

LETTER OF INTENT to DEVELOP a NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM [Sept 2011]

General Information

Date:

Campus: <i>Statewide: All Two-Year Colleges and Four-Year Colleges that Use the Statewide Curriculum</i>	Program: Title, CIP, Degree/Certificate Awarded <i>Birth to Kindergarten Education - Associate and Baccalaureate Degrees (CIP Code: ____)</i>
Institutional Contact Person & Access Info (if clarification is needed): <i>Jeanne M. Burns; Associate Commissioner for Teacher and Leadership Initiatives; Louisiana Board of Regents; 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802; 225-342-4253; Jeanne.burns@la.gov</i>	

1. Program Objectives and Content

Describe the program concept: purpose and objectives; basic structure and components/concentrations; etc.

Purpose:

To implement a statewide curriculum offered by colleges across the state that provides clear paths for early childhood professionals to expand their knowledge, skills, and credentials as they work with young children in early learning and development settings.

Objectives:

- To establish career paths for early childhood professionals (birth to kindergarten) that are clearly aligned with state and national early childhood education standards for children and educators.
- To establish a statewide curriculum for birth to kindergarten that allows candidates to stack credentials and easily transfer college credits while deepening their knowledge/skills and advancing their careers.

Basic Structure:

A core set of ten birth to kindergarten courses will be integrated into a birth to kindergarten curriculum at two-year and four-year colleges. As candidates complete the ten birth to kindergarten courses, basic general education courses, and upper level birth to kindergarten courses, they will earn the following credentials and degrees

Birth to Kindergarten Stackable Credentials

BoR Degree Designations	Degree Subject Areas (Major)	Early Childhood Credit Hours	General Education Credit Hours	Other Courses Credit Hours
Technical Competency Area (TCA)	Child Development Credential	9 (Courses 1-3)	0	0
Certificate of Technical Studies (CTS)	Birth to Kindergarten Assistant	30 (Courses 1-10)	0	0
Associate of Science (AS)	Birth to Kindergarten Associate	30 (Courses 1-10)	30	0
Bachelor of Science Degree (BS)	Birth to Kindergarten Education <i>Concentration: Birth to Kindergarten Teacher</i>	66 (Courses 1-10 plus additional courses)	39 (3 additional courses beyond AS)	15 (5 courses)

See Appendix A for a breakdown of courses that will be offered for the certificates and degrees.

2. Need

Outline how this program is deemed essential for the wellbeing of the state, region, or academy (e.g., accreditation, contribution to economic development; related to current or evolving needs within state or region). Cite data to support need: employment projections; supply/ demand data appropriate to the discipline and degree level, etc.

The need for a transferable early childhood curriculum first surfaced in 2003 when a new Grade PK-3 Early Childhood certification structure was adopted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to take the place of preschool/kindergarten certification and the degree requirements were not aligned to courses being taught by the two-year colleges for degrees in Care and Development of Young Children. Due to the depth of content knowledge in math, English, science, and social studies that teacher candidates were required to possess to pass the teacher licensure assessment for Grades PK-3 certification, more content courses were required for the baccalaureate degree than the associate degree. In addition, the Grades PK-3 early courses primarily addressed ages four through eight while the associate degree addressed birth through age five. Thus, few courses were transferrable from an associate to a baccalaureate degree.

The need for a Birth to Kindergarten statewide curriculum that contained stackable courses was formally identified in 2012 when a *BrightStart Early Childhood Professional Learning and Matriculation Task Force* was created by the BrightStart/Early Childhood Advisory Council. The BrightStart/Early Childhood Advisory Council was created by Executive Order by Governor Bobby Jindal to serve as an advisory council to organize a coordinated network of broad services involving the Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of Health and Hospitals, and the Department of Education to ensure school readiness, health, and safety of Louisiana's children.

The *BrightStart Task Force* met from June 2012 to September 2012 to develop a document entitled *Overview of Path Chart of Early Childhood Education Professionals (Birth Through Kindergarten)* that identified clear paths for early childhood professionals to expand their knowledge, skills, and credentials as they worked with young children in early learning and development settings. In addition, the task force developed a document entitled *Overview of Program Alignment Process for Early Childhood (Birth Through Kindergarten) Professional Development, Certificates, & Degrees* that identified a process for private trainers, two-year colleges, universities, and private providers to create educational opportunities for early childhood educators to build upon knowledge and skills as they pursued higher level certificates and degrees in early childhood education. The two documents were submitted to the Louisiana Department of Education and Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education during September 2012 and incorporated into State plans to address *Act 3: Louisiana Early Childhood Education*.

In spring 2013, a 52 member *BrightStart Birth to Kindergarten Pathway Workgroup* was formed that included representatives of 2-year colleges, 4-year colleges, districts, independent trainers, resources/referral agencies, Head Start/Early Head Start, state agencies (e.g., Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana Board of Regents, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services, etc.), and other early childhood educators/advocates. The workgroup was charged to address the following outcomes:

- *Progression of Course Credit Hours for Early Childhood Certificates and Degrees Chart:* Create a chart that identifies the progression of early childhood courses, General Education courses, and credit hours required for certificates and degrees in birth to kindergarten early childhood education
- *Course Titles, Course Descriptions, and Aligned Standards for Early Childhood Courses:* Create course titles and descriptions for ten early childhood courses with specific state/national standards to be addressed in each course

The workgroup met on April 22, May 20, and June 24, 2013 and provided strategies to address the following recommendations:

- Incorporate ten birth to kindergarten courses into the Birth to Kindergarten Pathway.
- Provide birth to kindergarten educators with opportunities to obtain stackable credentials.
- Provide birth to kindergarten courses that are aligned with state and national standards.

During Spring 2014, a *Birth to Kindergarten Syllabus Workgroup* and a *Birth to Kindergarten Online Degree Workgroup* was formed to further develop recommendations for a statewide birth to kindergarten curriculum, develop syllabi for the first three birth to kindergarten courses, and create a structure for the courses and degrees to be offered online. The work was suspended due to the need for the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to create credentials and certifications for early childhood teachers.

3. Relevance

Explain why this program is an institutional priority at this time. How will it (a) further the mission of the institution and (b) increase the educational attainment of the state's adult population or foster innovation through research.

The creation of a statewide curriculum for stackable Birth to Kindergarten credentials and degrees is an institutional and State priority at the current time for several reasons:

First, *Act 3: Louisiana Early Childhood Education* became law during the 2012 Regular Legislative Session in Louisiana to create an early childhood care and education network, provide for an accountability system for early childhood education programs, provide a quality rating system for certain day care center, etc. To address Act 3, the Louisiana Department of Education created an Early Childhood Policy Blueprint that outlines next steps for fully unifying Louisiana's early childhood system. One step is to "Support All Teachers to be Excellent" and ensure that early child care teachers: 1) Are Prepared; (2) Are Professional Educators; 3) Are Continually Improving; and 4) Are Rewarded for Quality Teaching. Three actions identified by the Louisiana Department of Education to address that need include the following: 1) Maintain BA Degree AND teaching certificate requirement for teachers in public and nonpublic PreK for four-year-olds; 2) Establish new Ancillary Teaching Certificate as a minimum expectation; 2) Create new Birth to Kindergarten BA field of study and teaching certificate; and 4) Support teachers to pursue credentials and reward performance. These recommendations are aligned with the recommendations that were made by the BrightStart task force and work groups in the "Needs" section of this document. State Superintendent John White has met with early childhood educators and administrators from across the state to discuss all parts of the Early Childhood Policy Blueprint.

Second, on January 14, 2015, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved a new Early Childhood Ancillary Teaching Certificate for Notice of Intent based on the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential which will be required of all lead child care teachers in licensed, publicly-funded program starting in 2019. In addition, BESE approved for Notice of Intent a new Birth to Kindergarten BA field of study and teaching certificate. Both are aligned with the recommendations of the BrightStart task force and work groups. Thus, there will be a demand for courses that will result in candidates obtaining Childhood Ancillary Teaching Certificates and Birth to Kindergarten teaching licenses.

Third, the Louisiana Legislature has supported the creation of courses that can be transferred from associate to baccalaureate degrees. The proposed birth to kindergarten curriculum will result in 100% of the courses being transferred across all participating two-year and four-year colleges since the same curriculum will be used at the colleges. In addition, individuals who complete a birth to kindergarten associate degree will be admitted to a baccalaureate birth to kindergarten baccalaureate program if they have passed the required Praxis Core Knowledge, pass Praxis content assessments, and meet other requirements that all baccalaureate candidates must meet to be admitted to the program.

Fourth, support exists for early child care teachers to acquire coursework for the certificates and degrees. The State currently provides School Readiness Tax Credits to early child care centers based upon ratings to support children care teachers who need or want to obtain early child care degrees and credentials. In addition, the State is working to increase a scholarship programs for early child care teachers to acquire early child care credentials and degrees.

The statewide curriculum identified in this Letter of Intent will be addressing new requirements to address *Act 3: Early Childhood Education* and it will be utilizing an extensive amount of work that has occurred during the last three years as two-year college faculty, four-year college faculty, state agency staff, early child care teachers, early child care administrators, and early childhood advocate have provided recommendations for a statewide birth to kindergarten curriculum that contains stackable courses that can be transferred across multiple institutions in Louisiana. Due to the number of child care centers and workers in Louisiana, this is a curriculum that needs to be offered in communities across the state.

4. Students

Summarize student interest/demand for the proposed program.

All child care centers in Louisiana who are publicly funded will be required to have teachers possess an Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate or higher by 2019. The Louisiana Department of Education estimates that there will be 6,000 teachers that will complete their Ancillary Certification over a three year period between 2016 and 2019, when the requirement becomes effective. Due to the high turnover rate of teachers in child care centers, it is anticipated that the need for birth to kindergarten courses will remain steady after 2019 since new teachers will be required to have an Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate or higher..

5. Cost

Estimate costs for the projected program for the first five years. Indicate amounts to be adsorbed out of current sources of revenue and needs for additional appropriations (if any). Commit to provide adequate funding to initiate and sustain the program.

The new birth to kindergarten courses for the certificates and associate degree will replace the existing Care and Development of Young Children courses and associate degree at 2-year colleges. In addition, it is anticipated that the new birth to kindergarten courses and baccalaureate degree will replace the Grades PK-3 baccalaureate degree at four-year colleges. Existing early childhood faculty should possess the necessary expertise to teach the birth to kindergarten courses. For campuses that do not have the staff to offer all ten birth to kindergarten courses, online courses will be developed and candidates will be able to meet their degree requirements by taking the online courses. A budget is not being submitted with the Letter of Intent; however, individual campuses will provide a budget to identify estimated costs and how costs will be absorbed.

APPENDIX A

COORDINATED PATHWAYS FOR BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN CREDENTIALS

DEGREE DESIGNATION: TECHNICAL COMPETENCY AREA (TCA)
DEGREE SUBJECT AREA: CHILD DEVELOPMENT CREDENTIAL
BESE/LDOE LICENSURE: EARLY CHILDHOOD ANCILLARY CERTIFICATE

<i>State Common Numbers</i>	<i>Course Names</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
CECE 1013	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children I	3
CECE 1023	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children II	3
CECE 1033	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children III	3
TOTAL TCA CREDIT HOURS		9

DEGREE DESIGNATION: CERTIFICATE OF TECHNICAL STUDIES (CTS)
DEGREE SUBJECT AREA: BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN ASSISTANT I
BESE/LDOE LICENSURE: EARLY CHILDHOOD ANCILLARY CERTIFICATE

<i>State Common Numbers</i>	<i>Course Names</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
CECE 1013	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children I	3
CECE 1023	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children II	3
CECE 1033	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children III	3
CECE 1043	Infant/Toddler Development	3
CECE 1053	Preschool & Kindergarten Development	3
CECE 2013	Language and Literacy Development	3
CECE 2023	Infant to Toddler Methods and Environment	3
CECE 2033	Preschool to Kindergarten Methods and Environment	3
CECE 2043	Families and Family Systems	3
CECE 2053	Birth to Kindergarten Practicum	3
TOTAL CTS CREDIT HOURS		30

DEGREE DESIGNATION: ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE (AS)
DEGREE SUBJECT AREA (MAJOR): BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN ASSOCIATE
BESE/LDOE LICENSURE: EARLY CHILDHOOD ANCILLARY CERTIFICATE

FRESHMAN: First Semester

<i>State Common Numbers</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
CENL 1013	English Composition I	3
CMAT	Math (Contemporary Math, Applied Algebra, College Algebra, etc.)	3
CECE 1013	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children I	3
CECE 1023	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children II	3
CECE 1033	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children III	3

FRESHMAN: Second Semester

<i>State Common Numbers</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
GBIO	General Biology I	3
CECE 1043	Infant/Toddler Development	3
CECE 1053	Preschool & Kindergarten Development	3
CENL 1023	English Composition II	3
CART, CTHE, CMUS, CDNC	Fine Arts (Art/Dance, Music/Theater)	3

SOPHOMORE: First Semester

<i>State Common Numbers</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
CHIST	History (American, Western Civilization, World Civilization, etc.)	3
CECE 2013	Language and Literacy Development	3
CECE 2023	Infant to Toddler Methods and Environment	3
CECE 2033	Preschool to Kindergarten Methods and Environment	3
GBIO	General Biology II	3

SOPHOMORE: Second Semester

<i>State Common Numbers</i>	<i>Course Name</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
CGEG	Geography (Human, World, Physical, etc.)	3
CECE 2043	Families and Family Systems	3
CECE 2053	Birth to Kindergarten Practicum	3
CENL	English Literature (American, British, World, etc.)	3
CMAT 1303	Math (Contemporary Math, Applied Algebra, College Algebra, Introductory Statistics, etc.)	3

TOTAL AS DEGREE CREDIT HOURS	60
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Note: Graduates must pass the Praxis I assessments in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics and meet other university and program entrance requirements for all 60 credit hours of courses to be transferred into a program for a baccalaureate degree in Birth to Kindergarten Education with a Concentration in Birth to Kindergarten Teacher. Knowledge of statistics is needed to pass the Praxis I assessment. Thus, candidates need to either develop basic knowledge about statistics in a general math course (i.e., Contemporary Math) or take Introductory Statistics which may require College Algebra as a prerequisite.

DEGREE DESIGNATION: BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (BS)
DEGREE SUBJECT AREA (MAJOR): BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION
BESE/LDOE LICENSURE: BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN TEACHER LICENSE

CONCENTRATION: BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

FRESHMAN: First Semester

<i>State Common Numbers</i>	<i>Course Names</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
CENL 1013	English Composition I	3
CMAT	Math (Contemporary Math, Applied Algebra, College Algebra, etc.)	3
CECE 1013	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children I	3
CECE 1023	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children II	3
CECE 1033	Strengthening the Care and Development of Young Children III	3

FRESHMAN: Second Semester

<i>State Common Numbers</i>	<i>Course Names</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
GBIO	General Biology I	3
CECE 1043	Infant/Toddler Development	3
CECE 1053	Preschool & Kindergarten Development	3
CENL 1013	English Composition II	3
CART, CTHE, CMUS, CDNC	Fine Arts (Art, Dance, Music, Theater)	3

SOPHOMORE: First Semester

<i>State Common Numbers</i>	<i>Course Names</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
CHIST	History (American, Western Civilization, World Civilization, etc.)	3
CECE 2013	Language and Literacy Development	3*
CECE 2023	Infant to Toddler Methods and Environment	3
CECE 2033	Preschool to Kindergarten Methods and Environment	3
GBIO	Biological Science II	3

SOPHOMORE: Second Semester

<i>State Common Numbers</i>	<i>Course Names</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
CGEG	Geography (Human, World, Physical, etc.)	3
CECE 2043	Families and Family Systems	3
CECE 2053	Birth to Kindergarten Practicum	3
CENL	English Literature (American, British, World, etc.)	3
CMAT	Math (Contemporary Math, Applied Algebra, College Algebra, Introductory Statistics, etc.)	3

FRESHMAN & SOPHOMORE CREDIT HOURS	60
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Note: Graduates must pass the Praxis I assessments in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics and meet other university and program entrance requirements for candidates to officially be admitted to a program for a baccalaureate degree in Birth to Kindergarten Education for certification as a birth to kindergarten teacher. Knowledge of statistics is needed to pass the Praxis I assessment.

DEGREE DESIGNATION: BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (BS)
DEGREE SUBJECT AREA (MAJOR): BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION
BESE/LDOE LICENSURE: BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN TEACHER LICENSE

CONCENTRATION: BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN TEACHER
Passage of Praxis I assessments and other university requirements needed for formal admittance to the teacher preparation program concentration.

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Courses</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
General Education	(1) English Literature (American, British, World, etc.) (2) Political Science (3) Natural Science (Physical: Chemistry, Geology, Physics, Astronomy/Meteorology)	3 3 3
Knowledge of the Learner and Learning Environment	Educational Psychology, Behavior Management, Diverse Learners, & Assessment of Young Children	9
Language/Literacy	Advanced Language/Literacy Development & Children's Literature	6*
Methodology	Math, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, & Physical Education	6
Academic Residency and Seminars	Full Academic Year Residency and Seminars for Birth to Kindergarten teaching: (1) Professional Teaching Clinical & Seminar I (Birth to Kindergarten) (2) Professional Teaching Clinical & Seminar II (Birth to Kindergarten)	24
Flexible Hours	Elective or course hours to be determined by the university	6
TOTAL JUNIOR & SENIOR CREDIT HOURS FOR BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN TEACHER		60
TOTAL BS DEGREE CREDIT HOURS		120

*Addresses Board of Elementary and Secondary's requirement for 9 credit hours of reading courses.