

Bobby Jindal
GOVERNOR



Bruce D. Greenstein
SECRETARY

State of Louisiana
Department of Health and Hospitals
Office of the Secretary

April 6, 2011

The Honorable Joel T. Chaisson, II, President
Louisiana State Senate
P.O. Box 94183, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9183

The Honorable Jim Tucker, Speaker
Louisiana State House of Representatives
P.O. Box 94062, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9062

The Honorable Kay Katz, Chairwoman
House Health and Welfare Committee
Louisiana State House of Representatives
P.O. Box 44486, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-4486

The Honorable Willie L. Mount, Chairwoman
Senate Health and Welfare Committee
Louisiana State Senate
P.O. Box 94183, Capitol Station
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9183

Dear President Chaisson, Speaker Tucker, and Honorable Chairs:

In response to Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 83 (SCR 83) of the 2008 Regular Session, the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) submits the enclosed reports. SCR 83 requires submission of biannual reports to the House and Senate Health and Welfare Committees regarding the progress of the BrightStart initiative. The BrightStart initiative is a federally funded effort to design and implement a comprehensive early childhood system for children ages 0-5. R.S. 24:772 also requires that the report be submitted to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House.

DHH is available to discuss the enclosed reports and recommendations with you at your convenience. Please contact Dr. Gina Lagarde, child health medical director in the maternal and child health program within the office of public health, at (504) 568-3507, or Clayton Williams, assistant secretary of the office of public health, at (225) 342-6188 with any questions or comments you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bruce D. Greenstein".

Bruce D. Greenstein
Secretary

Enclosures

Cc: The Honorable Members of the House Health and Welfare Committee
The Honorable Members of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee
Senator Lydia Jackson
David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library



BrightStart

A Stronger Louisiana Begins in Early Childhood

**LOUISIANA'S EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM
A HRSA-MCHB GRANT INITIATIVE**

PROGRESS REPORT

July 2010

**Department of Health and Hospitals
Office of Public Health
Maternal and Child Health Program**

Geoffrey Nagle, PhD, MPH, LCSW
BrightStart Director
Tulane Institute of Infant and
Early Childhood Mental Health

Melanie Bronfin, JD
BrightStart Assistant Director
Tulane Institute of Infant and
Early Childhood Mental Health

Gina Payton Lagarde, MD, MBA
BrightStart/Louisiana ECCS Grant Director
Louisiana Child Health Medical Director
Department of Health and Hospitals
Office of Public Health
Maternal and Child Health Program



Pursuant to Senate Concurrent Resolution Number 83 of the 2008 Louisiana Regular Legislative Session, attached please find the biannual report to the Joint Committee of the Senate and House Committees on Health and Welfare on the progress of the BrightStart initiative. The BrightStart initiative is a federally funded effort to implement a comprehensive early childhood system for children ages birth to five. It is conducted under the auspices and guidance of the Children's Cabinet with the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of Public Health, Maternal and Child Health Program providing the needed coordination and technical support. BrightStart has been federally funded through the Health Resources and Services Administration's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grant from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

We would like to highlight that BrightStart has coordinated the state's application for funding made available to support the improved quality, availability, and coordination of services for children from birth to school entry. The grant application for \$2 million was submitted on July 15, 2010. These funds, if awarded, will further the work of the BrightStart Advisory Council, and by designation of the Governor, will be administered by the Department of Children and Family Services.

We are grateful for the ongoing support of the Legislature, and look forward to partnering with you as we begin this new phase of our work. As our state faces great fiscal challenges, it is hoped that our policy makers in all branches of government make wise decisions about where our public investments are made. As stated by James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics, "As states are under constant pressure to improve the efficient use of ever dwindling financial resources, any investment away from young children can be viewed as a diversion of resources from the most efficient use of those funds."

We appreciate your consideration of this Progress Report and are committed to working with you to ensure the best opportunities for Louisiana's young children and their families.

Sincerely,

Gina Payton Lagarde, MD, MBA
Louisiana Child Health Medical Director
Maternal and Child Health Program
Office of Public Health
Department of Health and Hospitals

Geoffrey Nagle, PhD, MPH, LCSW
BrightStart Program Coordinator
Tulane Institute of Infant and
Early Childhood Mental Health

BrightStart Progress Report July 2010

The BrightStart initiative is a federally funded effort to design and implement a comprehensive early childhood system for children ages 0-5. BrightStart seeks to ensure that young children and their families have opportunities for optimal emotional, social, physical and cognitive development. BrightStart's two primary goals are listed below.

- 1) To maintain and strengthen systems integration and partnerships to enhance children's ability to enter school healthy and ready to learn; and
- 2) To continue to build an early childhood system that addresses the following *priority areas*:
 - Access to health insurance and medical homes;
 - Mental health and social-emotional development;
 - Early care and education;
 - Parenting education/family support; and
 - Child safety.

BrightStart is administered by the Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH), Office of Public Health (OPH), Maternal and Child Health Program. In addition, the grant effort is conducted under the auspices and guidance of the Children's Cabinet and the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board.

Senate Concurrent Resolution Number 83 of the 2008 Regular Legislative Session, calls upon the state agencies that serve young children to participate in BrightStart. The BrightStart Steering Committee, which is comprised of representatives from state agencies, the Louisiana House of Representatives, the Louisiana State Senate, and nongovernmental child-serving organizations, guides the work.

The following progress report highlights the work that BrightStart, in collaboration with other agencies, has achieved from January-July 2010. These accomplishments will improve the lives of Louisiana's youngest children.

BrightStart Steering Committee Reconstituted as Louisiana's Early Childhood Advisory Council

The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 authorizes the Governor of each state to designate a State Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) to improve the quality, availability, and coordination of services for children from birth to school entry. Under this U.S. Congressional Act (H.R. 1429-50, U.S. Congress 2007), an ECAC is charged with strengthening state-level coordination and collaboration among Federally-funded and State-funded child development, child care, and early childhood education programs and services, including collaboration and coordination among state agencies responsible for administering such programs. On December 18, 2009, Governor Jindal designated BrightStart as Louisiana's ECAC. The BrightStart Steering Committee was enlarged and reconstituted to meet the federal requirements for the ECAC and renamed the BrightStart Advisory Council. The Council is now composed of 28 members, and has met three times, on March 16, May 7 and June 25, 2010. All meetings are open to the public. The current members of the Council are as follows:

1. Geoffrey Nagle – Chair, BrightStart Director and Director, Tulane Institute of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health
2. Susan Sonnier – Deputy Secretary, DCFS
3. Rhenda Hodnett – Director, Prevention and Protection Services, DCFS
4. Gail Kelso – Interim Child Care Administrator, DCFS
5. Gina Lagarde – Child Health Medical Director, Office of Public Health, DHH
6. Richard Dalton – Office of Behavioral Health, DHH
7. Brenda Sharp – Coordinator, Part C-Early Steps, DHH
8. Susan Berry – Director, Children's Special Health Services, DHH
9. Kyle Viator – Deputy Director, Louisiana Medicaid Program, DHH
10. Kerry Laster – Executive Director, Literacy/Numeracy, Pre-K and High School Redesign, DoE
11. Jeanette Vosburg – Executive Director, LA State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
12. Karen Stubbs – Executive Director, LA Children's Cabinet
13. Vacant – Executive Director, LA Interagency Coordinating Council
14. Kim Dodd – Legislative Senior Analyst, Division of Administration
15. Carey Foy – Chief of Staff, LA Workforce Commission
16. Jerry Pinsel – LA Community and Technical College System
17. Vera Triplett – COO, Capital One University of New Orleans Charter School Network
18. Lydia Jackson – LA State Senator
19. Patricia Smith – LA State Representative
20. Kahree Wahid – Director, Head Start Collaboration Project
21. Sondra Myers – Director, Acadia Parish Head Start
22. Pearlle Harris – Owner, Royal Castle Child Development Center
23. Brenda Shelling – Member, Monroe City School Board

24. Lynda Gavioli – Immediate Past Board Chair, LA Partnership for Children and Families and Executive Director of the Children’s Coalition in Monroe, LA
25. Judy Harrison – Executive Director, LA Children’s Trust Fund
26. Adren Wilson – National Director, Equity and Inclusion Campaign
27. Ashley Lucas – Member, LA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
28. Vacant – LA Dept. of Economic Development

Application for Federal Funding

Funding was made available by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, to be awarded on a competitive basis, for startup grants to support the work of the ECAC’s. The maximum grant to Louisiana is \$2,000,000. Governor Jindal has designated the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to administer these funds, which will be added to the existing HRSA funds to further the early childhood systems building work in Louisiana.

BrightStart has coordinated the state’s grant application for these ARRA funds, working closely with DCFS, the Department of Health and Hospitals, and the Department of Education. The grant application outlines eight objectives, with at least one objective addressing each of BrightStart’s priority areas as well as objectives addressing other focus areas dictated by the grant guidelines. These objectives were presented and discussed at the May 7 and June 25, 2010 meetings of the BrightStart Advisory Council. A public hearing with an opportunity to comment on the application was held on June 25, 2010. The funds can be used over a three-year period, and the application was submitted on July 15, 2010. A notice of award date has not been announced.

Early Childhood System Integration Budget Now Available

Louisiana now has its first official Early Childhood System Integration Budget (ECSIB), which is defined by statute.¹ The ECSIB is organized along the original four components of BrightStart (access to health care, social-emotional development and mental health, early care and education, and family support and parenting education) as opposed to by department, thus detailing the state’s allocation of financial resources for children ages birth to five in these areas. Within these four areas, each state department categorizes program specific information, including the lead contact person, a very brief program description (1-3 sentences), the population served, the sources of funding for the program, and the parishes being served. For each line item, actual state and federal dollars invested in the program are detailed. The first official ECSIB is now complete, and includes both the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 fiscal years (see FY 11 ECSIB attached)². The ECSIB is compiled by the Division of Administration in conjunction with BrightStart and Louisiana Children’s Cabinet. The ECSIB is a key policy document that will add critical information to inform the ongoing work to build a comprehensive early childhood system.

¹ Louisiana Revised Statutes 46:2604.

² Note that the FY 11 ECSIB is based on the proposed budget as provided in the original HB 1. A revised FY 11 ECSIB based on the finalized state budget, passed by the legislature and signed by Governor Jindal as Act 11, is forthcoming.

National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices Chooses Louisiana to Participate in New Initiative to Build High-Quality Early Childhood State Infrastructure

Louisiana is one of only six states chosen to participate in the National Governor's Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices Policy Academy entitled, "Ready States: A project to Develop Key Components of State Early Childhood Infrastructure." Over a 10 month period, Louisiana will receive specialized technical assistance in developing and implementing a strategic plan that supports the creation of an early childhood professional development system.

The ultimate goal that Louisiana seeks to achieve is to have an integrated professional development system for early childhood professionals regardless of the setting in which they are employed. The professional development system should be researched based, aligned with statewide standards and incorporate accessible career pathways.

Specific outcomes the project activities seek to achieve include:

- 1) To devise a career pathway and articulation agreements to support early childhood professionals, particularly those working with at-risk populations.
- 2) To review and evaluate Core Knowledge and Competencies from other states for early childhood professionals across early care and education settings and identify recommendations for such competencies in Louisiana.
- 3) To conduct a statewide assessment of compensation parity and identify policy solutions to address gaps.

The core state team for the project is led by Suzy Sonnier, Department of Children and Family Services, and includes Geoffrey Nagle, PhD, BrightStart; Kerry Laster, PhD, Department of Education; Ben Nevers, Louisiana Senate; Jerry Pinsel, PhD, Louisiana Community and Technical College System; and Karen Stubbs, Governor's Children's Cabinet. The work will include two site visits by the policy academy to Louisiana, two policy academy meetings for the state team, and ongoing technical assistance.

BrightStart Reports

1) Risk and Reach Report

In the past, Louisiana has not consistently measured and tracked key indicators for early childhood. The new ECSIB, described above, is a start to monitoring the funding and specific state government programs serving young children and their families.

Additionally, BrightStart has initiated the development of a Risk and Reach Report that will detail indicators down to the parish level. Modeled after a similar effort in Pennsylvania, "Risk" is examined by parish based on twelve indicators³, and "Reach" will detail by parish what programs are serving young children. Initial work for the Risk component of the report has been

³ The 12 indicators are: (1) Percent of low birth weight babies (2) Teen birth rate (3) Infant mortality rate (4) Immunization rate (5) Estimated percent of 0-5 population uninsured (6) Unemployment rate (7) Percent of births to single mothers (8) Percent of mothers with less than a high school degree (9) Percent of children under age 5 who are below the poverty level (10) Median income as a percent of FPL (11) Availability of high quality early care and education (12) DIBELS kindergarten scores showing high risk for poor reading outcomes.

completed with existing resources and the in-kind contribution by the Louisiana State University/Tulane University Early Childhood Policy and Data Center. The Reach component will be completed as part of the new ARRA grant. The Risk and Reach Report will be updated annually as part of the work of BrightStart, and will serve as the basis for the ongoing needs assessment requirement for the federal funds, and as a means to track by parish the outcomes of Louisiana's youngest children.

2) Report on Home Visiting Programs in Louisiana Submitted to the Legislature

HCR 226 and SR 113 of the 2009 Legislative Session called on BrightStart to prepare a report outlining existing home visiting programs in the state and making recommendations to address the ways in which additional federal funding should be used if it became available. A report was completed that included an inventory of current home visiting programs in Louisiana, a categorization of their effectiveness, the identification of gaps in programs, and the infrastructure, training and technical assistance that will be needed to achieve and support a system of evidenced-based home visiting programs. Recommendations were also made for the use any federal funds that become available to support home visiting. The report was submitted to the Legislature on June 29, 2010.

Meanwhile, in March 2010, President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which provides \$1.5 billion over five years for a state-based early childhood home visitation grant program serving families with young children and those who are expecting children. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and Administration for Children and Families (ACF) have now released the initial Funding Opportunity Announcement for the new Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. Louisiana is eligible to receive up to \$1.5 million in year one to implement evidence-based home visitation services. Funds will be awarded as early as mid-July.

Conclusion

Science now tells us that some of our most expensive social problems, including crime, unemployment, school failure and poverty, are rooted in early childhood. It has also been shown that efforts targeting early childhood are less costly and more effective than later remediation. We appreciate your consideration of this report and look forward to continuing to work with you to improve the outcomes for Louisiana's young children and their families.

BrightStart Advisory Council would like to take this opportunity to thank Governor Jindal, the Louisiana Legislature, and the state agencies and private organizations statewide that serve Louisiana's young children for their continued collaboration and support. Much work has already been accomplished in Louisiana in building a comprehensive early childhood system, including high quality services for children from birth to five, and the infrastructure needed to support those services. However, what has been completed to date is only a starting point for addressing the great challenges our state faces as we try to improve the extremely poor outcomes of our young children and families while grappling with difficult economic times.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 83

BY SENATOR JACKSON

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the state agencies which participate in BrightStart, formerly known as the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems initiative, to coordinate policy, budget planning, and services that support early childhood development.

WHEREAS, a strong society is achieved by ensuring that our youngest citizens grow up to be productive, healthy members of the community; and

WHEREAS, a child's most important brain development occurs before age five and provides the foundation for later social, emotional, linguistic, and cognitive skill development; and

WHEREAS, studies conducted by noted economists have demonstrated the value of investments in early childhood programs; and

WHEREAS, these economists have shown that redirecting limited funds toward improving basic cognitive, social and emotional skills of young children is the wisest investment, as the longer we wait to intervene with children, the more expensive the resulting problems become, and the long-term returns on the later alternative investments are substantially less; and

WHEREAS, investment in high quality early childhood programs has an immediate economic development impact as well as long-term economic benefits; and

WHEREAS, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau within the United States Department of Health and Human Services has made funding available to state Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) programs to enable states to develop a strategic approach to the challenge of bridging multiple funding streams and forging collaborative partnerships for cross service system integration in support of families and communities in their efforts to foster the development of young children that are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school; and

WHEREAS, this federal grant is known in Louisiana as BrightStart and represents Louisiana's commitment to young children; and

WHEREAS, the federal initiative expects that states will facilitate the building of an early childhood system that includes, but is not limited to: (1) access to medical homes, (2) availability of services to address children at risk of developing or experiencing mental health or other social-emotional problems, (3) availability of high quality early child care and education services, (4) availability of high quality parenting education and family support services, and (5) budget planning across these domains; and

WHEREAS, the primary goal of BrightStart is to develop systems integration and partnerships to enhance children's ability to enter school healthy and ready to learn; and

WHEREAS, BrightStart has been in existence for five years and a statewide needs assessment, strategic plan and implementation plan have been completed; and

WHEREAS, many of the goals and strategies set forth in the BrightStart strategic plan have been accomplished, but many of the goals and strategies are yet to be realized; and

WHEREAS, a BrightStart Steering Committee will be convened that will include members or representatives of agencies or organizations that serve the needs of young children and their families; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Health and Human Services has made additional funding available to support the implementation of the strategic plan; and

WHEREAS, the ongoing grant effort will be conducted as a joint effort and partnership between the MCH program of the Department of Health and Hospitals, office of public health, and the governor's Children's Cabinet including the Children's Cabinet advisory board; and

WHEREAS, the current efforts of the governor's Children's Cabinet promote the development and coordination of services for children in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the MCH program staff will provide the day-to-day leadership, coordination and technical support for the grant including functioning as the fiscal agent, fulfilling all federal reporting requirements and submitting the necessary application for ongoing funding; and

WHEREAS, the legislature recognizes and acknowledges the significant potential contributions of BrightStart for Louisiana's young children and their families; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana has been selected as one of only 14 states to participate in the National Symposium of Early Childhood Science and Policy at Harvard University and our BrightStart effort was recognized by the selection committee as a critical strength in our application.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request that the office of family support and office of community services and the Louisiana Children's Trust Fund within the Department of Social Services; the office of public health, the children's special health services program, the office of mental health, the Part C – Early Steps program in the office of citizens with developmental disabilities, and the bureau of health services financing within the Department of Health and Hospitals; the pre-kindergarten and early childhood education programs section and the office of school and community support in the Department of Education; the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education; the Department of Economic Development; the Department of Labor; the division of administration; a member of the Louisiana Senate, appointed by the President of the Senate; a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the House; and the executive director of the Governor's Children's Cabinet, work together with the BrightStart staff to implement the BrightStart strategic and implementation plans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that BrightStart and the Children's Cabinet shall report to the joint committee of Senate and House Committee on Health and Welfare on the progress of the BrightStart implementation plan by January 31, 2009, and at six month intervals thereafter until the end of the grant initiative.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the executive director of the Governor's Children's Cabinet, the president of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, the commissioner of administration, the secretary of the Department of Social Services, the secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals, the secretary of the Department of Economic Development, the secretary of the Department of Labor, and the Superintendent of the Department of Education.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES