p>	<p>Applied practice should include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Use regular applied practice to support candidate learning and skill development (Provide practice opportunity for each of the learning and skill objectives in the course).2. Incorporate a variety of applied practice activities, including frequent reflection and direct feedback for candidates (opportunities such as observation, simulation, self-reflection, connections to course content, and authentic practice).3. Reinforce learning and skill objectives for the course through applied practice opportunities (Include opportunities to use high-quality instructional tools, including Tier I curriculum and TS GOLD™, in order to promote children’s learning).	<p>Successful program candidates have aligned practice activities with the CDA coursework and specify all applied practice in the course objectives and content. Additionally they have incorporated self-reflection, high-quality instructional tools including; Tier I curriculum and TS GOLD™.</p>
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<p>Assessment of Mastery</p>	<p>Please answer the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will you use performance assessments to determine candidate mastery of learning and skill objectives (require active demonstration of each of the skill objectives for the course and Include <i>CLASS</i>[®] observations and other performance assessments that demonstrate mastery in the classroom setting). 2. How will you incorporate results of performance assessments in making decisions regarding candidate progress and certification. 3. How will you provide feedback to candidate regarding progress in program coursework 	<p>Programs will include a <i>CLASS</i>[®] observation within one month of the initial coursework. Scores will be used as a baseline to measure improvement. Additional Assessment measures should include: The CDA Professional Portfolio, Teacher Observation notes, Student Observation notes, Description of classroom learning activities, clinical experiences, <i>CLASS</i>[®] assessment one month prior to completion of coursework, class projects, and exams.</p>
<p>Quality of Plan for Performance Management and Evaluation</p>		
<p>Successful applications include:</p>	<p>An application for program approval may include the following:</p>	<p>Tips for Success</p>

<p>Program Evaluation</p>	<p>Please describe your method of program evaluation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will you make decisions for program improvement based on collected workforce and preparation program data? (Data should reflect the success of recruitment, quality of curriculum, applied practice experiences, and the success on the CLASS® observations) 2. How will you improve preparation program based on teacher-candidate feedback and data? 3. How will you include community partners in program evaluation and planning for improvement? 	<p>Successful programs define strategies to improve programming based on pre and post CLASS® Assessments. Additionally programs must provide post course evaluations as well as retention strategies to define course mastery.</p> <p>CLASS® information Performance Profiles</p>
<p>Program Management</p>	<p>Please describe your plan of program management:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will you maintain cost-effective tuition rates and candidate expenses (cost of facility, training, coaches, books, etc...) ? 2. How will you manage program timeline and enrollment goals based on workforce needs ? 	<p>Successful programs align the tuition to the Louisiana Pathways scholarship amount so that the candidate may attend at no cost. Successful programs use the Louisiana Pathways scholarship amount to help determine how many cohorts they must run to be financially viable.</p> <p>Louisiana Pathways</p>

Access to Louisiana Pathways Scholarships and Program Evaluation -. Louisiana’s child care teachers who are employed in publicly-funded centers may be eligible to receive tuition support to attend BESE-approved ECAC Programs through [Louisiana Pathways Scholarships](#). In order to keep ECAC Programs no-cost for lead-teachers in publicly-funded centers, programs are asked to keep tuition at or under the annual limit for Louisiana Pathways Scholarship recipients. These limits are subject to annual revision.

BESE-Approved ECAC programs receiving funding from the Child Care Block Development Grant (through Louisiana Pathways Scholarships) will be required to provide data demonstrating their program's impact on the child care workforce in Louisiana.

Proprietary Schools Law- Private providers that receive BESE approval may be required to seek a proprietary school license through the Board of Regents. Additional information about the [Louisiana Proprietary Schools Law](#) can be found [here](#).

Submission Process

All applications should be submitted online through the Department's [online submission portal](#).