

ECE ALLOCATIONS PLANNING TOOL 2023-2024

This document should be used to ensure that all funding sources are able to be used for their intended purpose, maximized to the best of the Community Network Lead Agency and/or Ready Start Network’s ability, and prevent overlapping of funds being used for the same effort. Each allocation also has the contact information for the program manager should you have any questions about the use of funds.

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Allocation Name	eGMS Coding and Allowable Uses								
	Funding Source(s)	100 Personal Services - Salaries (district employees)	200 Personal Services - Benefits (district employees)	300 Purchased Professional and Technical Services (not done by internal staff)	400 Purchased Property Services (non-district employees do this service)	500 Other Purchased Services (not an employee of the district)	600 Supplies	700 Property (acquiring or improving capital assets like land and buildings)	800 Other
Community Network Lead Agency	SGF and CCDF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
<i>Believe!</i>	PDG and ARPA CCDBG	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ready Start Network Lead Agency	PDG and CCDF and ARPA CCDBG	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Early Childhood Education Fund	SGF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Early Childhood Guides	PDG and CCDF	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Family Engagement and Leadership Planning Grant	PDG			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Workforce Planning Grant	PDG			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Ready Start Transform	ARPA CCDBG			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

The decision to take Indirect Costs (IDC), a reduced amount of IDC, or no IDC is a local decision. All of the allocations in this document may allow the recipient to take indirect costs. The % of indirect costs is set at the local level.

Community Network Lead Agency Budget

State General Funds, Child Care Development Funds, and ARPA CCDBG funds Spending Deadline is 06/30/2024

Questions about Community Network Lead Agency allocation allowable uses and budgets should be directed to brittney.cochran@la.gov.

Recommended Use of Funds	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
CLASS® Observations	70%
Coordinated Enrollment	15%
Network Administration	10%
Materials, Supplies/Misc.	5%

These recommendations are based on the estimated costs associated with each function.

Recommended Use of Community Network Lead Agency Allocations Funds	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
CLASS® Observations	70%
CLASS® renewal fees (e.g., observer renewal, CLASS® trainer recertification fee)	
Stipends for contracted CLASS® Observers	
CLASS® observation materials	
Stipends/fees for CLASS® calibrations meetings	
Materials to support instruction (e.g., curriculum or supplemental materials)	
Travel (e.g., observations, TLS, EC Conference, Collaboratives, etc.)	
Network Administration	15%
Salaries for administration, coaches, administrative work, and benefits	
Coordinated Enrollment	10%
One-time rental for event (not a lease), for Coordinated Enrollment and/or family engagement	
Advertising with radio, newspapers, and TV	
Printing and print materials - yard signs, print materials, matching t-shirts for enrollment events, etc.	
Mobile enrollment and registration opportunities (not leasing or buying a vehicle) stocking the vehicle with electronic supplies laptops, printers, scanners, mobile wifi, and phones	
Family informational meetings or events related to enrollment and community network (e.g., trainings, materials, subscriptions, or activities)	
Materials, Supplies/Misc.	5%
Materials and supplies for children and classroom materials	
Technology: laptops, iPads, or office printer	
Not Allowable With Lead Agency Funds	
Tuition for seats or Food, gifts, or give-aways for events	

Believe! Category 1

PDG Spending Deadline is 12/31/2023

Questions about Believe! Category 1 allowable uses and budgets should be directed to devon.camarota@la.gov.

Recommended Use of Allocation	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
Workforce Incentives	Any of these activities could be up to 100% of the budget
Direct Payments to Centers	

Recommended Use of Believe! Category 1 Allocation	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
Workforce Incentives	100%
Bonuses or stipends for incentives like: attendance at work, sign-on stipends for new employees, attendance at professional development sessions, longevity bonuses, earning certain threshold(s) of CLASS® scores	
Salaries for staff working directly with children in a Type III Center	
Employee Benefits for staff working directly with children in a Type III Center	
Direct payments to centers for employee payments, stipends, or bonuses	

NOT Allowable for Believe! Category 1
Direct payments for child care tuition
Physical improvements or construction to any facility, including playground equipment
CLASS® observations or other professional development

Believe! Category 2

ARPA CCDBG Spending Deadline 6/30/2024

Questions about Believe! Category 2 allowable uses and budgets should be directed to brandi.crowell@la.gov.

Recommended Use of Funds	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
Support an existing Type III center to <i>increase</i> the number of children served in an existing B-3 classroom.	Any of these activities could be up to 100% of the budget
Support an existing Type III center to <i>open a new</i> B-3 classroom in an existing space already licensed for children within their facility.	
Support a CCAP-certified Family Child Care Provider to <i>increase</i> the number of children served.	

Recommended Use of Believe! Category 2 Allocation
Function
<i>The decision to take no Indirect Costs or a reduced amount is a local decision.</i>
Support an existing Type III center to <i>increase</i> the number of children served in an existing B-3 classroom.
Equipping an existing classroom with additional required furnishings, materials, and equipment
Supporting existing Type III child care centers in the hiring, onboarding, and training of additional teachers to meet the staffing needs associated with increasing the number of children served
Support an existing Type III center to <i>open a new</i> B-3 classroom in an existing space already licensed for children within their facility.
Equipping an existing classroom with the required furnishings, materials, and equipment
Supporting existing Type III child care centers in the hiring, onboarding, and training of new teachers to meet the staffing needs associated with a new classroom
Assisting the site with enrollment efforts, such as paying for advertisements, supporting the costs of site-specific enrollment events, and covering other costs associated with enrolling and admitting new children into the program
Support a CCAP-certified Family Child Care Provider to <i>increase</i> the number of children served.
Equipping their space with the required furnishings, materials, and equipment
Assisting the provider with enrollment efforts, such as paying for advertisements and covering other costs associated with enrolling and admitting new children into the program.

NOT Allowable for Believe! Category 2
Capital improvements - inclusive of construction or physical improvements to any facility, outdoor areas, or playgrounds.
Tuition for seats

Believe! Category 3

PDG Spending Deadline is 12/31/2023

Questions about Believe! Category 3 allowable uses and budgets should be directed to brittney.cochran@la.gov.

Recommended Use of Allocation	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
High-quality curriculum and learning resources	Most of these activities could be up to 100% of the budget (see exception below)
Professional development to support high quality interactions	
Mental health resources and trauma-informed supports	
Universal developmental screening process	
Service support for YCWD to increase inclusive opportunities	

Recommended Use of Believe! Category 3 Allocation	
Function	
High-Quality Curriculum and Learning Resources	
High-quality curriculum	
Curriculum supports	
Developmentally-appropriate learning resources and materials	
Subscriptions and site licenses for online programs	
Professional Development	
Professional development and/or training	
Coaching	
Salaries and benefits for new positions created to support the quality of type III child care centers	
Stipends and substitutes for type III centers	
Other Purchased Services	
Advertising and communication	
Travel	
Technology-related hardware and software (<15% of Category 3 allocation)	

NOT Allowable for Believe! Category 3	
Quality purchases for public school pre-K and Head Start/Early Head Start sites	
Increase seats for children in programs (no teacher salary or seat tuition)	
Purchase or lease of a building	
Physical improvements or construction to any facility, including playground equipment	
Food or refreshments for a meeting/professional development	
Activities from other Believe! categories	

Believe! Category 4

ARPA CCDBG Spending Deadline 6/30/2024

Questions about Believe! Category 4 allowable uses and budgets should be directed to brittney.cochran@la.gov.

Recommended Use of Allocation	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
Learning at home activities	Any of these activities could be up to 100% of the budget
Developmental screening and engaging families	
EC transition(s) and engaging families	

Recommended Use of Believe! Category 4 Allocation
Function
Family Engagement
Family informational meetings or engagement trainings (e.g., trainings, event advertising, promotional materials, materials, books, child incentives, food for family participants. etc.)
Family literacy development (e.g, training, seminars, adult materials, children materials, books)
Subscription to text-based family engagement programs
Parenting strategies support and/or training (e.g., curriculum, resources and stipends for teacher to lead after hours trainings with families)
Family engagement (advocacy) consultant
Family leadership training and events/activities
Developmental Screening Family Engagement
Developmental screening activities (e.g., family engagement activities and materials)
Costs associated with supporting families at developmental screening events (e.g., promotional materials, milestone materials, child incentives, etc.)
Early Childhood Transitions
Transition pre-K to kindergarten program development and support (e.g., training events for teacher and families, activities, materials, books, resources, after-hour stipends to teachers)
Costs associated with supporting families at pre-K transition events (e.g., promotional materials, materials, books, kindergarten book, child incentives, etc.)

NOT Allowable for Believe! Category 4
CLASS® materials, Tier I curriculum, child care management software, child care enrollment software, developmental screening kits
Increase seats for children in programs (e.g., teacher salary or tuition for seats)
Purchase, lease of a building or furniture (e.g., administrative, teacher, or classroom)
Physical improvements, construction to any facility, or including playground equipment
Activities from Believe! Categories 1, 2 or 3

Ready Start Networks

PDG Funding Deadline is 12/31/2023, CCDF Funding Deadline is 6/30/2024, CCDBG Funding Deadline is 6/30/2024

Questions about Ready Start Network allowable uses and budgets should be directed to brandi.crowell@la.gov.

Ready Start Network Recommended Use of Allocation

Ready Start Networks are dynamic entities that have individualized needs based on the landscape of the communities that they serve.

PDG “Bridge” Funding

Questions specific to the bridge funding should be directed to devon.camarota@la.gov

Each Ready Start Network is receiving an additional allocation of PDG funds to cover about 2.5 months of care for the infants and toddlers enrolled in the B-3 Seats pilot as of December 2022. The amount for each RSN was included in the preliminary notice of award in March 2023. The allowable uses for this funding are:

- tuition for up to 2.5 full months for enrolled children
- partial tuition for up to 6 months for enrolled children

Standard Annual Allocation (\$50,000 of PDG and \$50,000 of CCDF)

The **unique characteristics of each community drives the mission and goals of each Ready Start Network**; therefore, each budget and associated allowable expenditures are unique and based on each individual network’s:

- blueprint goals and associated strategies,
- funding needs related to the execution of the deliverables associated with the Ready Start Network framework, inclusive of the four pillars (blueprint, coalition, advisory council, and local funding),
- participation in additional LDOE initiatives and grant opportunities, and
- funding from sources in addition to the RSN allocation.

Due to this, **specific guidance related to allowable uses of RSN funding** will be provided during RSN-specific support activities including but not limited to

- individualized support calls with the Ready Start Network manager,
- Community of Practice webinars, and
- in-person strategic planning meetings.

Additionally, **allowable uses for Ready Start Network allocations will be determined on a network-by-network case** and in consultation with the Ready Start Network Manager based on each network’s:

- progress in developing the local Ready Start Network as a scaled initiative,
- progress related to the Ready Start Network becoming a sustainable facet of the local early care and education landscape and the state early childhood system,
- progress in developing and implementing network and community goals,
- participation in other LDOE initiatives and grant opportunities, and
- usage of multiple funding sources or initiatives that may utilize strategies that result in cross-funding.
- All or part of salary for one district employee(s) as Ready Start program director, coordinator, etc.=
- Fringe benefits for Ready Start program staff
- Purchased professional and technical services to achieve RSN pillars

- Professional services contract for business/educational consultant to establish a local collaborative advisory council structure and assist in creation of bylaws
- Web page professional services contract to develop early childhood network website
- Domain services for website
- Contract with consultant to organize, plan, facilitate, and communicate ongoing early childhood engagement opportunities
- Mileage for Ready Start staff to provide on-site visits to child care centers

One-Time \$100,000 Additional RSN Allocation

Each RSN will receive a total of \$100,000 in additional one-time funding. Networks are required to spend up to \$50,000 of this funding on efforts related to Family Child Care Recruitment and Support and utilize the remaining funding on Innovative Network Improvement efforts. The total budget for all efforts must not exceed \$100,000 total.

Family Child Care Recruitment and Support

Up to \$50,000 should be allocated to develop a programmatic approach for recruiting and supporting additional unregistered Family Child Care (FCCs) providers to opt into Academic Approval

This process will promote FCC providers' understanding of the process and benefits of academic approval and address common misperceptions.

Networks should utilize this funding to:

- Support FCCs who have opted into Academic Approval
- Recruit and encourage FCCs who have not opted into Academic Approval to join
- Assess FCC progress, knowledge, and barriers related to opting into academic approval
 - Develop strategic plans and strategies for including FCCs as part of the EC Community Network, including plans to:
 - Educate FCCs about Louisiana's Early Childhood Quality Improvement System (Academic Approval)
 - Share information to FCCs about their role in the Quality Improvement System
 - Share information with the FCCs about the Networks' role in the Quality Improvement System
 - The benefits of being active participants in the Quality Improvement System
 - The benefits of being actively involved in your Community/Ready Start Network
 - How Community/Ready Start Networks can develop relationships with FCC providers
 - How Community/Ready Start Networks can support FCC providers
- Embed strategic plans focused on FCCs within RSN and CNLA blueprints.
- Assess the viability of increasing access for infants and toddlers through FCC sites (for those FCCs that are active participants in the QIS systems and those with which there is a strong partnership already established)

Each RSN will work with the RSN Manager to discuss how each network can best utilize this funding and develop aligned budgets based on the presence and needs of the FCCs within the communities they serve.

Innovative Network Improvement Efforts

The remaining funding should be utilized to develop and implement innovative network improvement efforts focused on the following:

- Child Wellness and Support Approaches to Learning
- Kindergarten Readiness
 - Improving Classroom Environments (for sites rated approaching proficient and below based on CLASS data)
 - Improving Instructional Support (for sites rated approaching proficient and below based on CLASS data)
- Family Engagement
- Workforce Supports
- Access Expansion in Rural Communities

Each RSN will work with the RSN Manager to discuss how each network can best utilize this funding and develop aligned budgets based on the needs of the communities they serve.

Example Non-Allowable Expenditures for Ready Start Network Budgets

Funding for Early Head Start or Head Start

Capital expenditures, i.e. Facility Improvements, property purchases, and major renovations

Office furniture

Food/refreshment, unless for an activity directed to children who are present (e.g., “lunch with loved ones”)

Early Childhood Education Fund (ECE Fund)

SGF - Spending deadline 6/30/2024

Questions about Early Childhood Education Fund allowable uses and budgets should be directed to devon.camarota@la.gov.

Recommended Use of Allocation	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
Direct payments to centers for seats	70% or more
Quality Improvements to Seats	0-30%
Audit Costs	

Recommended Use of ECE Fund Allocation	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
<i>The decision to take no Indirect Costs or a reduced amount is a local decision.</i>	
Direct payments to centers for seats	70% or more
Cost of infant seats by daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly rate	
Cost of toddler seats by daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly rate	
Cost of three-year-old seats by daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly rate	
Quality Improvements to Seats	0-30%
Stipends for teachers teaching at B-3 participating centers	
Coaching staff salary or stipend for B-3 teachers/centers	
Family engagement trainings or activities	
Audit Costs	0-30%
<p>A participating local entity must submit to the department an independent limited scope audit conducted by a certified public accountant who has been approved by the legislative auditor. Audit procedures will be developed by the department and will be limited in scope to those records necessary to substantiate that the funding received was utilized in accordance with program requirements and the approved application. <i>This will additionally include administrative costs for managing this program, such as paying staff to complete eligibility determination of children applying for the seats.</i></p>	

NOT Allowable for ECE Fund
Food or refreshments for a meeting/professional development
Purchase or lease of a building
Physical improvements or construction to any facility, including playground equipment
Excessive materials and supplies
Seats for children aged four years or older

Early Childhood Guides (EC Guides)

PDG Funding Deadline is 12/31/2023, CCDF Funding Deadline is 6/30/2024

Questions about Early Childhood Guides allowable uses and budgets should be directed to devon.camarota@la.gov.

Recommended Use of Allocation	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
EC Guide Salaries	The funding can be used flexibly as the RSN sees fit to meet community needs.
Family Engagement and Enrollment	
Incentives for CCAP Certified Type III Centers	
Materials and Supplies	

Recommended Use of EC Guides Allocation	
Function	
<i>The decision to take no Indirect Costs or a reduced amount is a local decision.</i>	
Salaries	
EC Guide salary	
Other child and family engagement staff stipends	
Benefits for EC Guides	
Family Engagement and Enrollment	
Family informational meetings or engagement trainings (e.g., trainings, materials, or activities)	
Family literacy development (e.g, training, seminars, adult materials, children materials, books)	
Subscription to text-based family engagement programs	
Developmental and/or Ages and Stages Questionnaire Screenings	
Incentives for CCAP Certified Type III Centers	
Direct payments to centers for engagement and partnership with EC Guides	
Scholarships to cover enrollment fees for families applying for CCAP as needed	
Materials and Supplies	
Any materials and supplies needed for the EC Guide to implement the work, compensate travel costs, and recruitment or engagement activities.	

NOT Allowable for EC Guides Allocation	
Physical improvements or construction to any facility, including playground equipment	
Food or refreshments for a meeting	
Tuition for Seats for children	

Family Engagement and Leadership Planning Grant

PDG Funding Deadline is 12/31/2023

Questions about Family Academies should be directed to brittney.cochran@la.gov.

Recommended Use of Allocation	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
Family Engagement Consultant (Contracted)	0% - 40%
Family Engagement Meeting Venues	60% - 100%
Communication and Technology Resources	
Materials and Supplies for Family Events	
Travel and Lodging to LDOE Facilitated Events	

Recommended Use of Family Engagement and Leadership Planning Grant Allocation	
Function	
<i>The decision to take no Indirect Costs or a reduced amount is a local decision.</i>	
Family Engagement Consultant (Contracted)	
Grantees will be given the option to contract a family engagement consultant.	
Family Engagement Meeting Venues	
Family engagement events and venues	
Communication and Technology Resources	
Communication and technology resources to streamline communication and dissemination of information to families	
Materials and Supplies for Family Events	
Any materials and supplies needed for family engagement events, sharing information with families, collaborations events, etc. (not food or drink)	
Travel and Lodging to LDOE Facilitated Events	
Travel and lodging for LDOE facilitated family engagement events	

NOT Allowable for Family Academies Allocation	
Physical improvements or construction to any facility, including playground equipment	
Food or refreshments for a meeting	
Tuition for Seats for children	

Workforce Planning Grant

PDG Funding Deadline is 12/31/2023

Questions about the Workforce Grant should be directed to janet.grigg@la.gov.

Recommended Use of Allocation	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
Workforce Consultant (Contracted)	40%
Director and teacher stipends to attend focus group meetings	20%
Facilitated events (travel and multiple venues)	40%
Materials and supplies for meeting events	

Recommended Use of Workforce Planning Grant Allocation
Function
<i>The decision to take no Indirect Costs or a reduced amount is a local decision.</i>
Workforce Consultant (Contracted)
Grantees will be given the option to contract a family workforce consultant.
Director and teacher stipends to attend focus group meetings
Direct payments to centers for director and teacher participation in focus group meetings.
Workforce Planning Meeting Venues
Workforce planning/workshop events and venues
Travel and Lodging to LDOE Facilitated Events
Travel and lodging for LDOE facilitated workforce planning meetings

NOT Allowable for Workforce Planning Grant Allocation
Physical improvements or construction to any facility, including playground equipment
Food or refreshments for a meeting
Tuition for Seats for children

Ready Start Transform

CCDBG Funding Deadline is 6/30/2024

Questions about the Ready Start Transform should be directed to janet.grigg@la.gov.

Recommended Use of Ready Start Transform Allocation	
Function	Estimated Percent of Funding
Direct payments for child care tuition	100%

Recommended Use of Ready Start Transform Allocation	
Function	
<i>The decision to take no Indirect Costs or a reduced amount is a local decision.</i>	
Funding at the Local Level Quality and Expanded Access	
Direct payments for child care tuition	

NOT Allowable for Ready Start Transform Allocation	
Physical construction to any facility that was not allowable in the CSBAE grant allocation	
Food or refreshments for a meeting	

Budget Planning Template

*Directions: Please use this planning template, or the Google Sheet version of this template, to prepare your budgets for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Make a copy of this template for **each** allocation you anticipate receiving for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, and send to earlychildhood@la.gov saved as “Network Name_Allocation Name_2023_2024 Budget Draft”. These budget planning documents for all awarded allocations are due June 9 to the program manager.*

An example would look like, “Acadia_Community Network Lead Agency_2023_2024 Budget Draft”. Documents incorrectly named will not be saved by the LDOE and recipients will need to resend with the corrected naming convention.

You can use [this guidance](#) for the budget categories to support your budget writing process.

Budget Category	Brief Description of Activity or Activities <i>(add rows or bullets as needed to differentiate)</i>	Source of Funds <i>(PDG, ARPA CCDBG, CCDF, or SGF)</i>	Expiration Date of Fund Source <i>(12/31/23 or 6/30/24)</i>	Estimated Date(s) of Reimbursement Requests	Estimated Total Cost
100					
200					
300					
400					
500					
600					
700					
800					

Internal Business Office Questions

Please answer the following questions, as they will help you in ensuring that funds get into the hands of your centers as quickly as possible. ***This does not need to be returned to the LDOE, however it is a best practice to have these questions answered prior to the start of the fiscal year.***

1. Who in the CNLA internal budget office do I need to speak to in order to process reimbursements?
2. What documentation does the CNLA internal budget office need in order to process reimbursements?
3. How long does the CNLA internal budget office take to process reimbursements?
4. For allocations that are able to be sub-granted to providers: When does the CNLA want to have payments in center director's hands, and based on the previous questions, how far in advance should the CNLA program manager start the reimbursement process with my internal office?
5. How much of the total allocation can be drawn down right away, according to the CNLA internal budget office?
6. When are the staff in the CNLA internal business office likely to be out of office, so that the CNLA program manager can prepare documents prior to their leave?
7. What caused hold-ups for previous years' drawdowns? How will you troubleshoot those issues in the 2023-2024 fiscal and academic year?

Early Childhood Allocation Fiscal Assurances

Please read through these general early childhood allocation assurances. These should be signed by both the Community Network Lead Agency point of contact and the Community Network Lead Agency’s business office’s point of contact, then **returned to the LDOE by sending to earlychildhood@la.gov by June 9, 2023.**

By accepting these funds, the Community Network Lead Agency agrees to:

- Serve as the fiscal agent for this Community Network
- Submit budget descriptions in eGMS that have already been approved by the program manager through the Budget Planning Document due May 1, 2023 for each allocation
- Adhere to all timelines provided by the LDOE so that fiscal operations for the Community Network Lead Agency are able to move forward without hindrance
- Submit original budgets in eGMS for all allocations by or before July 1, 2023 and absolutely no later than July 30, 2023
 - In the event that the July 1 deadline is unable to be met, the Community Network Lead Agency agrees to notify the program manager(s) of the impacted budgets immediately so that support can be provided to ensure timely submission of budgets, and reimbursement requests
- Submit all Periodic Expense reports within fifteen (15) calendar days of the closing of each quarter
 - September 30 - October 15
 - December 31 - January 15
 - March 30 - April 15
 - June 30 - July 15
- Communicate all fiscal reminders, information, and notices from the LDOE staff to internal Community Network Lead Agency business office point(s) of contact
- Submit at least one reimbursement per month for each available allocation, and/or ensure 50% of the funding allocated is spent at the halfway point of the spending period for each funding source
 - ex: PDG funds that expire on December 31, 2023, should have enough reimbursements submitted to show 50% of the allocation is spent by October 1, 2023.
- All funding will be budgeted for only activities outlined in the Allowable Uses document provided by the LDOE for the current fiscal year, or otherwise approved in writing by the program manager at the LDOE.
- All budgeted funds will adhere to spending deadlines for the respective grants supporting the allocation(s)
 - ex: Ready Start Network budgets will not have budget lines utilizing PDG funds for activities in January-June 2024.

(Community Network Lead Agency Point of Contact)

(Date)

(CNLA Business Office Point of Contact)

(Date)

All Grants' Programmatic Assurances

The assurances in the next pages are signed in eGMS before any funding can be budgeted or spent. Please keep a copy of these assurances for your records, and refer to them in establishing your budgets. **Since these are signed in eGMS, there is no action needed for these assurances beyond signing in eGMS.**

Early Childhood Network Lead Agency Assurances

- My organization will comply with all provisions of BESE Bulletin 140 – *Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Network* and all guidelines and requirements for lead agencies prescribed by the Louisiana Department of Education (Department), Early Childhood Office and that my organization will:

CONDUCT ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY NETWORK

- Ensure that all of the following required program partners are engaged:
 - Any school district in the community network's geographic boundaries and all early childhood programs within the district(s), and the Recovery School District if more than 10% of public schools are governed by the RSD; and
 - Programs that feed into any participating school district's pre-K and kindergarten programs (e.g., Head Start and Early Head Start, all school-based early childhood programs including charter schools, Nonpublic School Early Childhood Development (NSECD) Program sites, Early Steps, and Type III child care providers).

Note: All licensed Type III early learning centers are required to participate in the state's and the local coordinated enrollment system.

- Engage additional partners in the community who want to support early care and education.
- Serve as fiscal agent for this community network.
- Maintain records and documentation for this community network and make the records available to representatives of the Department when requested.
- Designate an individual to serve as the primary point of contact between the community network and the Department.
- Send a representative to all Department-sponsored meetings for lead agencies.
- Disseminate communication to all community network program partners when requested by the Department.
- Ensure that all sites in this community network have a site code assigned by the Department.
- Facilitate and reconcile on an ongoing basis an accurate accounting in the GOLD® online system of all classrooms at publicly funded sites in the community network that contain children from age birth to age five.
- Ensure that all infant, toddler, and pre-K classrooms at publicly funded sites are entered in the Department's CLASS® online system.
- Using the Department's verification process, verify community network-level data that has been collected and reported to the Department for the community network Performance Profile.
- Conduct meetings for all community network program partners a minimum of once each quarter. Note: Best practice is to conduct meetings once each month.

COORDINATE CLASS® OBSERVATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY NETWORK

- Identify all sites and all classrooms to be observed with the CLASS® Infant, CLASS® Toddler tool, and the CLASS® PreK-3 (2nd edition) tool.
- Develop a written process to verify that all sites and all birth to age five classrooms at each site are correctly recorded in the Department's CLASS® online system.
- Maintain an adequate number of local reliable observers and maintain a copy of their certificate of reliability.
- Ensure that all local observers have the required Child Care Criminal Background Check and that they are prepared to present it when entering a center.
- Develop a schedule and a written local protocol, in accordance with Department guidelines, to ensure that all Infant, Toddler, and PreK classrooms in publicly funded programs, child care centers with Type III licenses, and Family Child Care Providers in Academic Approval are accurately observed twice each year by CLASS® reliable observers.
- Collaborate with all program partners to establish and implement written procedures that minimize potential conflict of interest between local observers and the personnel in the classrooms they are assigned to observe and incorporate these procedures into the local observation protocol.
- Conduct shadow score observation checks for 10 percent of all classrooms observed during the fall observation period and for 10 percent of all classrooms observed during the spring observation period.
- Ensure that every local observer is shadow scored at least once per CLASS® tool during each academic year.
- Ensure that at least one observation for each classroom age configuration in the community network is shadow scored during each school year.
- Develop and implement a written process to monitor and compare the results of all local observers for the purpose of ensuring accurate observations.

Note:

- *Local observers with fall observation results that differ from third party results by more than one point across the majority of domains compared may not be allowed to observe in the spring for the accountability system. Lead agencies should monitor observer accuracy to maintain adequate local observer capacity.*

- *High scores, low scores, and concerning patterns will trigger additional third party observations to ensure accuracy for local observation scores.*

- Conduct a minimum of one observation calibration activity each semester and ensure that all observers participate in a minimum of one observation calibration activity each semester.
- Ensure that all local observations entered in the Department’s CLASS® online system are conducted in accordance with the publisher’s standardized procedures.
- Ensure that observation information and results are entered into the Department’s CLASS® online system accurately and in accordance with [BESE Bulletin 140](#) timelines.
- Request corrections for the observation data in the Department’s CLASS® online system in accordance with the Department’s established procedures and timelines.
- Establish and implement a written process and timeline to ensure that written results and feedback from each local observation is reported to sites within 10 business days.
- Collect the scoring booklets for all community network observations that occur in a school year and maintain them for three school years. The three school year retention period begins on June 30th of the school year during which the observations were conducted. If programs conduct their own observations, assure that copies of the original scoring booklets are obtained from the program and maintained in lead agency files for three school years.

COORDINATE BIRTH-TO-AGE-FIVE ENROLLMENT AND THE STATE FUNDING APPLICATION FOR THE COMMUNITY NETWORK

- Count all at-risk publicly funded birth-to-age-five children being served in the community network on October 1 and February 1 of each school year and report to the Department as required.
- Coordinate and submit to the Department a community-wide application for early childhood public funding and:
 - Provide an opportunity for each program partner in the community network and the general public to comment on the proposed funding request prior to submission to the Department.
 - Document the public comment process and include the documentation in the funding request that is submitted to the Department.
- Engage all program partners to submit a coordinated enrollment plan to the Department that is signed by all program partners.
- Provide all program partners the opportunity to participate in the design of an enrollment information campaign that identifies the community network and/or all program partners.
- Provide all program partners in the community network the opportunity to plan and participate in information and enrollment events that are conducted on behalf of all program partners.
- Collaborate with all program partners to develop and implement a single preliminary eligibility determination process that informs families of the programs for which they are eligible to apply.
- Inform all program partners of eligibility requirements for all programs so that appropriate referrals can be made.
- Collaborate with all program partners to design and use a coordinated application that allows families to indicate/rank their preference for programs and is used year-round by all programs in the community network.
- Provide all program partners with the opportunity to be represented in the design, review, and revision of the application on an annual basis.
- Collaborate with the Regional Child Care Resource and Referral agency (CCR&R) to develop a Memorandum of Understanding that delineates the relationship between the CCR&R’s referral system and the community network’s coordinated enrollment system.
- Collaborate with all program partners and the Regional CCR&R to ensure that the community network’s enrollment application is easily accessible and available year-round, particularly for families interested in child care.
- Collaborate with all program partners to ensure that at-risk children are enrolled in programs based on family preference, as long as space is available.
- Collaborate with all program partners to develop and maintain a community-wide waitlist of unserved infant-to-age-five children so families that want publicly funded child care and education services are identified and their preferences noted.

Ready Start Networks Assurances

In addition to complying with all provisions of BESE Bulletin 140 - Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Network and all guidelines and requirements for lead agencies prescribed by the Louisiana Department of Education (the Department), my organization as a Ready Start Network (RSN) will:

- Develop and publish a publicly available blueprint that includes the following components outlining the RSN’s strategic plan:
 - an analysis of current state;
 - mission and vision statements; and
 - SMART goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound) complete with strategies, performance metrics, and resources.
- Revise the blueprint as needed and submit the newly revised version to the Department.
- Recruit stakeholders and expand the network’s coalition, a group of community members committed to the cause of improving early childhood education quality and access for families, serving as advocates and external champions.
- Establish a governance structure as a decision-making authority that has bylaws and adheres to public meeting requirements.
- Create a fundraising strategy to survey resources available to support the blueprint.
- Regularly communicate with the Department and attend bimonthly Communities of Practice.
- Use Ready Start Network allocations to strategically support the implementation of the RSN model of four pillars (blueprint, coalition, governance, and fundraising) and the development, coordination, and/or improvement of early childhood across the network.

EC Education Fund Assurances

Community networks receiving this application will:

- Use funds to expand supply of and access to high-quality care for birth through three-year-olds.
- Complete and submit an ECE Fund Plan to the LDOE that does the following: outlines the local funds received, budget, eligibility requirements, and site partnerships.
- Submit required documentation to confirm receipt of local funds including but not limited to a letter from donor or a grant award letter.
- Budget at least 70% of funding awarded to directly fund additional birth through three-year-old seats in Type III early learning centers rated Proficient or higher.
- Ensure that these seats are for children defined as economically disadvantaged.
- Budget the remaining funds to administer the program, make quality improvements, and cover other associated costs.

Ready Start Transform Assurances

- Ready Start Transform grantees and applicable Ready Start Network Community Team members will participate in ongoing technical assistance opportunities and monthly webinars and will meet with the LDOE team for monthly scheduled check-ins throughout the grant period.
- Ready Start Transform grantees will develop and implement monthly strategy meetings that engage all Community Team members. Grantees are required to submit the dates of these meetings and other supporting documentation at the request of the LDOE team at any point during the grant period.
- Ready Start Transform grantees will submit monthly and quarterly reports to the LDOE team regarding progress of the Ready Start Transform Community Team in meeting/achieving goals and executing specific strategies and deliverables.
- Ready Start Transform grantees and applicable Community Team members will participate in biannual meetings with other Ready Start Transform teams.
- Ready Start Transform grantees and applicable Community Team members will make annual presentations to the LDOE, other Ready Start Transform grantees, stakeholders, and local and national committees, councils, and agencies.
- Ready Start Transform grantees will submit documentation reflecting any adjustments or updates to the network's work plan and timeline to the LDOE team when applicable and/or upon request.
- Ready Start Transform funding cannot be used to purchase or improve land, or for the purchase, construction, or permanent improvement of any building or facility. However, funds may be expended for upgrading child care facilities to ensure that providers meet state and local child care standards, including applicable health and safety requirements.

Early Childhood Guides Assurances

Overview:

The Early Childhood Guides (EC Guides) are local enrollment coordinators who help families connect to the resources they need to ensure their children have access to high-quality early childhood education. Guides will act as family engagement coordinators, to ensure families throughout the community deeply understand the value of early childhood education, know what child care options exist in their community, find wrap-around services such as pediatricians, WIC, SNAP, job-development programs, etc. so that families can support their children's development. As part of this pilot program, EC Guides may also provide individualized assistance to families throughout the application process for available publicly funded seat programs in the community, such as the Early Childhood Education Fund, Child Care Assistance Program, LA4, NSECD, or other local options. Finally, EC Guides should work to connect families with developmental milestones, and strategies to assist their children in meeting those milestones at home. If families see their children are not progressing toward those milestones, EC Guides can direct families to the necessary services like Early Steps and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, that will ensure the children get the services they need to progress and be Kindergarten ready, as well as be thriving young people.

Assurances:

To further the mission of Early Childhood (EC) Guides, the Ready Start Network agrees to use the allocation funding in the following ways:

- Support the continued employment of the EC Guide(s) through salary, benefits, bonuses, or other financial incentives the Ready Start Network lead agency sees appropriate to maintain the EC Guide role(s) in the community
- Support the continued employment of the EC Guide(s) through materials and supplies needed to successfully complete the work, such as:
 - Technology like a laptop, mifi/portable wifi device, cell phone, printer/copier, etc.
 - Office space needs, such as furniture, rugs, toys for children in a waiting room, etc.
- Host family engagement events that will connect families with resources, skills, and knowledge that will assist in the at-home development of their children, and the empowerment of families to be excellent advocates for their children throughout the children's educational experience
- Recruit and enroll potentially eligible families across the community through advertisements in various mediums, from radio and television to billboards and internet/social media outreach for any available publicly funded seat.
- Purchase materials to provide to families to inform them of their child care options, child development milestones, kindergarten readiness, and other priorities specific to the Ready Start Network Blueprint.

- Share with families child developmental milestones, and needs of their children through actions such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaires and additional materials for the EC Guides to help families complete, informational sessions through local Early Steps agents, and other outreach through local community stakeholders.
- Incentives and support for Type III centers receiving children who qualify for CCAP that work closely with the EC Guides and families such as;
 - Bonuses for newly accepted CCAP recipient families, bonuses for family referrals to EC Guides from directors, etc.
- Teacher recruitment and sign-on incentives for new or returning teachers at Type III centers receiving CCAP families.

Additionally, the Ready Start Network agrees to:

- Ensure the EC Guide participates in all technical assistance opportunities provided by the LDOE
- Ensure the EC Guide submits monthly memos to the LDOE's EC Guide program manager
- Ensure the EC Guide receives professional development at the local level

Family Engagement and Leadership Planning Grant

Overview:

The LDOE will partner with well-established RSNs to pilot Family Academies that provide leadership and advocacy training for families to effectively participate in decision-making in the ECE system. The LDOE will provide grants and technical assistance to RSNs to develop Family Academies based on an application process that will indicate their readiness, capacity, and the diversity of communities represented in the cohort.

Assurances:

In order to further the mission of Family Academies, the Ready Start Network agrees to use the allocation funding in the following ways:

- Comprehensive Professional Development and Coaching
 - Contracted family engagement consultant(s)
 - Professional development session, trainings, meetings
 - Meeting venues for family engagement meetings and events
- Family Academy Parent Leadership Stipends
 - Stipends for selected members of Family Academies for attendance, work, and planning
- LDOE Facilitated Events
 - Travel and lodging
 - Quarterly Sessions facilitated at LDOE
- Materials for Teams, Professional Development and Coaching
 - Materials and supplies needed for Family Academy professional development, leadership events, and coaching to implement the work or engagement activities.
- Communication and Technology Resources and Supplies
 - Resources and supplies needed for Family Academy leaders to implement the work or engagement activities.

Workforce Planning Grant

Overview: The Ready Start Workforce Planning Grantees will participate in a local landscape analysis of ECE workforce needs and build a strategic plan. The focus within workforce planning will be to develop a detailed analysis of their community's ECE workforce needs and a strategic plan to address these needs. Workforce planning is the process of analyzing existing workforce components and planning that includes

- **Building a pipeline:** Ensure path for effective early educators
- **Equitable access:** Ensure all children have great educators
- **High quality practices:** Ensure workforce has skills to implement
- **Wellness initiatives:** Promote a culture of wellness for educators who care for our youngest children

Assurances:

In order to further the mission of Workforce Planning Grant, the Ready Start Network agrees to use the allocation funding in the following ways:

- Comprehensive Professional Development and Coaching
 - Contracted workforce consultant(s)
 - Professional development session, trainings, meetings
 - Meeting venues for workforce meetings and events
- LDOE Facilitated Events
 - Travel and lodging
 - Sessions facilitated at LDOE
- Materials for Teams, Professional Development and Coaching
 - Materials and supplies to implement the work or engagement activities
- Communication and Technology Resources and Supplies

- Resources and supplies needed to implement the work or engagement activities

Believe! Assurances
Click for Instructions

[] By checking this box and saving the page, the applicant hereby certifies he/she has read, understood and will comply with the assurances listed below, as applicable to the program(s) for which funding is requested.

Category 1 Assurances:

- I agree that this funding will be used to directly support publicly-funded child care providers who are eligible to enroll children through public funds, including Type III child care centers, CCAP-certified in-home providers, and CCAP-certified family child care providers.
- I agree that this funding will be used in accordance with the Believe! Guidances, prioritizing the following activities related to child care stabilization:
 - **Workforce incentives**, such as staff bonuses, salaries, sign-on bonuses, and/or incentives tied to professional development, attendance, or CLASS® scores
 - **Direct payments** to sites for regular operating costs (e.g., rent, utilities, wi-fi or internet connection)

Category 2:

Community network lead agencies can apply for funding in this category to support owners and administrators of existing Type III child care centers and CCAP-certified Family Child Care providers to expand their services to increase the number and ages of children they are able to serve. This can be accomplished through activities such as the following:

- Supporting a site to *increase* the number of children served in an existing B-3 classroom
 - Equipping a classroom with additional required furnishings, materials, and equipment
 - Supporting existing Type III child care centers in the hiring, onboarding, and training of additional teachers to meet the staffing needs associated with increasing the number of children served
- Supporting a site to *open a new* B-3 classroom in an existing space already licensed for children within their facility
 - Equipping a classroom with the required furnishings, materials, and equipment
 - Supporting existing Type III child care centers in the hiring, onboarding, and training of new teachers to meet the staffing needs associated with a new classroom
 - Assisting the site with enrollment efforts, such as paying for advertisements, supporting the costs of enrollment events, and covering other costs associated with enrolling and admitting new children into the program
- Supporting a CCAP-certified Family Child Care Provider
 - Equipping their space with the required furnishings, materials, and equipment
 - Assisting the provider with enrollment efforts, such as paying for advertisements and covering other costs associated with enrolling and admitting new children into the program.

Potential Assurances:

- I agree that this funding is to be utilized to support access expansion efforts in existing Type III child care centers (excluding Early Head Start and Head Start) and/or CCAP-certified Family Child Care Providers
- I agree that this funding is to be utilized to support efforts that increase access and result in new seats within existing early childhood classrooms.
- I agree that this funding is to be utilized to support access efforts that are not being funded through any other funding source (B-3 seats, CSBAE, or RST).

Category 3:

Community network lead agencies can apply for funding in this category to support the quality of classrooms and teacher preparedness in Type III centers* as well as mental health supports, developmental screening, and services for young children with disabilities. The Department encourages community networks to prioritize requesting funding for those providers who serve a significant number of publicly-funded children. Funding can be requested to support each of the following activities:

- **Activity 1:** Communities ensure all early childhood classrooms are equipped with high-quality curriculum and developmentally-appropriate learning resources and materials
- **Activity 2:** Communities provide early learning educators with professional development to support high-quality interactions and effective implementation of instructional tools
- **Activity 3:** Communities support the social and emotional wellbeing of children and educators by providing additional mental health resources and trauma-informed supports
- **Activity 4:** Communities develop a plan to identify children in need of intervention through a universal developmental screening process

- **Activity 5:** Communities and school systems provide high-quality direct and related service support for young children with IEPs to increase inclusive opportunities within the least restrictive environment

Category 3 Assurances:

- I agree that this funding will be used to implement, fully and effectively, the plans submitted in the network's *Believe!* Category 3 application to support the quality of classrooms in Type III early learning centers.
- I agree to purchase materials on behalf of existing Type III early learning centers. Sites will not be given funding to make individual purchases within Category 3.
- I agree to follow local, state and federal procurement laws, as applicable.
- I agree to monitor and evaluate the actions the network and site recipients have taken, as outlined in the approved application.

Category 4:

Community members and educators should implement ongoing, consistent opportunities for parent, family, and community engagement. Providing equitable, high-quality family engagement practices across early childhood programs results in partnerships with families to support their child's learning of children at home and prepares children to enter kindergarten ready to learn.

Community network lead agencies can apply for funding in this category to support the implementation of family engagement practices that fall into one of the following activities:

- **Activity 1:** Communities use strategies to support child development through at-home learning and family engagement programs
- **Activity 2:** Communities link families with support for monitoring their children's development and provide coordinated support services to better prepare children for future success
- **Activity 3:** Communities develop plans in partnership with families, school systems, and program partners to support early childhood transitions

Category 4 Assurances:

- I agree that this funding will be used to support equitable, high-quality family engagement opportunities across early childhood programs and community-wide.
- I agree that this funding will be used to provide ongoing, consistent support for families and teachers during the implementation of family engagement programs and strategies to improve the impact (e.g., teacher/staff training, family training, technical assistance, webinars, guidance documents, teacher stipends, learning materials)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the CFDA# for these grants?

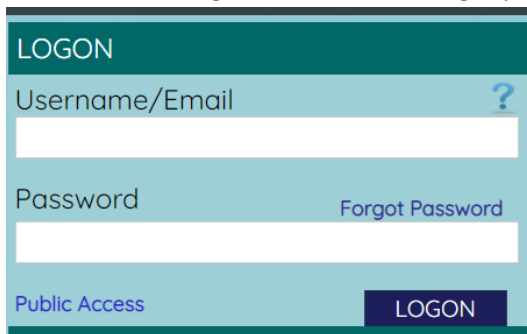
A: PDG is 93.434, ARPA CCDBG is 93.575, and CCDF is 93.596.

Q: How long does it take the LDOE to approve a budget, amendment, or reimbursement?

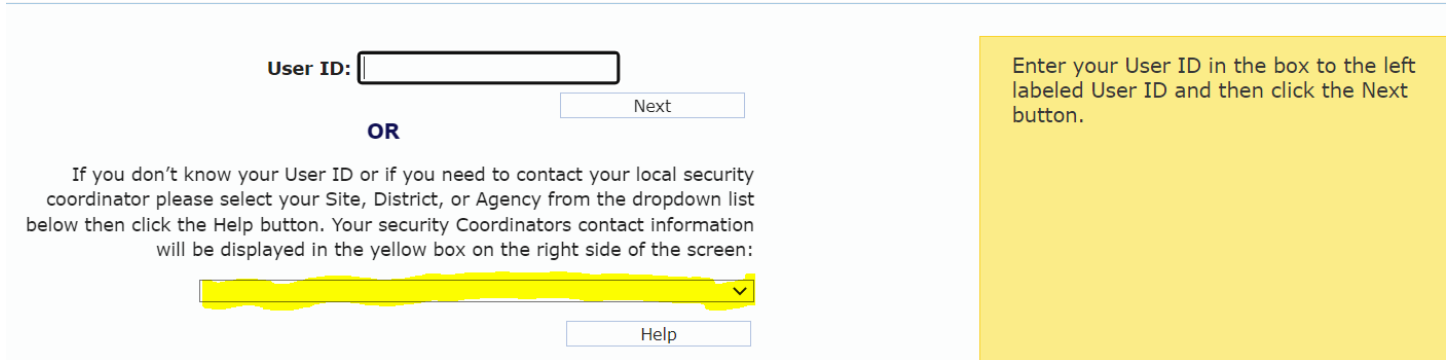
A: Ideally, the turn-around time for LDOE reviewers would be to have all reviewers complete the review within two weeks of the LEA submitting in eGMS. However, during “high volume” times, such as the beginning of the fiscal year (July 1-30) and end of the calendar year (December-January), turn-around time may be longer. It is for this reason that all LEAs are encouraged to submit **as soon as possible** so that any anticipated delays can be proactively addressed.

Q: I can’t access eGMS. What do I do?

A: On the main log-in screen, click “forgot password.”



Next, select the desired LEA from the highlighted drop down, then click “help.”



In the yellow box on the right side of the screen, contact information for the local security coordinator will appear. Contact that individual to gain or expand access to eGMS.

