



*Early Childhood*  
IMPROVING SCHOOL READINESS



**Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood**

**Request for Applications**

**Application Due Date: November 25, 2015**

John White, State Superintendent of Education

 **DEPARTMENT of  
EDUCATION**  
Louisiana Believes

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## **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

The Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate is a professional credential for teachers who are working in early learning centers. The certificate will be required for all lead teachers working in publicly-funded early learning centers as of July 2019. More information about the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate can be found [here](#).

To ensure all teachers receive a high-quality preparatory experience, the Department will require all coursework used towards the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate to be approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), beginning January 2018.

Preparation programs will receive BESE approval by demonstrating their ability to provide a cohesive set of coursework and applied learning experiences for teacher candidates. Candidates who attend BESE-approved providers will be eligible to receive [Louisiana Pathways Scholarships](#).

**Program Approval-- Fall 2015:** Programs will be recommended for a two-year provisional approval. One year after BESE grants provisional approval, the Department will review the program's alignment with policy and the quality of delivery and report these results to BESE. After two years of successful program implementation, the Department may recommend that BESE confer full approval.

Providers who are applying to Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood **must also apply for and receive** program approval. The application for program approval can be found [here](#).

### ***Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood***

Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood will support the initial development of Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs, and help lead teachers meet credential requirements.

At this time, Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood is **only** open to programs that result in candidates being prepared to earn a CDA credential.

Through the provision of startup funding and ongoing technical support, **Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood** will:

- Elevate and professionalize the child care workforce;
- Expand statewide availability of high-quality teacher preparation programs; and
- Increase the number of children who have access to a teacher with the knowledge and skills necessary to support their development

Selected programs will receive an award of up to \$50,000 to use in the implementation of their program.

## I. PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Through Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood, the Department will support the development of a stable portfolio of Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs. Applicants have a unique opportunity to design and implement an innovative approach to preparing child care teachers.

All programs that are considered for Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood funding must also apply for, and receive, program approval from BESE.

Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood applicants will be selected based on their ability to demonstrate the following priorities:

1. A comprehensive plan to develop and launch an effective program.
2. A description of the organizational structures and improvements that will be necessary for long-term sustainability of the program.
3. The ability to meet regional early childhood workforce needs through high-quality preparation programming.
4. A commitment to collaborate with the Department, and to seek full BESE-approval.

By raising the child care teacher expectations and increasing access to high-quality preparation experiences, Louisiana will develop a more prepared, professional early childhood workforce that supports all children to enter kindergarten ready.

**II. APPLICATION AND GRANT TIMELINE**

<b>Release of Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood RFA .....</b>	<b>October 14, 2015</b>
<b>Application Notice of Intent Deadline (Required).....</b> <i>Programs that are planning to apply for program approval and Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood must submit a written notice of their intent to apply to <a href="mailto:BelieveAndPrepare@la.gov">BelieveAndPrepare@la.gov</a>.</i>	<b>October 23, 2015</b>
<b>Application Proposal Conversation.....</b> <i>Applicants will participate in a 30-minute individual conversation by phone about their intent to apply for program approval and Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood with program staff.</i>	<b>October 26- October 30</b>
<b>Deadline to Submit Application.....</b> <i>Complete applications should be submitted <b>with</b> the program approval application to <a href="mailto:BelieveAndPrepare@la.gov">BelieveAndPrepare@la.gov</a>.</i>	<b>November 25, 2015 at 5pm</b>
<b>Applicant Interview Period.....</b> <i>Programs will participate in interviews related to their applications.</i>	<b>December 7 – 11, 2015</b>
<b>Announcement of Grant Winners .....</b> <i>Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood and program approval applications will be reviewed by BESE during their January 2016 meeting.</i>	<b>Week of January 12, 2016</b>
<b>Grant Award.....</b> <i>Programs will receive their award to assist with startup, and begin offering coursework.</i>	<b>January 2016 –March 2016 (initial)</b>
<b>Program Evaluation .....</b> <i>Programs will be evaluated by the Department one year after receiving approval. After two years of successful program implementation, the Department may recommend programs for full BESE approval.</i>	<b>January 2016- January 2017</b>

**III. FUNDING**

The Department will award up to seven Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood Grants of up to \$50,000. This funding will be awarded to programs that have received program approval of their Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Program, and also meet the criteria in this application.

#### IV. BELIEVE AND PREPARE: EARLY CHILDHOOD APPLICATION

Each application must include the following information and be submitted **with** the program approval application by **Wednesday, November 25, 2015**. Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood applications should be emailed as a single PDF document email to **BelieveAndPrepare@la.gov**.

The Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood application should include the following pieces, assembled in the order listed below.

Each piece of the application should be single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, double spaced between paragraphs, one-inch margins, on 8 1/2 x 11 pages.

<b>Cover Page</b>	Complete and include the enclosed cover page as the first page of the Believe and Prepare grant application.
<b>Abstract</b>	The abstract should summarize the program mission, goals and expected outcomes. The abstract may not exceed one page.
<b>Program Application Narrative</b>	Applicants should address how the program will meet the Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood program priorities and criteria for evaluation (section V). The narrative may not exceed four pages.
<b>Budget</b>	Provide an itemized budget of how the grant award will be used.
<b>Budget Narrative</b>	Provide a budget narrative that describes each item in the award budget. Describe the basis for each item and how each item supports activities described in the program narrative. The budget narrative may not exceed two pages.
<b>Signed Assurances</b>	Provide a copy of the signed assurances. Signatures should be from identified program staff, preparation program director, and the administrator/CEO of the applying organization.

A copy of the Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood Application Form can be downloaded [here](#).

## V. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

### **Program Approval for Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs:**

- Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood applications will be evaluated in concert with the program approval applications.
- Program success will be evaluated by the program evaluation criteria described within the program approval application.
- Evaluators will look for clear alignment between the goals and objectives in both the Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood and the program approval application.

Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood Applications will be assessed on the criteria below:

- 1. A comprehensive plan to develop and launch an effective program.**
  - Description of the outcomes and priorities that will be supported with award.
  - Identification of steps the program will take to support a prompt program launch.
  - An award budget and budget narrative that support the program's mission, initial goals, and program outcomes.
  - A projected timeline for how all grant funds will be used.
- 2. A description of the organizational structures and improvements that will be necessary for long-term sustainability of the program.**
  - A plan to address identified organizational needs for both the short- and long-term.
  - Explanation for how the program will be sustained once the Believe and Prepare grant is complete.
- 3. The ability to meet regional early childhood workforce needs for high-quality preparation programming.**
  - Explanation and evidence for how the program will be meeting the regional needs for high-quality preparatory coursework.
- 4. A commitment to collaborate with the Department, and to seek full BESE-approval.**
  - Commitment to participate in the collaboration between the program and the Department (e.g., onsite visits, cohort events, bimonthly updates).
  - Commitment to seek full BESE-approval at the completion of their provisional status.

Selected programs will be expected to demonstrate candidate and program success. If programs are successful they will be considered for full BESE-approval at the end of their two year provisional status.

## VI. QUESTIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For answers to questions or additional information, email [BelieveAndPrepare@la.gov](mailto:BelieveAndPrepare@la.gov).