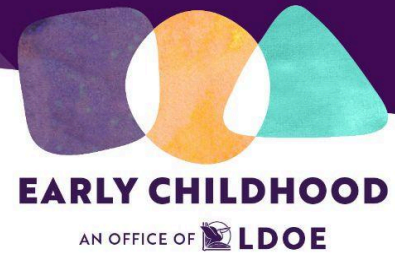




Early Childhood Newsletter



February 2025

February is Early Ed Month in Louisiana!

Early Ed Month celebrates the importance of early learning programs for children and highlights the critical need for access to and investment in high-quality early learning educational care programs for our state's youngest learners.

Early Ed Month 2025 features a month-long series of events highlighting the critical issues surrounding early childhood education that impact children and families in Louisiana.

Visit the [Louisiana Policy Institute for Children](#) page for a list of Early Ed Month 2025 activities.



Upcoming Deadlines

- February 28: Teaching Strategies GOLD® Winter Checkpoint
- February 28: February 1 Child Count due
- February 28: [Tulane University Early Childhood Coordinated Enrollment Survey](#) Due

Upcoming Events

- February 10: [Teacher Leader Summit Early Bird Registration](#) Opens
- February 20: [CCAP Monthly Call for Providers](#)
- February 28: [New Director Office Hours](#)
- March 6: [Monthly Provider Webinar](#)
- March 10: [Teacher Leader Summit Early Bird Registration](#) Closes

More Important Dates

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

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UPCOMING EVENTS

REMINDER: Teacher Leader Summit 2025 Registration

[Teacher Leader Summit \(TLS\) 2025](#) will be held June 10- 12 at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center.

- Early bird registration will take place from February 10 to March 14, and regular registration begins on March 15 and will close on April 18 or at sellout. There will be no on-site registration. All registrations must be completed before arriving at the event.
- Educators can now complete their [Early Bird Registration](#).

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

NEW: Early Childhood Provider Update Webinar

The LDOE hosts monthly webinars for early childhood providers. These webinars include essential reminders and updates for all provider types. Providers can access the upcoming March Provider Update Webinar using the information below:

- **Webinar Date/Time:** March 6 at 1 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/91532982014?pwd=D5xkBgKac4rzD1SbQl0OC5BNmOT0sE.1>
- **Meeting ID:** 915 3298 2014
- **Passcode:** 519100

The February 6 webinar presentation slides are available in the [Quality Providers Library](#) on the LDOE website.

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

NEW: Office Hours for New Directors

The LDOE team conducts webinars on various topics related to early childhood quality and improving child care sites' administrative and operational functions. Through engaging sessions and monthly guest speakers, the office hours are designed to support directors seeking professional development training to facilitate effective ECE leadership development.

This month's topic is "Understanding School Readiness Tax Credits" (SRTC). Participants will learn about the different types of credits, their integration within the Career Development System, and how providers can claim tax credits.

- **Webinar Date/Time:** February 28 at 12 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93015014527?pwd=WfJgjcO9gVqJFtYDs3lI9traYaMqv3.1>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 1 346 248 7799
- **Meeting ID:** 930 1501 4527
- **Passcode:** 012444

Please contact tella.henderson@la.gov with questions.

NEW: The 2026 Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Award Application Portal Has Closed!

The LDOE, in partnership with [Dream Teachers](#), is excited to recognize and celebrate some of the state's most exceptional educators through the Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year programs.

The application period **closed** as of **January 15**. If you applied, please note the timeline below for next steps:



Please contact shallan.jones@la.gov with questions.

NEW: LA GATOR Scholarship Program

Student applications for the Louisiana Giving All True Opportunity to Rise (LA GATOR) Scholarship Program will be available beginning **March 1** and will close on April 15 for the 2025-2026 school year.

Interested families, schools, and community members are encouraged to explore the [LA GATOR Scholarship Program webpage](#) to access program information, such as eligibility requirements and potential scholarship award amounts, as well as resources tailored for different audiences, including [families](#), [schools](#), and [service providers](#). The program administrator, Odyssey, also provides [customer support services](#).

- Call Center: 225 422 1538
- E-mail Help Desk: help.la@withodyssey.com

Please contact help.la@withodyssey.com with any questions.

UPDATES FOR FUNDING AND ENROLLMENT

REMINDER: 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 site 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:

- 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, 2023 – September 30, 2024	Not reached their first birthday before September 30, 2024
Ones	October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023	Reached first birthday on or by September 30, 2024
Twos	October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022	Reached second birthday on or by September 30, 2024
Threes	October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021	Reached third birthday on or by September 30, 2024

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

NEW: Early Childhood Coordinated Enrollment Survey

The Tulane University Early Childhood Policy Research Lab is conducting a brief survey focused on Louisiana’s early childhood enrollment practices. Participation in this survey will contribute to an important project being conducted in collaboration with the LDOE, aimed at understanding the challenges networks face regarding access to and enrollment in early childhood programs.

- **Survey Release Date:** February 10
- **Survey Due Date:** February 28
- **Link to Survey:** https://tulane.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ODLiWZaAw3xfGey

The survey takes only 10 minutes to complete. Thank you for supporting this vital initiative.

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

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) 2025 Sliding Fee Scale

- The new [2025 Sliding Fee Scale](#) has been updated. As of February 3, the parent’s copayment and qualifying income were calculated using the new scale.
- Additional families may now be eligible for CCAP based on the new scale.
- Providers should immediately adjust families’ co-pay amounts to reflect the new Sliding Fee Scale.

Copay	2 persons		3 persons		4 persons		5 persons	
\$0	\$0	\$3,474	\$0	\$4,292	\$0	\$5,109	\$0	\$5,927
\$2.00	\$ 3,475	\$3,746	\$ 4,293	\$4,627	\$ 5,110	\$5,509	\$ 5,928	\$6,390
\$3.00	\$ 3,747	\$4,017	\$ 4,628	\$4,962	\$ 5,510	\$5,908	\$ 6,391	\$6,853
\$8.00	\$ 4,018	\$4,289	\$ 4,963	\$5,298	\$ 5,909	\$6,307	\$ 6,854	\$7,316
\$10.00	\$ 4,290	\$4,614	\$ 5,299	\$5,700	\$ 6,308	\$6,786	\$ 7,317	\$7,872
Copay	6 persons		7 persons		8 persons		9 Persons	
\$0	\$0	\$6,744	\$0	\$6,898	\$0	\$7,051	\$0	\$7,204
\$2.00	\$ 6,745	\$7,271	\$ 6,899	\$7,437	\$ 7,052	\$7,602	\$ 7,205	\$7,767
\$3.00	\$ 7,272	\$7,798	\$ 7,438	\$7,975	\$ 7,603	\$8,153	\$ 7,768	\$8,330
\$8.00	\$ 7,799	\$8,325	\$ 7,976	\$8,514	\$ 8,154	\$8,704	\$ 8,331	\$8,893
\$10.00	\$ 8,326	\$8,957	\$ 8,515	\$9,161	\$ 8,705	\$9,365	\$ 8,894	\$9,568
Copay	10 persons		11 Persons		12 Persons			
\$0	\$0	\$7,358	\$0	\$7,511		\$0	\$7,664	
\$2.00	\$ 7,359	\$7,932	\$ 7,512	\$8,098		\$ 7,665	\$8,263	
\$3.00	\$ 7,933	\$8,507	\$ 8,099	\$8,684		\$ 8,264	\$8,862	
\$8.00	\$ 8,508	\$9,082	\$ 8,685	\$9,271		\$ 8,863	\$9,460	
\$10.00	\$ 9,083	\$9,772	\$ 9,272	\$9,975		\$ 9,461	\$10,179	

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

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Prospective Payments

Later this spring, the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) will transition to paying providers prospectively in accordance with new federal regulations. This change, in which the LDOE will make child care payments in advance of services, will help to support better provider stability. The LDOE will share more specifics about the transition in coming monthly webinars and e-mail blasts to providers.

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

NEW: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Monthly Call for Providers

In the next Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Monthly Call for Providers, participants will learn how to recognize CCAP “red flags,” review KinderConnect essential reminders, and have current issues addressed.

- **Webinar:** CCAP Quality Control Guidance
- **Date/Time:** February 20 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/95071530570>
- **ID:** 950 7153 0570

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

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) KinderConnect Attendance Tracking

Providers caring for CCAP-certified families are required to track daily attendance in the KinderConnect Attendance Tracking System:

- Providers must check the KinderConnect portal daily to observe whether there are successful check-in/check-outs for *all* certified children in attendance.
 - The LDOE suggests that providers review the portal after the morning check-in and at the end of the day.
- Providers must also ensure that daily check-in/check-outs in the KinderConnect portal *match* the physical Attendance log.

Providers who use a Child Care Management System (CCMS) different from CenterTrack must ensure that their system is connected to the KinderConnect System via KinderBridge (API). Note that CenterTrack is a free CCMS offered by KinderSystems that certified providers may obtain to track attendance. Providers may contact KinderSystems by e-mail at supportLA@kindersystems.com or by calling 1-888-829-9258.

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

REMINDER: Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Underutilization of CCAP Authorizations

Providers who check the KinderConnect portal daily for successful attendance tracking are aiding parents in maintaining their CCAP certification:

- Providers must upload attendance weekly to KinderConnect
- Immediately addressing incomplete attendance in KinderConnect means parents will not be included on an Underutilization Report
- Timely reporting children that no longer attend or never attended a child care site means parents will not be included on an Underutilization Report and prevents CCAP recoupment of payment

If a family appears on the LDOE CCAP Underutilization Report and child care services are still needed, the parent may contact the LDOE immediately at 1-877-453-2721 to state that child care services are still needed. Timely receipt of the call to the LDOE will prevent the closure of the family’s case. If the case is closed, the parent will have to reapply and if still deemed eligible, will be placed on the waiting list until additional funds are available for Child Care Assistance.

Please contact the CCAP Provider Help Desk at 225-250-7635 or 225-614-5917 with questions.

UPDATES FOR LICENSED CENTER

NEW: Motor Vehicle Passenger Checks

According to [RS. 32:295.3](#), it is unlawful for any driver or operator to leave a child or children under the age of six years unattended and unsupervised in a motor vehicle in Louisiana. Violation of this law will result in a fine not more than five hundred dollars, or imprisoned for not more than six months, or both. In addition, [Bulletin 137 §2101. A. 4.](#) requires that no child or children, of any age, be left unattended and unsupervised in a motor vehicle.

Providing transportation services is an extension of the license, and failure to meet the standards may result in adverse actions, including revocation. To prevent a child being left unattended and unsupervised in a motor vehicle, licensed early learning centers that provide transportation are required to adhere to the following:

Daily Transportation

- Track children and staff during transportation by using a current passenger log for each trip
- Conduct visual passenger checks at the completion of each trip or route prior to the staff member exiting the vehicle

Field Trip Transportation

- Maintain a written or electronic record for each field trip to include the following:
 - Date, destination(s), and method of transportation
 - Names of all the children being transported in each vehicle
 - Names of the driver, staff members, and other adults being transported in each vehicle
 - Names of other adults who joined the field trip at the destination(s) to assist with supervision of children and
 - The presence of each child each time the children enter or exit the vehicle
- Conduct a visual passenger check and a face-to-name count at the following times:
 - Prior to leaving center for destination
 - Upon arrival at and prior to departure from each destination
 - Upon return to the center

To conduct a proper motor vehicle passenger check, a staff person must do all of the following:

- Physically walk through the vehicle
- Inspect all seat surfaces
- Inspect under all seats
- Inspect all enclosed spaces and recesses in the vehicle's interior

For additional information on transportation requirements, see the following sections of [Bulletin 137](#):

- §2101. General Requirements (Center-Provided, Parent-Provided or Contract Transportation)
- §2103.F. Passenger Log
- §2107. Motor Vehicle Passenger Checks

Please contact your [licensing consultant](#) with questions.

NEW: Reminder of Child to Staff Ratios

Child-to-staff ratios are based on what children need for quality nurturing care and must be met during all hours of operation, including in vehicles during transport:

It is recommended that child-to-staff ratios be kept low to keep staff stress below levels that might result in anger expressed with children.

Maximum Child to Staff Ratios:

Infants under 1 year - 5:1

1 year - 7:1

2 years - 10:1

3 years - 13:1

4 years - 15:1

5 years - 19:1

6 years and up - 23:1

At rest time, sufficient staffing is needed to satisfy child-to-staff ratios. Staff shall be present on the premises during rest time and available to assist as needed. Although the center is only required to have the physical presence of one staff member to observe sleeping children, the center is required to have sufficient staff available onsite, able to respond quickly to any emergency or evacuation needs that may suddenly arise to ensure the safety of children. Children ages one and older may be grouped together at rest time, with one staff member in each room supervising the resting children. This requirement also ensures the prevention of inappropriate behavior that may occur if a staff member is not present.

Please contact your [licensing consultant](#) with questions.

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

REMINDER: *EC Learn* Portal is Open For Continuing Education Training

EC Learn is the LDOE's Early Childhood free online training and learning resource where early childhood educators can enroll in and access new continuing education courses.

During the first phase of *EC Learn*, Health & Safety Training, including Medication Administration in Child Care, has been launched to support the needs of the early childhood workforce in obtaining continuing education courses required by [Bulletin 137](#) and [Bulletin 139](#). Within each individual's *EC Learn* account, early childhood educators can access and download certificates of completion for the required courses. In addition, *EC Learn* participants will be emailed a copy of the training certificate within 24 hours of successfully completing the final course exam. Participants can also view and download training certificates or transcripts by clicking on their Student Dashboard's "Completed" tab.

Educators can access and enroll in courses at <https://eclearn.doe.louisiana.gov/>. Additional training will be added periodically to support the growth and development of the EC workforce, including new teachers and administrators. Educators can check progress on enrolled courses and access training transcripts or certificates on "My Dashboard."

Please contact eclearn@la.gov with questions.

REMINDER: School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)

Parent School Readiness Tax Credit (SRTC) forms (R-10614) were mailed to Type III sites and Family Child Care sites with Academic Approval:

- Once updated tax forms are received, 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 to educators who work at a Type III site or a Family Child Care site with Academic Approval. Louisiana Pathways will mail the form if in 2024 educators were enrolled with Louisiana Pathways, worked in the site for at least six months of the calendar year, and worked at least 30 hours per week at the site.

To find your site's 2024 star rating, site code, as well as beginning and end dates, please download the [Type III School Readiness Tax Credit Spreadsheet](#). The link will prompt a download of an Excel file. Please note that there are two tabs at the bottom of the spreadsheet: one for Type III sites and the other for FCC sites.

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

NEW: Requested CCCBC Corrections

Providers are notified about needed corrections to a CCCBC application in two ways:

1. Via e-mail notification
2. Through the [CCCBC System](#) Notification Log

When corrections are needed, the notification e-mail will specify exactly what needs to be fixed, such as the following:

- Missing attachments that need to be uploaded
- Applicant's information that needs to be updated

Follow the correction instructions provided in the notification e-mail and resubmit the application. The CCCBC application will remain in "Corrections Requested" status until all requested changes are completed and the application is successfully resubmitted.

To avoid processing delays, carefully review the correction requests to ensure all items that need attention are addressed.

Please contact ldeccbcprocessing@la.gov with questions.

NEW: Locating an IDEMIA Fingerprinting Site

To find a nearby IDEMIA fingerprinting location, visit identogo.com/locations and input a zip code or city name into the search field. From the results displayed, select a location identified as "IdentoGO-State Agency Enrollment" to ensure an authorized service center is chosen.

Only electronic digital fingerprint submissions are accepted unless the LDOE specifies otherwise. If an applicant has a condition that may cause fingerprinting issues, please notify the LDOE CCCBC Section by emailing LDECCBCprocessing@la.gov before the scheduled fingerprinting appointment.

Please contact LDECCBCprocesing@la.gov with any questions or for assistance.

CONTACT US



- For questions regarding licensing or child health and safety, please contact LDElicensing@la.gov.
- For all questions regarding Child Care Criminal Background Check processing, please contact LDEccbcprocessing@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.