# Zoom Meeting Preparation

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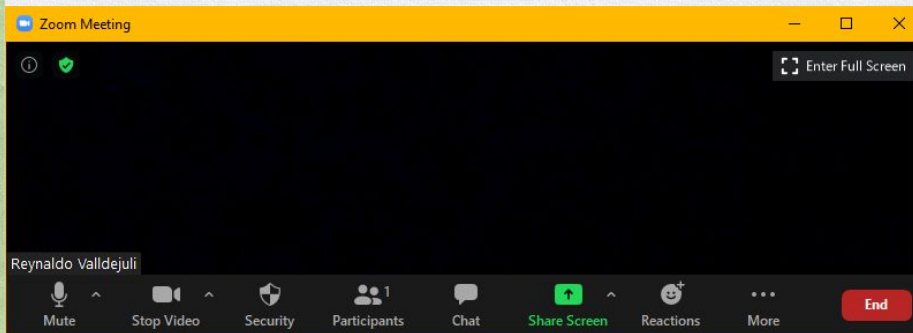
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Louisiana Believes

Certification Monthly Call
September 19, 2022

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New Applications

The Certification Office has updated all applications related to the recent legislation and policy changes. The new applications were posted and available on teachlouisiana.net on **September 15**.

There will be a little over a one-month grace period where either version of the application can be submitted. However, the new version of the application will be required by **November 1.**

Since policy was approved as **emergency rule** regarding these changes, any unprocessed application that is currently "unassigned" can have additional supporting documentation uploaded via the "history" option if needed.

New Applications (TA)

The Teaching Authorization (TA), as required by Act 634 of the 2018 Legislative session, now includes a risk assessment scale that is required to be completed. The options on the form now include classification of risks, based on what an LEA sees on the CBC.

Risk categories are as follows:

- **Critical** - conviction(s) for prohibited offenses in R.S. 15:587.1 or for felony offenses
- **High** - conviction(s) for R.S. 15.587.1 drug offenses, offenses regarding weapons, violence, children, sex, or drugs; less than 5 years post-conviction, more than 10 conviction entries
- **Moderate** - subsequent convictions, at least 5 years post-conviction
- **Low** - Over 10 years post-conviction, no new convictions

Criminal Background Checks (CBCs) are still **not permitted to be sent to LDOE**. Court documentation is required to be included for any records on the CBC.

New Applications (TA)

Louisiana Employing School System or Nonpublic School:

State Approved School System or Nonpublic Site Code:

Geographical Parish (school system or nonpublic school location):

Grade Level(s):   Date of Hire:

Employment Role: ----------------Choose Employment Role--------------->

Criminal Background Determination Results

Date CBC/Report Received: CBC/Report Reviewed by:

Indicate background clearance result/documentation (check/select only one):

☐ If CBC is clear of records, check here, and attach the coversheet/request page that the LSP returned to the employing school system which indicates "no record found" or enclose a copy of the confirmation email from LSP indicating the person is clear.

☐ If CBC has records, check here, and use Risk Assessment & Classification rating scale to assess the CBC, indicating the number of risks in chart below. DO NOT enclose the CBC. Include court or other applicable documentation for each offense and satisfaction of sentence verification.

Critical	High	Moderate	Low
# Risks	# Risks	# Risks	# Risks

I confirm that I am seeking employment with the Louisiana employing school system noted above. I affirm and declare that all information submitted by me is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand any misrepresentation of facts, by omission or addition, may result in criminal prosecution and/or the denial or revocation of my teaching authorization. I further understand that all court actions, and convictions (including but not limited to expungements, first offender pardons, deferred adjudication, and pre-trial diversions) shall be reported on the criminal background check. I agree that my electronic signature as entered below is the legal equivalent of my manual signature on this application.

Signature of Applicant: Date:

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New Applications (TAT)

Other than the removal of Praxis I Core, the major change to the Temporary Authority to Teach (TAT) application is the removal of the GPA flexibility form, since this option was removed from the law for practitioners. The required GPA for the TAT is a 2.20 on a 4.0 scale. The GPA used for this determination is the cumulative **undergraduate degree at the time of degree conferral.**

The exam verification form is still a key document required when applying for TAT renewal. Applicants who already have a TAT, using GPA flexibility will not be denied renewal; however, keep in mind, under current policy, they cannot be issued a PL if content exams are passed.

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New Applications (PL)

Other than the removal of Praxis I Core, the major change to the Practitioner's License (PL) application is the removal of the GPA flexibility form, since this option was removed from the law.

The intent to employ form has also changed slightly. More guidance is provided around appropriate placement. The assigned teaching area section of the form only requires the inclusion of **subject, grade** and **if area includes special education**.

New Applications (IN)

The significant changes to the initial application (IN) include:

- Removal of the private provider form
- New verification of meeting Reading requirements section
- Removed "higher" certificate option

New Applications (TEP)

Act 244 of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session expanded options for the Temporary Employment Permit (TEP). There are two options for issuance of a TEP:

- Educators possessing a graduate degree in the area in which he/she is seeking employment may be eligible for a TEP. (Graduate Degree Option)
- Educators completing a teacher preparation program but lacking required exams by 10% only may be eligible for a TEP. (Preparation Option)

The application includes dropdown menus from which to choose the TEP pathway and the TEP Certification area. Please note that not all certification areas are available for the TEP.

TEPs **will not be issued** in Special Education Areas, Agriculture, or Physical Education. Additionally, a TEP in an elementary area is only available through the Preparation option.

New Applications (TEP)

The TEP application includes documents required for both options. The instructions include details about which forms are required for each option. Additional guidance documents are provided for each pathway: preparation pathway guidance and graduate degree pathway guidance.

Some of the forms required for the TEP include:

- Program Completion Verification (must be completed by a BESE-approved teacher preparation program)
- Pre-service Training Verification
- Exam Verification
- Mentoring Attestation

Additionally, since the TEP is used to address workforce shortages, similar to a TAT, an attestation is included at the bottom of the application.

New Applications (TEP)

Indicate type of TEP requested: -----Select TEP Pathway----->

Select the TEP Certification Area/Grade Level
(See guidance documents Linked on instructions page for allowable areas):

-----Select TEP Certification Area ----->

For *preparation program completers lacking exams only*, indicate Praxis exams attempted or successfully completed, including score reports for these exams:

Indicate by Checking	Exam #	Praxis Exam Attempted	Select *Successful* or *Unsuccessful*
☐		Elementary Content	Select:
☐		Middle School Subject-Specific Content Exam	Select:
☐		Secondary Subject-Specific Content Exam	Select:
☐		Pedagogy/PLT	Select:
☐		Other	Select:

New Applications (TEP)

COMPLETED BY DEAN OF EDUCATION OR PROGRAM PROVIDER:

| Select Program Provider: | ---Select Program Provider---> | Program Admission Date: *(format MM/DD/YYYY)* | |
| Select Program Type: | ---Select Program Type---> | Program Completion Date: *(format MM/DD/YYYY)* | |

Select Certification Area(s): *(in alignment with Plan-of-Study)*	☐ Residency/Internship/Student Teaching:	---Select One --->
---Select Program Certification Area--->	Term: Specify start and end calendar years (YYYY) Start _____ End _____
	☐ Three years in lieu of student teaching: if allowed based on Program Admission/Completion Dates, include In-State Experience Verification Form

| Indicate how the teacher candidate fulfilled teaching of reading/literacy requirements mandated by law and outlined in Bulletin 996 §745: | Select Method Applicant Demonstrates Fulfillment of Reading/Literacy Requirement---> |

Indicate exams completed/attempted:

	Exam #	Exam Name	Highest Score	Successful/Not Successful
Content				Select:
PLT				Select:
Specialty				Select:
Other				Select:

*I certify that the above named applicant has completed **ALL** requirements for completion of an approved education program from this college/university/state-approved private program with the EXCEPTION of the required exams, completing the required/allowable coursework, successful completion of residency, student teaching, or internship, and earning the minimum program completion GPA as mandated by law in LA R.S. 17:7.1. I agree that my electronic signature as entered below is the legal equivalent of my manual signature on this verification.*

| Dean of Education/Program Provider signature: | | Date: | |

Rev. 9/15/2022

New Applications (RH/NH)

Updates to the Renewal/Higher (RH) and Nonpublic Higher (NH)applications include more generic requests to reduce the number of declinations.

Options are now simply listed as higher level, extend/renew, reactivate/reinstate, and status change.

This will allow schools to request a higher level certificate subject to the documentation submitted instead of the specific certificate. Based on the documents included, we will process the request.

For status change requests, there is now also an option to start at issuance/renewal.

New Applications (RH/NH)

Higher Level 1, 2, or 3 or Type A Certificate – If requirements for a higher certificate are met based on the documents provided, a new certificate is issued at the qualified level. The new certificate replaces the lower certificate. Areas of certification remain the same. *Include graduate degree transcript if not already reflected on the current certificate to be evaluated for Level 3 or Type A*. Nonpublic/private educators use *Nonpublic Higher/Renewal App*. If request is for Educational Leader issuance/higher, use the *Educational Leader App*.

Extend/Renew Type C or Level 1, 2, or 3 Certificate – Renewal or extension adds validity to the current certificate if requirements are met and extension is allowed by Bulletin 746. A request to renew WILL NOT change the Type or Level of a certificate, or issue the separate public Level certificate to educators currently holding a nonpublic (*) Level. *To request that the current certificate be renewed if a higher request cannot be granted, an extension may be indicated here in addition to the higher request above*.

Reactivate / Reinstate Lapsed Type A, B, A*, or B* - Provides 1-year validity on the certificate allowing educator to complete coursework for full reinstatement where there has been a 5-year break in teaching/service and evidence of completed coursework has not been provided. Reinstates certificate validity to "lifetime with continuous service" if applicant includes transcripts with six semester hours completed within the past five year period.

Status Change –Status change request must be accompanied by the experience verification form which aligns to the requested effective date within the validity of the certificate, not before August 1, 2012. *The Certification Office will determine the appropriate status based on the experience and/or current role verified by the current or former employing school system*. Two status changes per certificate may be requested here if retroactively placing a certificate into Non-practicing or Operational Role and back into practicing.

Certificate Type & Number: [____] Certificate's Current Validity: [____] to [____]
MM/DD/YYYY to MM/DD/YYYY

Non-practicing or Operational Role: Effective Date for Status Change: [____] or at issuance/renewal [____]
MM/DD/YYYY

Return to Practicing Status or evaluated role: Effective Date for Status Change: [____]
MM/DD/YYYY

New Applications (OS)

The Out-of-State (OS) application has not changed significantly. However, since the law changed to allow exam exemption with only three years of prior successful out-of-state experience, for educators meeting exemption, the Out-of-State Experience Verification Attestation form will be required at time of initial application if the educator wishes to use that experience to be issued a higher level certificate in lieu of an OS.

We will be processing/issuing credentials based on the documents submitted at the time of application.

Believes

Certification Processing

As many are aware, this is our **peak processing season**. The volume of applications submitted weekly generally **exceeds 900 to 1000** applications per week. Current staff only has the capacity to process approximately 525 applications per week.

Additionally, as mentioned on previous calls, the certification team is currently training **new staff**. However, since it takes approximately a year to train a new specialist, immediate reduction in processing time will not occur. Due to training and peak season, processing time has increased.

Current application processing time is approximately **60 business days or 12 weeks**. This is indicated via email each time an application is submitted.

Believes

Certification Processing

The Department is aware this processing time is **not ideal** and is working on both **long term and short term solutions** to reduce processing time.

During the next few weeks, our staff will continue to prioritize processing of Mentor Teacher, Resident and Practitioner Licenses due to the funding deadline.

If any applications need to be expedited, please schedule an office hours appointment with our Office.

Your patience is appreciated during this time.

Believes

Contact and Communicate with Certification Experts

- Submit a question via the [Online Teacher Certification Portal, Teach LA Live!](#)
  - Responses are provided, in writing, in less than five business days.
  - Using the online portal provides transparency and accountability for which responses can be referred to through the user's online history.
  - Providing details in the question will allow responses that are specific to educators' cases.
- Schedule an office hours appointment through an HR or Program Provider account
  - Complex questions can be asked/answered verbally during the call and with follow-up email.
  - Certification applications may be expedited.

Certification Monthly Call

The Certification Office will now have a monthly call devoted solely to certification. They will generally fall on the third **Monday** of each month at **10:30 a.m.** Any changes due to BESE meetings or holidays will be included on the school system support calendar.

Certification Monthly Call details:

Webinar link:
https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97801045748?pwd=N1JobWlDU1gvNnNYQk40WjI3YmpxUT09

Meeting ID: 978 0104 5748

Passcode: 959091

Q & A

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Residents/Mentors

For funding purposes, resident teacher, practitioner licenses, and mentor teacher certificates that need to be **issued by *October 1*** to receive a stipend must have been submitted completely and correctly via the online portal **on or before September 1.**

Any applications submitted after September 1, or any incomplete/incorrect submission may not be processed by October 1. This may result in the candidate's inability to be eligible for the funding.

Please direct any funding questions to believeandprepare@la.gov.

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Teacher Certification Appeals Council

The last TCAC meeting for this year will be held on **November 10.** The deadline to submit an appeal for the November meeting is **October 13**. The appeals application packet has been updated with the 2023 appeals meeting dates.

Please keep in mind that to be eligible to appeal, an applicant must first be **denied** certification by the certification office. Appellants must appeal within 120 days of declination.

All decisions of TCAC are **final**, as outlined in law.

Legislative and Policy Updates

There have been many recent policy and legislative updates. Please see the appendix for details of the recent legislative and policy updates.

Childcare Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) System

It has come to the attention of the LDOE that some school boards, charter schools, or other like entities may be using the Childcare Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) System for background checks on pre-K-12 teachers and staff.

This is not the purpose of the System. **The Federal Bureau of Investigation and other federal entities strictly prohibit the use of this System for any reason other than early childcare.**

The reasons this is **prohibited** are listed in slides at the end of the appendix.

Childcare Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) System

For employment in a Pk-12 setting and for certification, school systems must use and follow Louisiana R.S. 17:15 and R.S. 17:7. These laws indicate a fingerprint-based criminal background check must be completed and submitted through **Louisiana State Police** for a check against the state (and federal) criminal registry.

This check must be **separate and apart** from any check done through the CCCBC system, which is **only** used for individuals attempting to work in childcare. Therefore, it is possible that individuals serving in a dual capacity will require two criminal background checks.

Believes

Childcare Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) System

If an educator will be employed or on the campus of an early learning center, use the CCCBC system to collect background information. This eligibility is **only** good for the purpose of working in the early learning center.

If an educator will be employed in the Pk-12 school system or needs to be certified (including for ECACs), then complete a fingerprint-based background check through LSP, as outlined in **R.S. 17:15 and R.S. 17:7**.

This may mean that multiple background checks will need to be completed on some individuals.

For any questions regarding criminal history checks, please first consult your legal counsel, then contact Hayden.Melancon@la.gov.

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Important Dates

Key Dates:

- **September 20: Nonpublic School Council Meeting**
- **September 22: Superintendent's Advisory Council Meeting**
- **September 27: Special Education Advisory Panel**
- **October 4: Early Childhood Care and Education Commission**
- **October 5: STAR Task Force**
- **October 11: BESE Committee Meetings**
- **October 12: BESE Full Board Meeting**
- **November 1: Deadline requiring New Applications be used**

Supports and Resources:

- 2021-2022 School System Support Calendar
- Educator Resource Guide
- School System Planning Resources
- Family Support Toolbox Library
- Certification Bulletin, Bulletin 746
- Online Teacher Certification Portal, Teach LA Live!

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Praxis I (Core) Update

Acts 707 and 244 of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session were passed removing the requirement of a core academic skills assessment (e.g. Praxis Core, ACT, SAT) as a requirement for entering the profession and for teacher licensure.

In August, BESE approved the removal of the requirement of a core academic skills assessment (e.g. Praxis Core) for both entrance into a Teacher Preparation Program and for licensure. All other requirements (Praxis II (Content), PLT, one-year residency, etc.) remain the same.

Praxis I (Core) Update

For the **exam** portion of requirements for the following certificates, this means:

- Praxis **Core (R,W,& M)** is **<u>not</u> required** for issuance of a **Resident** Certificate
  - Praxis **Content is required** for **renewal** of a **Resident** Certificate
- Praxis **Core (R,W,& M)** is **<u>not</u> required** for **issuance** of a **Practitioner's License (PL)**
  - Praxis **Content** is **REQUIRED** for **issuance** of a **Practitioner's License (PL)**
- Praxis **Core (R,W,& M)** is **<u>not</u> required** for **issuance** of an **initial Level 1 (or higher)**
  - Praxis **Content, Pedagogy, and Specialty exams** are **REQUIRED** for **issuance** of **Level 1 (or higher)** certificate
- Praxis **Core (R,W,& M)** is **<u>not</u> required** for **issuance** of a Temporary Authority to Teach **(TAT)**
  - Praxis **Content** exam **is REQUIRED (two attempts)** for **renewal** of a **TAT**

Believes

Grade Point Average (GPA) Update

Act 244 of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session updated the GPA requirements for entry into a teacher preparation program and for program completion. GPA flexibility for entrance into a teacher preparation program was **removed** from law.

In August, BESE adopted policy to align with the legislation that requires a 2.20 GPA on a 4.0 scale for **entrance** into a teacher preparation program. This means a **2.20 undergraduate** GPA for entrance into post-baccalaureate programs and 2.20 GPA **prior to entrance** into the college of education for traditional programs.

This requirement has been updated for issuance of both the PL and the R certificates. This law is **not retroactive** and thus **does not** affect candidates **enrolled/admitted** prior to the law's effective date (**5/31/2022**).

Believes

Grade Point Average (GPA) Update

The updates related to program completion amended by Act 244 include the following:

- applicants must have a 2.50 on a 4.0 scale **program GPA at graduation**
- applicants that do not have a program GPA of 2.50 or higher have some flexibility for certification

Out-of-State Reciprocity

Act 244 of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session amended Out-of-State certification reciprocity requirements.

- Out-of-State educators meeting all other Louisiana certification requirements except exams **and** having **three years of Out-of-State successful experience teaching** out-of-state **prior** to coming to Louisiana can now be issued a standard level teaching certificate.
- All other Out-of-State educators meeting all other Louisiana certification requirements except exams will be issued a three-year provisional certificate. These educators are **required** to take and **pass Louisiana exams**.

Believes

Temporary Employment Permit (TEP)

Act 244 of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session expanded options for the Temporary Employment Permit (TEP).

- There are two options for issuance of a TEP.
- Educators **possessing a graduate degree** in the area in which he/she is seeking employment may be eligible for a TEP.
- Educators **completing a teacher preparation program but lacking required exams** by 10% only may be eligible for a TEP.
- No TEPs will be issued in Special Education areas.
- After five years of successful evaluations* or passage of exams, candidate can move to the standard professional level teaching certificate

Temporary Employment Permit (TEP)

- TEP candidates possessing a graduate degree and never having completed a teacher preparation program must complete a pre-service classroom readiness training prior to entering the classroom.
- All TEP candidates must be mentored by a certified mentor teacher each year on the TEP.
- Candidates must be evaluated via Compass and found effective proficient or highly effective.

TEPs may be held for up to five years provided:

- candidates are mentored by a certified mentor teacher
- candidates meet effectiveness requirements
- attestations are signed stating no suitable certified teacher has been found
- two attempts at *required exams have been made since issuance or last renewal

Believes

Algebra I Endorsement

At August BESE, policy revisions were approved to update and align the Algebra I endorsement with the Geometry endorsement.

Requirements to add-on the Algebra I endorsement include:

- valid OS or standard professional Level 1 or higher teaching certificate; **and**
- pass the Algebra I exam

Geometry Add-On

In an effort to address the high school math teacher shortage, at April BESE, revisions to Bulletin 746, *Louisiana Standards for State Certification of School Personnel,* were adopted to create a Geometry Add-on.

Requirements to add-on the Geometry endorsement include:

- Valid standard, professional level Louisiana teaching certificate or higher; and
- Pass the Geometry Content Exam

At June BESE, these revisions were adopted as **Emergency Rule**, meaning they are **effective immediately**, in an effort to allow educators to take advantage of this policy over the summer.

Believes

Literacy Updates

At June BESE, proposed revisions to certification policy were approved to align with literacy requirements in law. These literacy updates have a **future effective** date. The updates include:

- updating teacher certification requirements to include the adoption of a Teaching Reading exam that assesses updated literacy competencies,
- specifying the type of reading coursework required to align with the science of reading competencies, and
- including the adopted science of reading training as options to meet certification requirements.

LDOE is also partnering with ETS to update the Teaching of Reading exam for Louisiana for the future.

Reading Competencies

In the meantime, the more **broad** interpretation of the law regarding teaching reading will be used. When issuing initial certification, our team will be looking for the following:

- Traditional Programs: Semester hours 3, 6 or 9 hours
- Alternate Programs:
  - BESE-adopted Teaching Reading Exam (5206) OR
  - Signed Assurances indicating contact hour equivalent

If a university program **does not** offer the reading competencies **via coursework**, indicating contact hour equivalent is **required** on the initial recommendation.

Reading requirements are outlined in law, therefore, these requirements are also considered when additional areas are added to existing certificates.

Believes

ETS Exam Updates

ETS is phasing out or redesigning some of its exams. At April BESE, revisions to Bulletin 746, *Louisiana Standards for State Certification of School Personnel,* were adopted to include the newly redesigned ETS exams. There will be a one-year overlap where either current exams or new exams can be accepted for certification. Current exams will **expire** on **8/31/2023**. The **effective** date for newly adopted exams is **9/1/2022**. All BESE-adopted exams are noted on the updated Praxis chart. Newly adopted exams include:

- Biology (**5236**), score of 154
- Chemistry (**5246**), score of 146
- General Science (**5436**), score of 141
- Physics (**5266**), score of 145
- Early Childhood Special Education/Early Intervention Praxis (**5692**), score of 159
- School Counselor (**5422**), score of 159
- School Librarian (**5312**), score of 154

Believes

Reasons the Childcare Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) System is Restricted

Childcare Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) System

There are a total of five entities that the applicant's personal data are sent to when using the CCCBC system.

    a.   Federal Bureau of Investigation for a check against the federal criminal registry

    b.   Louisiana State Police for a check against the state criminal registry

    c.   National Sex Offender Registry

    d.   Louisiana State Sex Offender Registry

    e.   Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services for a check against the child abuse and neglect registry

Results from any one of these entities can make the applicant **ineligible** to work in childcare based on convictions for certain offenses.   Note that these convictions **may not necessitate ineligibility** for certification or employment of preK-12 staff.

Believes

Childcare Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) System

Additionally, convictions listed in a CCCBC may be **permissible** for eligibility to work in childcare, but may be **prohibited** for certification or employment in a preK-12 school setting. Two separate laws govern employment in a PK-12 setting and certification of staff in a school setting. Additionally, BESE certification policy has further restrictions on certification.

a. For example, **all** felony convictions are **prohibited** for certification in a preK-12 setting. Individuals with felony convictions can have a records review and be cleared for certification by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). However, they would first be denied certification. Therefore, a clearance on a CCCBC provided could be a "false" clearance and have legal consequences.

Childcare Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) System

Criminal History Information is **strictly governed by Federal regulations**. Any criminal history information obtained must be used for its **original intended purpose**. It can also only be used for **one** purpose. Obtaining and using the criminal history information for more than one purpose or not for the original intended purpose is a **direct violation** of Federal regulations and is subject to appropriate consequences.

The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) only has the right to check on their registry for people attempting to work in childcare. Not only do they **not** have the **legal right** to search their registry for a pre-K-12 applicant but they are **not entitled to receive** that person's personally identifiable information (PII).

Childcare Criminal Background Check (CCCBC) System

If/when DCFS declares an applicant **ineligible**, LDOE has to immediately make the applicant **ineligible** for childcare purposes in the CCCBC system. If an entity/provider **incorrectly** used the CCCBC system for a pre-K-12 teacher, they would be made **ineligible** immediately. This creates an issue, being that DCFS or LDOE Early Childhood should have **never** received their information in the first place.

Entities must restrict the use of the CCCBC system to childcare exclusively. For reference, please see the [User Agreement](#) that was signed by all entities before allowing entry into the CCCBC System. In addition, [R.S. 17:407.42](#) describes the state law about child care criminal background checks. Lastly, BESE [Bulletin 137, Chapter 18](#) provides more detailed information.