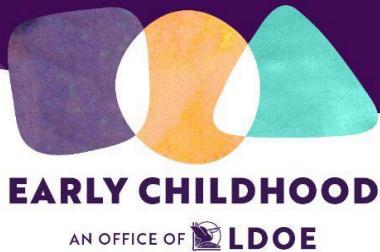




Early Childhood Newsletter



January 15, 2026

A Fresh Start: What Quality Looks Like in Early Childhood Classrooms

As the new year begins, it is a good time to reflect on what quality looks like in early childhood classrooms across Louisiana. High-quality classrooms share common practices that support children's learning and development.

Quality is built through positive, responsive interactions. Educators support learning when they are warm and attentive, follow children's lead, and use conversation and questions to extend thinking and language throughout the day.



High-quality classrooms also reflect intentional teaching. Educators plan meaningful experiences, support children during play, and use routines and transitions as opportunities for learning. Language and literacy development happen all day, not only during whole-group lessons.

Quality instruction is strengthened by clear routines, well-organized spaces, and consistent expectations, helping children feel safe, engaged, and ready to learn. Focusing on these interaction-based practices supports strong instruction and positive outcomes for young learners as the year continues. The LDOE wishes each of you, and the children you serve, a very happy and successful new year of learning!

Upcoming Deadlines

- January 15: Last day for CNLAs to submit a [Fall 2025 Third Party CLASS Observation Appeal](#)
- January 23: Network [Blueprints](#) and [CFR](#) due via Super App
- January 30: CNLA and RSN RFA Intent to Apply e-mail due
- January 30: Final ECE Fund Documentation of raised funds for 2026-2027 due
- February 1: Spring Observations must be scheduled in the [EC CLASS® Portal](#)
- February 10: LA 4/NSECD Attendance due
- February 13: CNLA and RSN RFA due to earlychildhood@la.gov by 5 p.m.

Upcoming Events

- January 21: [KinderSystem CenterTrack Webinar](#)
- January 21: [Early Childhood Active Coaching Office Hours](#)
- January 22: [CCAP New Provider Training](#)
- January 27: [Young Children with Disabilities Community of Practice](#)

- January 30: [New Director Office Hours](#)
- February 5: [Monthly Provider Webinar](#)
- February 10: [CNLA Office Hours](#)
- February 19: [CCAP Monthly Call for Providers](#)
- April 16, 21-22: Spring Collaboratives for CNLAs and CCR&Rs

More Important Dates

Please see the [LDOE School System Support Calendar](#)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW: CCAP New Provider Training

CCAP hosts a monthly training for all newly-certified providers. The new provider training gives site leaders all the tools and resources that support their new role as a certified provider.

The training can be accessed as follows:

- **Webinar Date/Time:** January 22 at 1 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** [CCAP New Provider Training](#)
- **Phone Number:** 1 470 250 9358
- **Meeting ID:** 920 6545 2011

For more information, please contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917.

NEW: CCAP Monthly Provider Call

CCAP hosts a monthly call for all certified providers that shares CCAP updates and requirements for providers and families. Providers can access the February Monthly Call via the information below:

- **Webinar Date/Time:** February 19 at 1 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** [CCAP Monthly Call for Providers](#)
- **Phone Number:** 1 470 381 2552
- **Meeting ID:** 939 7378 5023
- **Passcode:** 082226

For more information, please contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917.

NEW: KinderSystems January Webinar

Learn about CenterTrack, a Child Care Management System (CCMS) free to Louisiana child care providers!

Interested participants can access the webinar using the information below:

- **Webinar Date/Time:** January 21 at 12 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** [CenterTrack Webinar](#)
- **Webinar ID:** 160 165 2409

Please note that attendees need to register for the webinar prior to attending. Please e-mail SupportLA@KinderSystems.com with questions.

NEW: CNLA and RSN Request for Applications (RFA)

The LDOE is requesting applications for interested Community Network Lead Agencies and Ready Start Networks.

The [CNLA RFA](#) and [RSN RFA](#) applications were made available on the LDOE website under "Administrative Support" on January 13, 2026. If interested in submitting an application, eligible entities should first submit an **Intent to Apply**

via e-mail to earlychildhood@la.gov no later than January 30, 2026, but are encouraged to submit this intent by January 23, 2026. The Intent to Apply should include the following information:

- The name of the agency intending to apply
- Agency point of contact information, inclusive of name, title, e-mail address, and phone number
- Indication of intent for RFA type: Early Childhood Community Network Lead Agency and/or Ready Start Network Lead Agency
- The community or communities the agency wishes to represent

All Community Network Lead Agency and Ready Start Network Lead Agency applications are due to earlychildhood@la.gov by 5 p.m. on February 13. For any specific questions about the application process, please e-mail earlychildhood@la.gov.

NEW: Early Childhood Active Coaching Office Hours

The LDOE hosts monthly Active Coaching Office Hours specifically for early learning sites participating in site improvement. These sessions provide important reminders, guidance, and updates to support continuous growth and implementation efforts.

All early learning providers are welcome to attend. Providers can access the upcoming webinar using the information below:

- **Webinar Date/Time:** January 21 at 12 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/98038985498>
- **Phone Number:** 1 470 250 9358
- **Meeting ID:** 980 3898 5498
- **Passcode:** 989833

For more information, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.

NEW: Office Hours for New Directors

The LDOE team holds New Director webinars that focus on topics related to early childhood quality or operations while also helping to expand new directors' network of peers.

This month's topic is "How to Build Your Leadership Identity as a New Director." Participants will gain knowledge and understanding of how to establish a credible leadership identity by cultivating trust across teams and stakeholders.

Interested participants can access the webinar using the information below:

- **Webinar Date/Time:** January 30 at 12 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/98824530491>
- **Phone Number:** 1 470 250 9358
- **Meeting ID:** 988 2453 0491
- **Passcode:** 760909

Please contact Tella.Henderson@la.gov with questions.

NEW: Young Children with Disabilities (YCWD) Community of Practice Webinar

The LDOE hosts monthly webinars for early childhood special education administrators and educators. These webinars include professional development and updates regarding young children with disabilities in early childhood settings.

Providers can access the January YCWD Community of Practice Webinar using the information below:

- **Webinar Date/Time:** January 27 at 3 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/91561982271>
- **Meeting ID:** 915 6198 2271
- **Passcode:** 787411

For more information, please contact Caitlyn.Robinson@la.gov.

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

NEW: Early Childhood Literacy Initiative - Upcoming Early Childhood Curriculum Funding, Reviews, and Updates to the Tier I Early Childhood Curriculum List

The LDOE updated the state's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) in 2024 to reflect the latest research and best practices in early childhood education. In alignment with these updated standards, the LDOE has revised the "2025-2026 Instructional Materials Review (IMR) Rubric" for Early Childhood Education (ECE), Ages Birth to Five, and has begun to review new early childhood curriculum. In anticipation of those soon-to-be-announced new Tier 1 curricula aligned with the Science of Reading, the LDOE is allocating funding for new infant, toddler, and pre-k curriculum purchases. This funding was approved by BESE at the January 14 BESE meeting, and funding will be available to CNLAs, for school-based Pre-K classrooms, and to CCR&Rs, for child care classrooms, through eGMS on February 1st.

To ensure a smooth and effective transition for early childhood providers and school systems across Louisiana, the LDOE is in the process of reviewing each curriculum submission. These reviews are designed to evaluate the alignment of instructional materials with the revised ELDS and ensure that the materials used in classrooms support high-quality teaching and learning. As the LDOE continues this process, please be advised of the following:

- A new Tier I Curriculum List for ECE will be published as reviews are completed. This updated list will only include instructional materials that are aligned with the 2024 ELDS and meet the criteria of the 2025-2026 IMR rubric.
- Currently-posted Tier I materials were reviewed using previous standards and do not fully align with the newly-updated ELDS. As a result, these materials will be archived and will no longer appear on the active Tier I list. (Note: The archived materials list will not count against site Performance Profiles.)
- Providers and school systems should anticipate updated guidance and recommendations based on the newly-reviewed and approved Tier I curricula.

The LDOE is committed to supporting providers and school systems through this transition. Information about new Tier I curricula that have been approved will be made available via this newsletter, e-mail blasts, and webinars. These newly-reviewed and approved resources will ensure that all early childhood classrooms are equipped with high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials that support strong learning outcomes for every child, from birth to age five.

The LDOE encourages providers and district leaders to begin planning for the upcoming changes and to stay informed through regular updates from the Department. More detailed guidance will be shared in the coming months to assist with curriculum planning and adoption for the 2026-2027 academic year. First the LDOE will offer two rounds of office hours to answer questions and provide additional information. To attend, please use the information below:

Early Childhood Literacy Initiative Office Hours	
Tuesday, February 3, 2026	Thursday, February 5, 2026
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Webinar Time: 3 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.• Webinar Link: https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/• Meeting ID: 93171452293• Passcode: 840675	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Webinar Time: 3 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.• Webinar Link: https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/• Meeting ID: 99018201924• Passcode: 423122

Please reach out to LouisianaCurriculumReview@la.gov with questions related to the instructional materials reviews. For all other questions, including those related to funding, purchases, and newly-rated curriculum, please reach out to earlychildhood@la.gov.

NEW: February 1 Child Count

Per *Bulletin 140*, Community Network Lead Agencies (CNLAs) and publicly funded sites are required to count publicly funded children served at each of those sites as of February 1 and submit that count to the LDOE by February 28.

CNLAs will work with each publicly funded early learning site in capturing accurate data as of February 1, 2026:

- Child Count is intended to count every publicly funded child birth through age four at each publicly funded site in the state.
- Child count is intended to be an unduplicated count: only count children under one funding source.
- A child's age cohort is determined by the child's age on September 30 of the academic year, not the age configuration of the classroom they are in. During February Child Count, the child age cohort is still determined by the child's age on September 30. Determine the child's age using the table below:

Age Group	Children born between...	Children who have...
Infants	October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025	Not reached their first birthday before September 30, 2025
Ones	October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024	Reached first birthday on or by September 30, 2025
Twos	October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023	Reached second birthday on or by September 30, 2025
Threes	October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022	Reached third birthday on or by September 30, 2025
Fours	October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021	Reached fourth birthday on or by September 30, 2025

For questions regarding child count, please contact your local [Community Network Lead Agency](#).

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) KinderConnect Message Center

The Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) will use the KinderConnect Message Center to communicate program updates with providers. The updates may include mass alerts and notices or individual provider messages.

To enter the KinderConnect Message Center, providers should do the following:

- Access the Home page of KinderConnect that defaults to the *News*.
- Next, press the *Messages* icon to review messages.
- A *New Message* tab is available for response to individual messages only, not mass alerts sent to all providers.
- Providers should begin checking the Message Center regularly for CCAP communications.

Providers may access the KinderConnect Quick Reference Card for [Messages](#) for additional assistance.

For additional help, contact KinderSystems at 1-888-829-9258 or e-mail supportLA@kindersystems.com.

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Family Central Portal

In 2026, the LDOE will launch the new [FamilyCentral](#) application portal for families. The new application portal will allow families to apply for child care assistance more efficiently. Families can use Family Central to:

- Apply for child care assistance
- Renew existing child care assistance (i.e., Redetermination)
- Update household information and upload requested verifications
- Update provider information
- Communicate with their case worker through Family Messages

[EdLinkInfo.com](#) includes a [Family Central Overview Video](#) and step-by-step guides and information on using Family Central.

For additional assistance, contact the Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917.

NEW: CCAP B-3 Seats Recertification Notifications to Providers

The LDOE is working to conclude the process of sending out provider notifications for the CCAP B-3 seats children who have been re-certified and rejected. The e-mail will come from the NoReplyCCAP@la.gov e-mail address, so please check your e-mail inbox daily for the CCAP B-3 Seats re-certification notices for your site.

For additional assistance, contact the Provider Help Desk through the [Provider Help Desk Ticket System](#) or at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917.

NEW: CCAP Case Redeterminations

Redeterminations for CCAP families have resumed for the month of January 2026. Clients and providers should have received a redetermination notice in the mail in mid-December 2025 as a reminder.

These redeterminations include the families whose cases were extended from May and June 2025 to January 2026. If the family's prior redetermination month was extended from May or June 2025 and you or the parent have not received a redetermination notice for the month of January 2026, please contact the LDOE as soon as possible to avoid potential breaks in service. Families should e-mail LDECCAP@la.gov, and providers should contact the CCAP Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917.

It is important that all CCAP families have the most up-to-date contact information on file with the LDOE for all future notifications.

REMINDER: School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTCs)

Parent School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) forms (R-10614) were mailed to Type III sites and Family Child Care sites with Academic Approval last month. Site directors should complete the child care portion and distribute the forms to all eligible parents.

Director and Staff member School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) forms (R-10615) will be mailed from Louisiana Pathways beginning this month. As a reminder, the requirements for educators who work at a Type III site or a Family Child Care site with Academic Approval are that educators must:

- Enroll with Louisiana Pathways by submitting an enrollment form and employment verification form
- Work in the site for at least six months of the calendar year
- Work at least 30 hours per week at the site

Please contact demita.walker@la.gov for questions regarding SRTCs.

UPDATES FOR LICENSED CENTERS

NEW: Daily Reports for Infants

Daily infant reports provide parents and center staff members with a detailed summary of an infant's day. These reports help bridge communication between home and the early learning center. When parents know how their infant slept or ate during the day, they can better plan evening routines at home. Similarly, staff members can learn from parents about changes in sleep patterns or feeding preferences. Daily reports become an essential tool for understanding the infant's needs, routine, and development.

Per [Bulletin 137](#), reports can be written or electronic but must include the infants' liquid intake, food intake, disposition, bowel movements, and eating and sleeping patterns. These reports must be given to the parents on a daily basis and kept current throughout the day.

For questions, licensed centers should contact a [Licensing Consultant](#).

NEW: Infants Should Not Wear Bibs While Asleep

Infant sleep safety is an important responsibility in an early learning center environment. An important safety practice is ensuring infants do not wear bibs while sleeping.

Although bibs are helpful during feeding times, they can present serious risks when left on during sleep. For example, bibs can become a strangulation hazard if they shift, bunch up, or come loose while an infant is sleeping.

Even bibs with snaps or velcro can pose a risk if not removed.

Please contact your [Licensing Consultant](#) with questions.

NEW: End-of-Day-Check

Checking the entire early learning center at the end of each day is an essential safety and quality practice. Here are some reasons why it is important:

1. Ensures no child is left behind - Confirm that all children have been safely picked up.
2. Maintains safety and security - Ensure all doors and gates are locked and that hazardous materials are secured.
3. Identifies health concerns - Notice items that might attract pests as well as spills or messes that were not cleaned up.
4. Protects confidential information - Properly store child records, incident reports, and medications.
5. Prepares for the next day - Restock supplies, reset learning areas, arrange furniture safely.

[Bulletin 137](#) requires the entire center and play yard be checked after the last child departs and that it shall be documented with the date, time of visual check, and signature of staff conducting the check.

Please contact your [Licensing Consultant](#) with questions.

NEW: Epinephrine Education

[Code Ana](#) is a non-profit organization ready to help early childhood educators recognize and respond to anaphylaxis in any child. This organization offers online, self-paced training that will provide information on the following:

- Signs and symptoms of a severe allergic reaction
- What epinephrine is and why it is needed for anaphylaxis
- How to use common epinephrine auto-injectors

For more information on how to receive training, please review [Code Ana Training](#). There is no-cost enrollment for one staff member per site.

UPDATES FOR LICENSED CENTERS, FAMILY CHILD CARE, AND IN-HOME PROVIDERS

NEW: Child Care Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) Application Guidance

Applications returned for corrections must be resubmitted once the required changes are made. Providers can review reasons for a returned application in the CCCBC System's Notifications Log or in the e-mail notification. After corrections, select "next" at the bottom of the CCCBC System screen until the option to "submit application" appears.

Applications successfully resubmitted will show as "In Progress," indicating the CCCBC team can review the updated information. Providers and applicants can monitor status updates within the CCCBC System.

Applications and fingerprints must be submitted before CCCBCs can be processed. Please note: fees are non-refundable.

To avoid fingerprinting appointment issues:

- Confirm the applicant's e-mail address matches the address used in the CCCBC application.
- Remind applicants to check junk mail for e-mails from no-reply@uemail.identogo.com.
- If the e-mail with the IDEMIA scheduling link is inaccessible, visit <https://uenroll.identogo.com/workflows/27N4H8> and enter Service Code 27N4H8.
- Pre-enroll using the exact information from the CCCBC application.
- Refer to the current list of fingerprinting locations; new sites are added regularly.

For IDEMIA finance or NCAC questions, call 877-512-6962 or e-mail LAUEPaccounts@us.idemia.com. For UEID or scheduling, call 844-539-5543.

For other questions, contact the CCCBC team at LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov.

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For questions regarding the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), please contact the LDECCAP@la.gov.
 - For all questions regarding Child Care Criminal Background Check processing, please contact LDEcccbcprocessing@la.gov.
 - For all other questions regarding early childhood, please contact earlychildhood@la.gov.
 - Subscribe to our monthly newsletter by completing our [Newsletter Signup](#) form.