NOEEN | NEW ORLEANS EARLY EDUCATION NETWORK

MEMORANDUM

To: NOEEN Steering Committee

From: Caitlin Boley, Director of Early Childhood Systems & Supports

Date: May 12, 2026

Re: Community Network Lead Agency Updates

This memo contains updates regarding the Community Network Lead Agency recent and planned activities.

Coordinated Observations (CLASS)

According to Louisiana Bulletin 140, lead agencies are required to coordinate and conduct local CLASS observations for all early childhood sites within their network.

Spring 2026 Observations

- There were 169 sites with 674 open classrooms within the network that required an observation in Spring 2026.
- The NOEEN CLASS team conducted 634 of 636 observations in open classrooms as of May 12, 2026, in advance of the LDOE's May 15 deadline, completing observations for the Spring 2026 semester.
    - Remaining observations were completed by self-observing sites as detailed below.

Spring 2026 Observation Waivers

Observation waivers are submitted to the LDOE in cases when completion of an observation is not possible, such as classroom closure, classroom teachers not meeting observation requirements (such as required days in the classroom), and/or inadequate attendance during numerous observation attempts.

- 40 observation waivers were submitted to the LDOE this semester.
    - 38 of these waivers were submitted due to classrooms that were no longer open at the time of the scheduled observation.
        - Of these 38, 12 classrooms were reopened and observed using a different age configuration. The reopened classrooms are included in the number of completed observations above.
    - 2 waivers were submitted for reasons other than classroom closure.

- 1 waiver as a result of a newly hired teacher not being within the classroom the required amount of days to be observed.
- 1 waiver submitted as a result of inconsistent enrollment and upcoming site closure.

Self Observing Sites

- There were also 38 classrooms observed by a child care program's internal staff at self-observing sites in accordance with the LDOE Protocol.

CLASS Observation Supports

- The CLASS team implemented the following strategies to support observations since April 15, 2026:
  - The use of additional observers - 17 additional observers were utilized to support observation completion in advance of the deadline.
  - In-person office hours - Monthly in-person office hours were conducted for observers to receive real-time support from the NOEEN team on April 15, April 29, and May 12.
  - Double-coded observations - 14 additional double coded observations were completed in compliance with the LDOE requirements to support observer readiness and reliability.
  - Calibrations - 14 additional calibrations were completed by NOEEN observers to support accurate scoring for network observations.
  - 1 of 1 local observation appeals was denied since no protocol violation was found. NOEEN appeals are only approved if a protocol violation is cited.

<u>SmartTeach Assessments</u>

In accordance with Bulletin 140, all NOEEN providers must complete assessments of publicly-funded children enrolled at their using SmartTeach. These must be completed by the LDOE mandated checkpoint dates.

Checkpoint Information

- The Spring SmartTeach assessment checkpoint for 2025 - 2026 will be held on May 31.

SmartTeach Assessment Support

- The NOEEN team implemented the following strategies to support the completion of SmartTeach assessments since April 15, 2026:

- Sent individualized notices to providers with reminders of historic compliance, resources, and upcoming checkpoint dates.
- Continued coaching outreach for sites with low compliance rates to support meeting training.
- Completed 12 out of 12 requested SmartTeach transfers as part of efforts to support accurate site rosters within the SmartTeach platform.

ECHO Fund Grants

The NOEEN team has implemented the following strategies to support the ECHO Fund grant program since April 15, 2026:

- Processed 224 awards for the 2026 CCR&R SRTC Workforce ECHO Fund Grant, including those for providers in Orleans Parish. Awards for these grants are to be disbursed by May 31, 2026.
- Undergoing application review for the 2026 City Seats Program Quality ECHO Fund Grant and the 2026 ECEF Program Quality ECHO Fund Grant. Notifications for these grants will be sent by May 31, 2026.

Upcoming Events

The next NOEEN Monthly Provider Drop-In Office Hours will be held on May 19, 2026 at 12 p.m. at the Agenda for Children Offices.