



Early Learning in Louisiana

LASAFAP Spring 2017

Session Overview

- **The Louisiana Proposition**
- **Vision, Framework and Implementation**
- **Five Essential Elements to Prepare All Children for Kindergarten**
 1. Early Childhood Community Networks
 2. Accountability Connected to Licensure
 3. Coordinated Enrollment and Funding
 4. Teacher Preparation and Support
 5. Centralized Oversight at the State Level
- **Early Learning in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan**

The Louisiana Proposition

Small State, Big Ideas

About half of children in Louisiana enter kindergarten ready. We are unifying the system to prepare all children for success.

- Louisiana requires early childhood programs that take public funding to meet **universal standards** – regardless of program type – with a **focus on outcomes** rather than inputs.
- At the same time, Louisiana seeks to infuse **informed choice** into the system – for families, providers and communities.
- To achieve this, Louisiana has established **local networks** in every community and **centralized state oversight** under the Board of Education.
- Ultimately this forces the question – who is ultimately responsible for the **quality and availability of early childhood options** within a community? And how should we **think differently** about funding, regulations and oversight as a result?

Vision, Framework and Implementation

Vision for Ensuring Kindergarten Readiness

Louisiana is unifying the early childhood system – birth to preK – so all children are ready for kindergarten.

Shared high standards for what children should learn and what excellent teaching looks like.

Teachers are excellent at interacting with children and guiding learning.

Expectations for health, safety, and learning are consistent with adequate funding levels for programs that serve children well.

Families can easily enroll and choose the best option for their children.

Implementation Timeline

Local Communities Leading the Way

2013-2014

13 Early Childhood Community Network Pilots launched



2014-2015

16 additional Community Network Pilots launched
Legislation was passed to further unify licensing, enrollment, and funding



2015 - 2016

All communities put Community Network in place
Statewide implementation was achieved through a Learning Year



2016-2017

Practice Performance Profiles have been issued based on the Learning Year
The Early Childhood Accountability system is now "live"

Legislative and Policy Framework

Laws and policies passed since 2012 establish framework for the transformation.

Louisiana has passed laws that:

- Unify all public programs and require rating system indicative of child outcomes;
- Require local coordination of enrollment to increase access for families;
- Create an academic expectation as a condition of licensing; and
- Transition all state child care and Head Start functions under the State Board.

The State Board has passed policies that:

- Establish local community networks;
- Establish rating system based on *CLASS* observations with consequences for unsatisfactory performance;
- Set expectations for coordinated enrollment implementation and processes;
- Establish health, safety and academic expectations for licensing;
- Establish new teaching certificate based on CDA credential with applied practice;
- Require all child care lead teachers to have new teaching certificate by 2019; and
- Increase child care assistance rates, bonuses and eligibility.

Five Essential Elements

1. Community Networks

Community Network model ensures implementation meets local needs.

Community Networks:

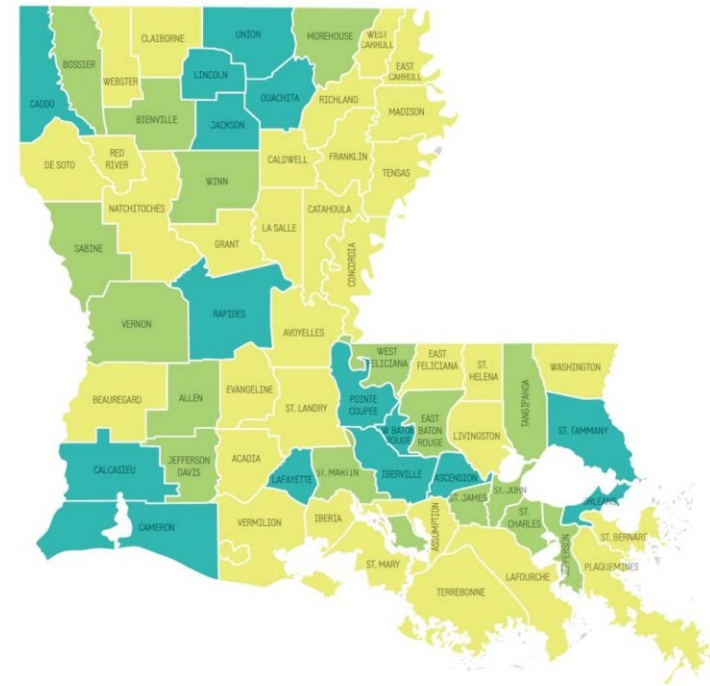
- From 2013-2015, all parishes voluntarily established unified local early childhood networks
- State Board set formal expectations in 2015

Each Community Network:

- Has a lead agency
- Includes all publicly-funded early childhood programs (child care, Head Start, PreK)

Activities of Each Community Network:

- Account for every birth-to-age-5 at-risk child
- Provide 2 CLASS observations per classroom
- Implement coordinated enrollment
- Oversee coordinated funding request



2. Accountability

Rating system should help families choose the best option for their children.

In 2015-2016, Louisiana launched a unified rating and improvement system with practice performance profiles to:

- *Define and measure core elements needed for positive child outcomes;*
- *Provide simple, clear information about what's happening in classrooms;*
- *Clearly articulate a path to improvement; and*
- *Give families an easy way to compare choices in their community.*

Louisiana's unified rating and improvement system has two core components:

1. Rating that relates to positive child outcomes

- *Adult-child interactions and instruction, as measured by CLASS; and*
- *Access for at-risk children (Community Networks only).*

2. Information on classroom best practices

- *E.g., using curriculum, maintaining low ratios, assessing children for learning*

Publicly-funded programs that do not participate or fail to meet minimum standard may lose license or funding.

2. Accountability

2015-2016 Learning Year

Louisiana successfully completed a statewide practice year for the unified rating system.

- **98% of Louisiana's classrooms were observed using CLASS® multiple times in 2015-2016** – positioning the state well for real profiles in 2016-2017.
- 2015-2016 results are for practice purposes only; **there were no consequences.**
- **Louisiana has exemplars** – from schools, Head Start and child care – that score among **the best in the country.**
- Results indicate that programs, on average, **positively impact children**, by providing warm, caring and organized classrooms. Yet too many children **are not receiving the instructional support** needed to prepare them for kindergarten.
- With this valuable information, we can work together to **build on the unique strengths** as well as **address the specific needs** of sites and communities. For example, the state will support sites to **choose and implement quality curriculum.**

2015-2016 practice results position Louisiana well for real profiles in 2016-2017.

2. Accountability

2015-2016 Practice Performance Profiles

Practice Performance Profiles have been shared with all publicly-funded early learning sites.

Practice Performance Profiles were available to sites and networks last fall.

- Practice Performance Ratings for sites and networks were based on CLASS (PreK and Toddler), with non-rated informational metrics included.
- There were no stakes or consequences attached to the ratings for 2015-2016.
- The Department released tools, including a key, guide, calculator, and FAQs, to support providers to understand these profiles.

EARLY CHILDHOOD SITE
2015-2016 • Community Network
Publicly-Funded Children Enrolled

PRACTICE LEARNING YEAR:
Initial Year of Public Reporting

P

PROFICIENT
4.11 OUT OF 7

MEASURES OF CLASSROOM QUALITY
High-quality classrooms are supportive, organized, and promote children's learning and development. These are scores based on classroom observations of teacher-child interactions.

CLASS MEASURES (1-7 Scale)		SITE	STATE
PREK (3-4 years)	EMOTIONAL SUPPORT	Excellent (6.10)	P (5.57)
	CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION	Proficient (4.60)	P (5.27)
	INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT	Approaching Proficient (3.25)	AP (3.37)
TODDLER (1-2 years)	EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT	Proficient (5.00)	P (5.06)
	ENGAGED SUPPORT FOR LEARNING	Approaching Proficient (3.12)	AP (3.28)

U = Unsatisfactory
1-2.99

AP = Approaching Proficient
3-4.49

P = Proficient
4.5-5.99

E = Excellent
6-7

USE OF BEST PRACTICES
This is self-reported information that is not included in the rating.

ASSESSMENT ARE TEACHERS MEASURING CHILD PROGRESS?	CHILDREN PER TEACHER WILL MY CHILD RECEIVE CLOSE ATTENTION?	CURRICULUM QUALITY WHAT IS THE QUALITY OF THE CURRICULUM?				
★★★	★★☆	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; font-size: 8px;"> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">PREK</th> <th style="width: 50%;">Infant/Toddler</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">★☆☆</td> <td style="text-align: center;"> <div style="text-align: center; color: red; font-size: 24px;">X</div> <p>NONE</p> </td> </tr> </table>	PREK	Infant/Toddler	★☆☆	<div style="text-align: center; color: red; font-size: 24px;">X</div> <p>NONE</p>
PREK	Infant/Toddler					
★☆☆	<div style="text-align: center; color: red; font-size: 24px;">X</div> <p>NONE</p>					

PREPARED TEACHERS

WHAT IS THE HIGHEST DEGREE EARNED BY TEACHERS?				HOW MANY TEACHERS HAVE LOUISIANA TEACHER CERTIFICATIONS?	
5% No degree	15% Child Development Associates	10% Associates	50% Bachelors	20% Masters -	TOTAL CERTIFIED 65%



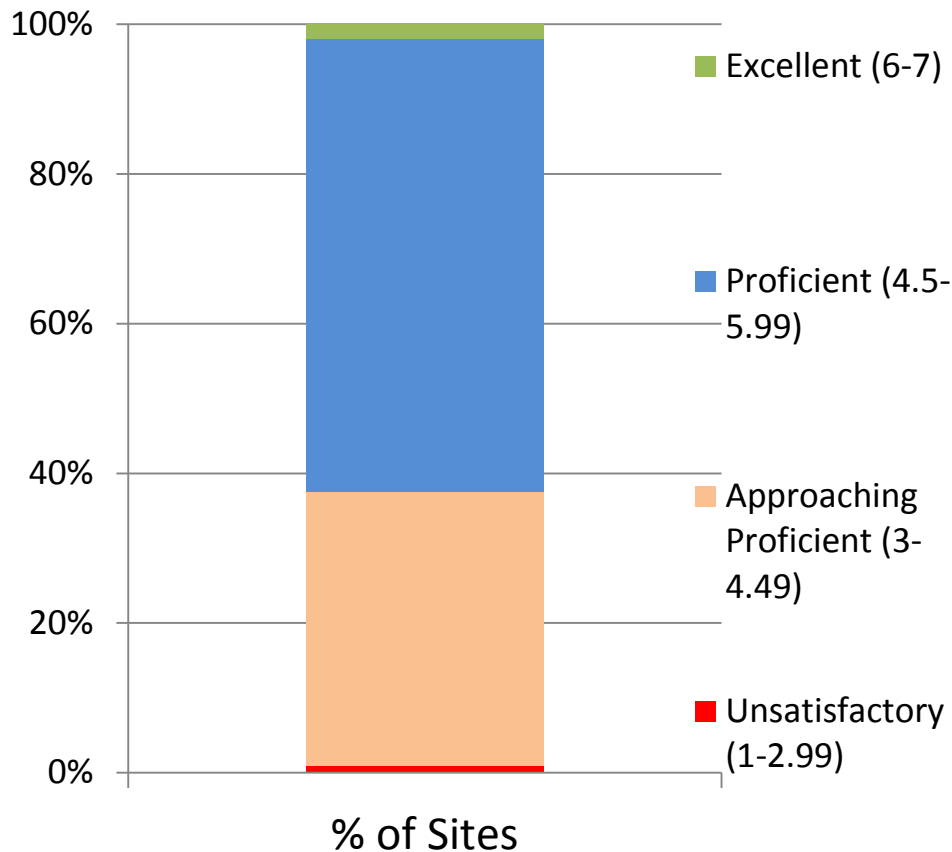
NOTE: Under previous three-level system the results for this site would be 4:11 or proficient



2. Accountability

2015-2016 Practice Performance Profiles

98% of classrooms were observed using CLASS – one million minutes of insight into how young children are cared for and taught.

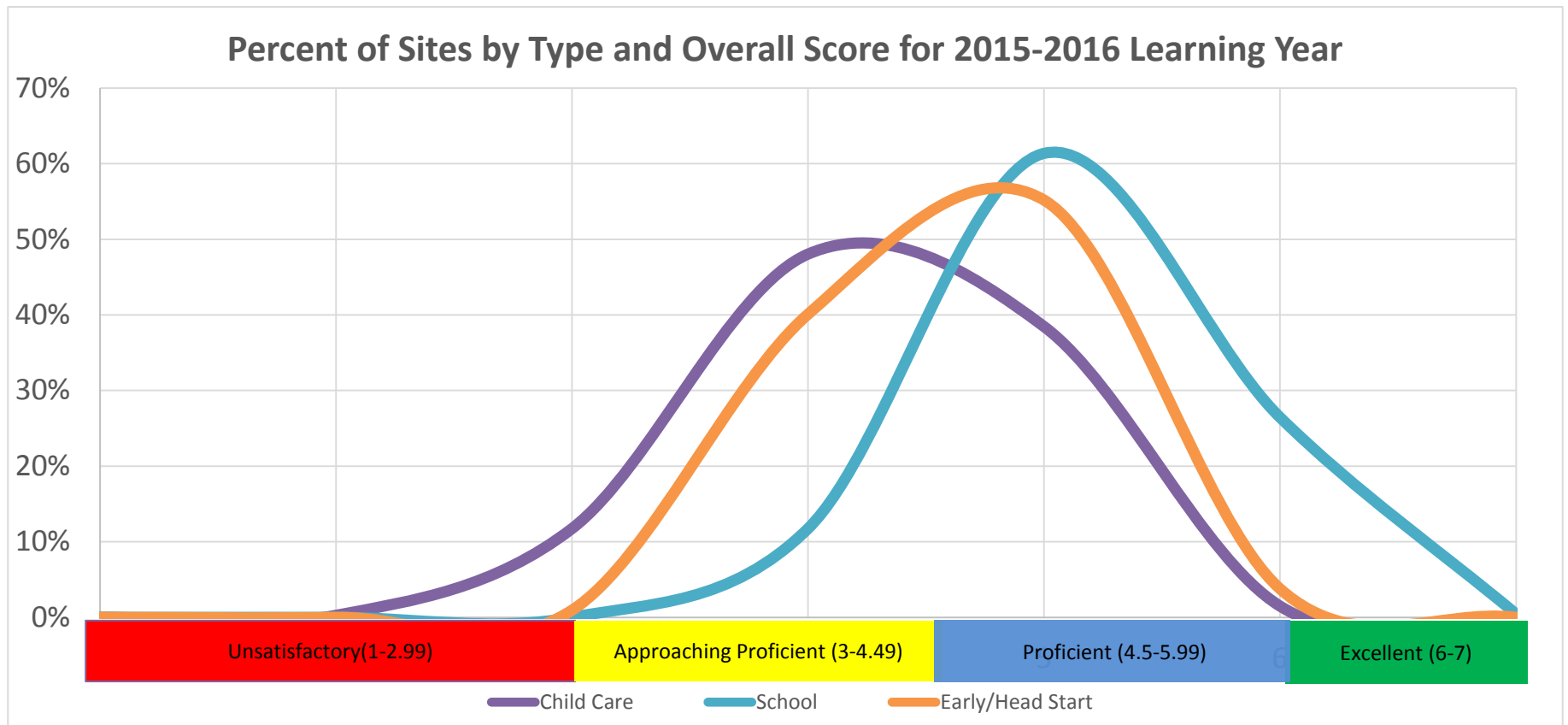


- Excellent sites scored high Proficient or above on instruction and Excellent on other domains.
- All sites that scored Proficient or Excellent on instruction scored Proficient or above on other domains.
- Most Proficient sites had higher emotional and organization scores with lower instructional scores.
- Most Approaching Proficient scored lower in organizational and instructional areas.
- Unsatisfactory sites had low scores across the board.

2. Accountability

2015-2016 Practice Performance Profiles

Initial results reinforce need for unified, outcomes-based system.



3. Coordinated Enrollment and Funding

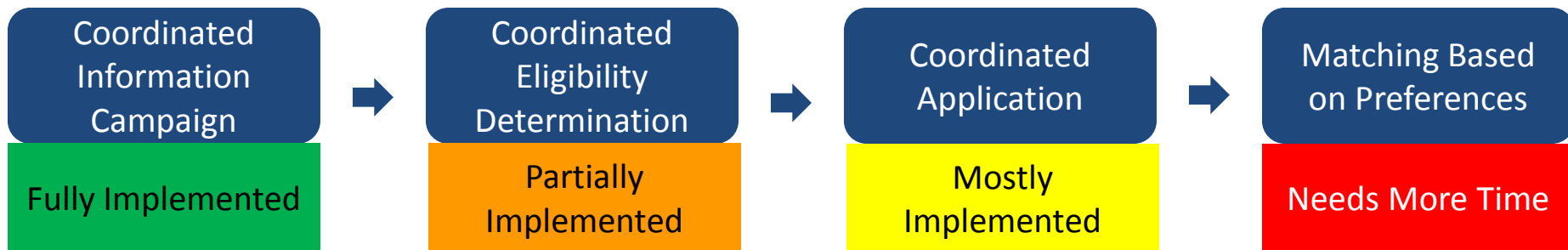
Coordinated enrollment and funding center on parent choice.

Families must be empowered to choose what is best for their child.

Louisiana should have locally-managed enrollment systems that:

- 1. Coordinate Information:** Families know of all available seats
- 2. Coordinate Eligibility:** Families easily know what they qualify for
- 3. Coordinate Applications:** Families indicate their top choices and apply to all programs through one application
- 4. Match Based on Preference:** Families enroll their child in the highest ranked preference available and no one occupies more than one seat

Snapshot of implementation of coordinated enrollment:



3. Coordinated Enrollment and Funding

Updates on Progress

Every community submitted a plan to coordinate enrollment across programs for families.

- **Plans address the four key areas of coordinated enrollment:**
 1. Coordinated Information Campaign
 2. Coordinated Eligibility Determination
 3. Coordinated Application
 4. Matching Based on Preferences
- **Overall, communities have identified a few key improvements from last year, including:**
 - Adding multiple enrollment events for families to attend, in order to reach more families
 - Using a more coordinated approach to referrals and waitlist processes across a given region
 - Including important supports for families, such as homeless liaisons, Early Steps and SPED coordinators, interpreters and ELL teachers
- **Communities still need more time to fully coordinate a matching process that does not rely on first-come, first-served.**

4. Teacher Preparation and Support

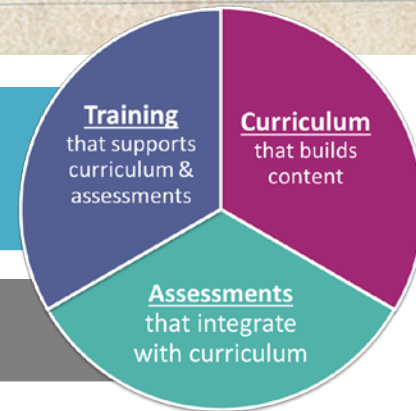
Louisiana is working to professionalize the workforce and support teachers to be effective at interactions and instruction.

- **Maintain BA Degree AND teaching certificate requirement for teachers in public and nonpublic preK for four-year-olds**
- **Establish new Ancillary Teaching Certificate as a minimum expectation**
 - *Based on Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or higher*
 - *Starting in 2019, require that all lead child care teachers in licensed, publicly-funded programs have an Ancillary Teaching Certificate or higher*
- **Create new Birth to Kindergarten BA field and teaching certificate**
- **Support teachers to pursue credentials and reward performance through scholarships, tax credits and new preparation programs**
 - *Four new state-approved Ancillary Teaching Certificate programs launched this fall; eight more are currently receiving start-up funding and support*

4. Teacher Preparation and Support

Kindergarten readiness depends on a system of supports to improve teaching and learning.

Supports aligned to **CLASS** Observations available for every classroom



Curriculum

- [Curriculum reviews](#)
- Curriculum Funding Initiative for Child Care
- [Teacher Leader Summit](#)
- Online Instructional Toolbox

Assessment

- *GOLD* available to all classrooms
- Online training on *GOLD*
- [Choice for sites to use another assessment](#)

Professional Development

- Prof. Development Guide
- [Teacher Leader Sessions](#)
- [R&Rs](#) (Foundational Training and Coaching)
- [Mental Health Consultation](#)
- Inclusion Pilot (Classrooms w/children w/special needs)
- Believe & Prepare: EC ([Ancillary Certificate](#))

4. Teacher Preparation and Support

Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood

The Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood grant is supporting teacher preparation programs to design high-quality training for child care lead teachers.

Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood

- Provides funding and support for teacher preparation programs that are designing coursework for the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate
- Programs work with the Department to design coursework aligned to *CLASS™*

Early Childhood Cohort 1 (Winter 2015-Winter 2016)

- Four programs received approval from BESE and are offering coursework:
 - *NSU, Children's Coalition, Agenda for Children, Volunteers of America*

Early Childhood Cohort 2 (Fall 2016-Fall 2017)

- Seven programs received approval from BESE and will offer coursework this year:
 - *BRCC, On Track by 5, Center for Development and Learning, Jefferson Parish, Children First, LSU-A, LSU-E*

The Department will launch a third cohort later this year.

4. Teacher Preparation and Support

CLASS™ Special Learner Pilot Overview

The purpose of the CLASS™ Special Learner Pilot is to help teachers and in early childhood settings improve the kindergarten readiness of children with disabilities by using a research-based system for improving adult/child classroom interactions.

Expected Project Outcomes:

- Teachers serving children with special needs have access to specific support which will increase their effectiveness with classroom interactions as measured by CLASS™.
- Children with special needs are better supported to show greater gains in learning and development.
- Teachers are more sensitive to children's learning and developmental milestones and are empowered to make recommendations for additional screening and evaluation if a child is not meeting those benchmarks.

4. Teacher Preparation and Support Curriculum in Child Care

More Type III Centers are using high quality curriculum to improve interactions and instruction in their classrooms.

Child Care Curriculum Initiative

- Type III Centers can purchase up to two Tier I Curriculum and receive 80% reimbursement (up to \$4,000).
- Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies provide training and technical assistance.
- Many Networks are purchasing curriculum for centers or paying the 20% difference.

Highlights:

- 32 centers have purchased curriculum.
- ~150 teachers trained.
- ~120 visits conducted by R and R staff.

Donated Curriculum

- After the Louisiana Flood of 2016, a few curriculum vendors generously donated curriculum kits.
- Centers were chosen to receive curriculum kits based on their impact from the flood and if they were back in operation.

Highlights:

- 50 curriculum kits donated to 25 centers in 6 parishes.
- R and Rs were trained by vendors.

5. Centralized Oversight at State Level

State Board oversees child care, Head Start and public and nonpublic preK.

- State Board has policy authority for all aspects of the system except EarlySteps and funding authority for everything except EarlySteps and Head Start.
- Early Childhood Office includes staff who impact every aspect of the system:
 - *Licensing, Accountability, Portfolio, preK Funding, Child Care Assistance, Child Care Improvement (e.g. R and R), Teacher Preparation and Certification, Teacher Observation; Teacher Scholarship; Instruction (Curriculum/Assessment), Special Education (IDEA Part B), Head Start Collaboration*
 - *Early Childhood Office has increased from ~25 staff to ~200 staff*
- Current challenge is to align separate functions to provide a more seamless experience for providers and families – focused on shared goal of ensuring all children enter kindergarten ready.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)

Employment and School Attendance Qualification

The Department has worked to revise the employment and school enrollment criteria to increase the number of families that can access CCAP.

Effective February 1, 2017 the employment qualification criteria have changed:

- All qualifying applicants must be employed for 20 hours per week.
- Qualifying applicants that have a child with special needs must be employed for 15 hours per week.

There will also be changes for full and part-time school attendance:

- Beginning February 1, 2017, the educational qualification criteria include being enrolled as a full-time student in an education or training program.
 - *Full-time status is determined by the training institution, which must be accredited by the state of Louisiana or a national organization.*
 - *Education or training program must result in a degree or certificate that is designed to promote job skills.*
- Part-time school attendance is included with part-time employment to meet CCAP qualification criteria.

Early Learning in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan

Every Student Succeeds Act in Louisiana

Overview of Framework

Louisiana's ESSA framework proposes a state plan with five key challenges. Early childhood is integrated throughout.

1. Fundamental Expectations for Students and Graduates
2. Deep Struggles for Historically Disadvantaged Students
3. Fair Access to Experiences Essential for Success in School and Beyond
4. A Strong Educator Profession
5. Persistently Struggling Schools

Louisiana will establish a unified planning process, aligned to these five areas, for every school system that includes an annual cycle of reflection on results, strategic academic planning, and applications for federal funds.



Challenge 1

Fundamental Expectations

Expectations will include and be aligned for children from birth through 12th grade.

Early Childhood in Challenge 1:

- Under ESSA, Louisiana will provide more guidance for educators and principals to use developmentally appropriate instruments to monitor the development of early learners in child care centers, Head Start centers, and pre-K through 2nd grade classrooms and make appropriate referrals for additional interventions and support.
- The state will also produce detailed reports for school system leaders and principals. Using these annual reports, superintendents, principals, and educators will determine annual goals for their schools and school systems including developmentally appropriate goals for early learners.

Challenge 2

Struggles for Historically Disadvantaged Students

Building on efforts to unify early childhood, Louisiana will focus on early intervention.

Early Childhood in Challenge 2:

- Under ESSA, Louisiana will focus more intensively on early intervention to support diverse learners—specifically special education students and English language learners—starting with Early Steps and prekindergarten, and continuing through high school.
- School systems will be supported to include Title I, Title II, and Title III in annual plans such as:
 - *High-quality, early screening and continued monitoring until the student is exited effectively from support services such as academic interventions, special education, or English language services;*
 - *Interventions and instructional practices that help students access grade-level learning along with their peers rather than maintaining a below-level learning gap; and*
 - *School structures for learning that are least disruptive and best integrated for a student’s needs.*
- To support districts, the state will:
 - *Make available a series of optional, efficient check-up tests that align with state standards in grades pre-K to high school to help eliminate time-consuming, antiquated, costly, and unhelpful tests; and*
 - *Develop and identify an appropriate series of screening instruments, training and guidance for age three through the third grade.*

Challenge 4

A Strong Educator Profession

Louisiana will build talent pipelines from early childhood through 12th grade.

Early Childhood in Challenge 4:

- Under ESSA, Louisiana will support schools and school systems to use Title II to create a “talent pipeline” at every level of the system.
- The Department will continue to provide workforce reports.
- The state will continue to launch new early childhood educator preparation programs and provide \$5 million in scholarships to help all child care teachers obtain the new credential by 2019. Through *Believe and Prepare: Early Childhood*, the state uses federal dollars to help launch high quality, affordable preparation programs. Similar to pre-K-12, these teacher candidates receive practice and mentoring opportunities that prepare them to be effective in the classroom immediately.

Challenge 5

Persistently Struggling Schools

Louisiana will connect struggling schools with intervention partners that have demonstrated successes. This will likely include early childhood interventions.

Early Childhood in Challenge 5:

- Under ESSA, school systems with comprehensive support schools will build a multi-year plan to improve the achievement of students grounded in research-based strategies and in collaboration with an external partner. The plans will be submitted to the Department for review and will be funded with the Title I comprehensive support funds.
- The Department will also monitor the effectiveness of the plans.
 - *If a comprehensive support school does not make progress, ESSA requires that the Department intervene by requiring the district to implement strategies with greater research validity.*
 - *If the school does not demonstrate improvement in the first two years, the district and school will experience increased monitoring, planning and execution support.*
 - *If, after four years, the school does not improve its “F” rating, the school will be eligible for inclusion in the Recovery School District.*
- The state will also continue to play a role in pursuing evidence-based interventions to turnaround persistently struggling schools.