

# La DD Council - Status Report of FFY 2024 Action Plan

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- 'On Target: Initiative' indicates progress has been made as expected.
- 'On Target: Expenditures' indicates invoiced amounts are as expected.

Activity	Progress
As applicable, data is presented year-to-date and quarterly (October 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023).	
<p><b>Goal 1</b> Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families will have access to information and supports to become effective leaders of their communities and advocate for systems changes on behalf of themselves and other individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.</p>	
<p><b>Obj. 1.1</b> Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities of all ages will have access to opportunities to increase their awareness and knowledge of rights as a contributing member to society; including subject matters on (but not limited to) advocacy, voting, exploitation prevention, financial stability and responsibilities, and decision making.</p>	
<p><b>1.1.1</b> Provide financial support and technical assistance for Partners in Policymaking and its alumni network.  <b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost:</b>  <b>\$90,000</b></p>	<p>There were thirty-eight (38) applications received by the deadline of September 30, 2023 for the 2024 Partners in Policymaking (PiP) class. The 2024 PiP Selection Committee, made up of four (4) PiP graduates from various classes including one (1) Council member and the previous PiP Coordinator, met on October 10, 2023. Of the 38 applications received, 3 were found ineligible, leaving a total of 35 applicants eligible for review and selection based on the national Partners in Policymaking selection criteria. Eligible applicants were comprised of 4 self-advocates and 31 parents. The Selection Committee selected 25 applicants and 5 alternates. Of the selected and alternates, 24 applicants accepted and will begin the program in January 2024. The first PiP session is scheduled for January 4-6, 2023.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>

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<p><b>1.1.2</b> Provide financial support and information, training, technical assistance, and leadership to a grassroots network of individuals with intellectual developmental disabilities and family members of individuals with developmental disabilities to effectively educate policy makers on the development/improvement of programs and services for people with intellectual developmental disabilities.  <b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$240,000</b></p>	<p>As of December 2023, LaCAN has over 6,750 individuals registered for the Council and LaCAN list serve to receive information and action alerts related to home and community-based services (HCBS), employment, education and early intervention.</p> <p><u>Advocacy Activities</u>          Since October 1, 2023, there have been a total of three (3) LaCAN action alerts and one (1) yellow shirt day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 Action Alerts – 193 actions taken</li> <li>• 1 Yellow Shirt Day – 10 attended; 1 testimony provided</li> </ul> <p>LaCAN Leaders are in the process of planning for formal legislative visits with key committee members to discuss this year’s advocacy agenda. Legislative visits will begin once all documents pertaining to the Council’s advocacy agenda are finalized by staff. These visits will continue throughout the legislative session which begins on March 11, 2024.</p> <p>LaCAN continues to host two LaCAN Leader conference calls per month, which include updates on current concerns/issues and development of strategies to better educate, maintain, support, and lead LaCAN members.</p> <p><u>Update on Leader Positions</u>          All LaCAN leader positions are currently filled.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p><b>1.1.3</b> Facilitate and support diverse advocacy events, including but not limited to Legislative Roundtables, toward training, services and policies that will benefit individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.  <b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$30,000</b></p>	<p>LaCAN Leaders are in the process of planning for regional Legislative Roundtables in collaboration with their Families Helping Families Centers. Roundtables will be held in-person prior to the start of legislative session, March 11, 2024. Efforts will be made to offer virtual participation in Roundtables in each region. Once the roundtable schedule is finalized, it will be shared across all the Council’s platforms and include information on how to register and participate.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>

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<p><b>1.1.4</b> Provide financial support (from the entirety of state general funds) and technical assistance to nine Families Helping Families Regional Resource Centers across the state.</p>	<p>Since October 1, 2023, Centers have assisted 3,996 individuals with disabilities and families with information, referral, peer to peer and other supports. There have been over 10,624 units of information and referral completed with 67 trainings conducted with 1,305 individuals in attendance. Centers have conducted 138 outreach activities to hospitals, pediatricians, school districts, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) clinics and physical therapy clinics.</p> <p>In October, the Council added to its 2024 Legislative Advocacy Agenda funding for the Families Helping Families Centers currently contracting with the Council. For the past three years, an additional \$500,000 in state general fund has been added to the Council’s budget for FHF Centers. Unfortunately, the Council’s request for these additional dollars was not approved in the Fiscal year 25 budget. Advocacy will be needed to obtain these additional dollars. A factsheet will be developed, posted on the Council’s website, and distributed to Council members, LaCAN Leaders, and FHF Centers/Directors to be used during legislative visits and member meetings prior to the start of the 2024 legislative session.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p><b>1.1.5</b> Share videos and other visual materials featuring information important to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.</p>	<p>No activity this quarter.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p><b>1.1.6</b> Produce and provide information important to individuals with intellectual developmental disabilities and their families through a variety of electronic and social media (Council website, Facebook, and LaDDC News).</p>	<p>The Council’s social media presence on Facebook and Twitter continues to grow each quarter. Data as of December 18, 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council’s <a href="#">listserv</a> has 6,755 active subscribers.</li> <li>• The Council’s <a href="#">Facebook</a> has 6,205 page followers and 5,756 page likes.</li> <li>• The Council’s <a href="#">Twitter</a> has 535 followers.</li> </ul> <p>The following 7 LaDDC Newsletters were released via listserv and advertised on the Council’s Facebook and Twitter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">LDOE Complaint Process Performance Audit</a>, October 3, 2023</li> <li>2. <a href="#">OCDD Roadshows Coming Soon</a>, October 17, 2023</li> <li>3. <a href="#">OCDD and DCFS Informational Sessions</a>, October 25, 2023</li> <li>4. <a href="#">OCDD Roadshows Update</a>, October 30, 2023</li> <li>5. <a href="#">Trainings on Navigating the System for Co-Occurring Disorders</a>, November 13, 2023</li> </ol>

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	<p>6. <a href="#">Disability Voting Rights Training Opportunities</a>, November 16, 2023</p> <p>7. <a href="#">Public Notice of Executive Committee Meeting</a>, November 22, 2023</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p><b>1.1.7</b> Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.</p>	<p>The Louisiana Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) held Roadshows across the state throughout October and November to discuss the department’s upcoming initiatives. These Roadshows were for waiver participants, families, providers, support coordinators and all interested parties. The DD Council encouraged all stakeholders to participate to provide feedback and shared an <a href="#">LaDDC Newsletter</a> on October 17<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>OCDD and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) hosted two virtual informational sessions to receive feedback from community partners and give information to anyone interested in fostering children and teens with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. The DD Council encouraged all stakeholders to participate in the sessions to provide feedback and shared an <a href="#">LaDDC Newsletter</a> on October 25<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p><b>1.1.8</b> Provide financial support and technical assistance for the Louisiana Youth Leadership Forum. <b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$45,000</b></p>	<p>The Louisiana Youth Leadership Forum (LAYLF) Team finalized the dates and location for the 2024 class. It will be held June 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at the University of Louisiana Lafayette. The team is currently working on developing the application process, finalizing the budget, recruiting guest speakers, and planning the detailed schedule of the 2024 Youth Leadership Forum. The Council will share more information once the application is open via LaDDC News and social media.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p><b>1.1.9</b> Provide financial support, technical assistance to educate and train individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities on voting awareness, rights and accessibility. <b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$30,000</b></p>	<p>The Council has collaborated with People First of Louisiana to offer ten (10) statewide training opportunities (1 web-based and 9 in-person) to empower and educate individuals on voting rights for people with disabilities. Attendees will gain valuable information about: Why you should vote; The process of voting; Assistance and accommodations with voting; Rights and Responsibilities; and The meaning of Constitutional Amendments. A <a href="#">LaDDC News</a> was shared on November 15<sup>th</sup> announcing this new initiative.</p> <p>As of October 2023, one (1) web-based training occurred with four (4) participants in attendance and one (1) in-person training with eleven (11) participants in attendance. The in-person training session included representatives from the Secretary of State’s office to provide hands-on experience with voting machines used for both early voting and election day voting.</p>

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	<p>The training schedule will continue to be shared with all FHF Centers, The Arc of Louisiana, and Disability Rights LA. People First of LA and the DD Council (through websites and social media) are providing promotion of the scheduled events. The training schedule will also be listed on the <a href="#">Council website</a> and updated as more trainings are scheduled. Adults with disabilities, their families and other interested organizations and stakeholders are encouraged to attend.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p><b>Obj. 1.2</b> Louisiana’s self-advocacy network, partner groups, and citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities will be supported in self-advocacy training, systems change advocacy, and through participation on a variety of boards and commissions.</p>	
<p><b>1.2.1</b> Provide technical assistance and training opportunities designed to strengthen the self-advocacy network and the effectiveness of its systems change activities and promote self-advocacy participation in training of other self-advocates in leadership positions.</p> <p><b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$25,000</b></p>	<p><a href="#">The Arc’s National Convention</a> was held in New Orleans from November 6-November 8. The Arc’s National Convention is an unmatched opportunity to connect and learn with advocates, professionals, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families. Topics included: employment, education, advocacy, housing, criminal justice, and more. Thirteen (13) interested members of People First and three (3) Direct Support Workers (DSWs) registered and attended the conference and the self-advocate symposium.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p><b>1.2.2</b> Provide information and support for participation of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families in cross-disability and culturally diverse leadership coalitions and advisory bodies.</p>	<p>No activity this quarter.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p><b>1.2.3</b> Support Council members’ participation in training and educational opportunities and Council leadership’s participation in national training, networking</p>	<p>The Interim Executive Director conducted two orientation sessions for new self-advocate Council members on October 10<sup>th</sup> and December 14<sup>th</sup>. New self-advocate members will also participate in parliamentary procedure training with other new members on January 9<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>The Interim Executive Director attended a training for New Executive Directors hosted by the National Association for Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) on November 30, 2023.</p>

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<p>events and advocacy opportunities.  <b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$15,000</b></p>	<p>The Interim Executive Director held a New Officer Training with the Executive Committee and Parliamentarian on October 4<sup>th</sup>, which focused on chairing meetings. An additional training was conducted to discuss the roles, responsibilities and duties of the Executive Committee and each officer position on December 29<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p><b>Goal 2</b> To be fully participating members of the community, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including those with the most challenging needs, and their families will have access to quality supports and services inclusive of affordable healthcare, resources across various service delivery systems, and shall be treated equally by all members of the community.</p>	
<p><b>Obj. 2.1</b> Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have increased access to appropriate and affordable healthcare, including primary and specialist providers, preventive health services and prevention of chronic diseases, dental care, sexual/reproductive health services and behavioral health services.</p>	
<p><b>2.1.1</b> Oversee implementation of the Community and Family Support System Plan and advocate for adequate funding, the expansion of home and community based services, for waivers to provide access to services listed in the Freedom of Choice Provider Listing and consistent implementation of policy across regions, including, if necessary, changes in law and/or contracts with local governing entities (LGEs).</p>	<p>The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) hosted a Fall Roadshow similar to the Post Public Health Emergency (PHE) Roadshow they conducted in February and March 2023. This road show again focused on the end of the PHE COVID-19 exceptions but also included other important information. The Council share the scheduled dates for their Fall Roadshow on October 25<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>In October, the Council added to its 2024 Legislative Advocacy Agenda advocacy around eliminating the Flexible Family Fund wait list. This Act 378 program serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and those with behavioral health needs. As of the creation of this report, the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities and the Office of Behavioral Health are working with the local human services districts/authorities to determine how much funding is needed to eliminate the wait list.</p> <p>The Council also included in its advocacy agenda funding to increase direct support worker (DSW) pay. The Executive Committee met on November 29, 2023 and removed this advocacy agenda item in lieu of working with the department and providers on a rate methodology for Louisiana. This would help determine what rate is needed to provide quality home- and community-based services in the state. The Council could then use this methodology to advocate for an increased rate and appropriate wages for DSWs in subsequent session. The Executive Committee did agree to partner with providers this session to advocate for an increase in the waiver nighttime services rate. The current rate (\$13.52) would increase to match the day rate (\$18.52) if advocacy is successful. Approximately \$10.1 million in state general fund is needed.</p> <p>Fact sheets on both issues are forthcoming.</p>

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<p><b>2.1.2</b> Conduct research on best practices to provide appropriate, accessible sexual education to middle and high school aged people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.</p>	<p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Initiative</b></p> <p>No activity this quarter.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Initiative</b></p>
<p><b>2.1.3</b> Provide financial support for training to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities on how to navigate the Developmental Disability, Behavioral Health and Medicaid/Managed Care Organization Systems. <b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$30,000</b></p>	<p>The Council has collaborated with Hustle &amp; Grow, LLC for this new activity and a <a href="#">LaDDC News</a> was shared on November 13<sup>th</sup> announcing this new initiative. Hustle &amp; Grow will conduct trainings throughout the state of Louisiana to promote a continuum of care to foster early recognition, self-advocacy, and family/caregiver involvement to prevent instances of ineffective service delivery. There will be trainings for people with I/DD and their families on How to Identify Co-Occurring I/DD and Mental Health Disorders, Trauma-Informed and person-centered Care. There will also be 2 statewide virtual webinars for anyone with a co-occurring disorder (I/DD and behavioral health diagnosis) from the adolescent, adult, or geriatric population, with a concerted effort will be made to engage the waiver services population. The webinars will include: Rapid Response: De-Escalation Tactics in Times of Behavioral Health Crisis Training and How to Choose the Right Behavioral Health Provider Training.</p> <p>Hustle &amp; Grow provided two (2) training opportunities to improve overall awareness and early recognition of co-occurring intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and mental health diagnoses for persons with disabilities and their families. The first session was held November 14<sup>th</sup> in Pineville and the second session was held on December 15<sup>th</sup> in Monroe. The Council will share more information on the <a href="#">website</a> as more trainings are scheduled.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Initiative</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Expenditures</b></p>
<p><b>Obj. 2.2</b> Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families will have access to and be served by qualified trained professionals, including Direct Support Professionals, First Responders, and other professionals, who will value and promote inclusive community living.</p>	
<p><b>2.2.1</b> Provide financial support to conduct training sessions on first-responder tactics, approaches and resources in fostering relationships with and dealing with individuals with</p>	<p>Council contracted for a fourth year with Interaction Advisory Group (IAG) to conduct in-person training sessions for first responders. No trainings were held in this quarter. As in previous years, the months of November, December and January are slow with little to no turnout due to the holidays and mandated first responder training/certifications by their departments. The contractor is using this time to network with agencies statewide to arrange for in-person trainings in 2024. Dates are being set for Plaquemines Parish Fire department this summer.</p>

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<p>intellectual and developmental disabilities and training for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities on how to interact with first responders.</p> <p><b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$80,000</b></p>	<p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p><b>2.2.2</b> Provide financial support to establish a training program on emergency preparedness and response relative to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities</p> <p><b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$50,000</b></p>	<p>Council contracted for a fourth year with Niagara University to bring its emergency preparedness and disability awareness training to Louisiana. The contractor planned to host a refresher virtual training for participants December 12, 2023. Information regarding participation was not available at the time this document was created. The next two in-person sessions will be held the week of March 18, 2024. The contractor is considering Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Lafayette and/or the Northshore area, but no firm locations have been set.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p><b>2.2.3</b> Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.</p>	<p>The Louisiana Medicaid Innovation Technical Committee under the Louisiana Department of Health conducted a focus group to obtain feedback on the Patient Liability (PLI) notice in order to improve the PLI Notice readability. Council members were encouraged to participate on this focus group and sent information on October 24<sup>th</sup> via email.</p> <p>Additionally, The Louisiana Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) held Roadshows across the state throughout October and November to discuss the department’s upcoming initiatives. These Roadshows were for waiver participants, families, providers, support coordinators and all interested parties. The DD Council encouraged all stakeholders to participate and shared an <a href="#">LaDDC Newsletter</a> on October 17<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>Lastly, the OCDD and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) hosted two informational sessions to receive feedback from community partners and give information to anyone interested in fostering children and teens with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. The DD Council encouraged all stakeholders to participate in the sessions and shared an <a href="#">LaDDC Newsletter</a> on October 25<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>

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<p><b>Obj. 2.3.</b> Females with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families will have increased access to health services and health education. (Targeted Disparity – Disadvantaged population)</p>	
<p><b>2.3.1</b> Collaborate with the Louisiana Department of Health to address accessible, educational materials on Women’s health topics.</p>	<p>No activity this quarter.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p><b>Goal 3</b> Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have access to quality education in inclusive and safe environments throughout all stages of life and access to self-determined, individualized, equal and gainful employment opportunities that provide competitive wages and integrated work environments.</p>	
<p><b>Obj. 3.1</b> Parents of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have increased access to early diagnosis, identification of needs, early intervention services, childcare and information and opportunities to collaborate with educators regarding individualized educational planning or programming to meet the needs of their students.</p>	
<p><b>3.1.1</b> Advocate for increased focus and capacity within Louisiana Department of Education to address Special Education, including specific areas/issues (i.e., disability/topical/etc.)</p>	<p>An <a href="#">Action Alert</a> was sent on October 6<sup>th</sup> about the Louisiana Department of Education’s support of waiving Bulletin 1530 which would allow a chronological age span of more than three years within a special education class. The three school districts requesting a waiver included Jackson Parish School Board, Bricolage Academy and Audubon Charter Gentilly. Advocates were encouraged to reach out to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) before their meeting on October 10<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>At the December BESE meeting, Louisiana State Superintendent, Dr. Cade Brumley, stated that he has included a request in the Executive budget for six additional positions that will be specifically housed with the monitoring team in the Division of Diverse Learners to assist with monitoring Special Education. Additionally, a legislative audit specific to monitoring is upcoming. More information and a LaDDC news will be sent when that information becomes available.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p><b>3.1.2</b> Advocate for the Louisiana Department of Education to perform ongoing monitoring of local school districts to ensure compliance of all Special Education laws and policies.</p>	<p>The Legislative Auditor released the first of a series of reports in September 2023 related to the evaluation of the Louisiana Department of Education’s (LDOE) oversight of students with disabilities in Louisiana. An <a href="#">Action Alert</a> was sent on October 6<sup>th</sup> which highlighted several areas of concern on how the LDOE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handled formal complaints;</li> <li>• Failed to address all complaints received via email; and</li> <li>• The need for LDOE to make their complaint process more accessible, transparent and user friendly.</li> </ul>

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	<p>It was also noted the LDOE does not always reach out to parents during the complaint process, but they always reached out to school systems making the process unfair. Advocates were encouraged to reach out to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) before their meeting on October 10<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>The Legislative Auditor was report was referred to the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP). An <a href="#">Action Alert</a> was sent on November 21<sup>st</sup> encouraging advocates to attend a Yellow Shirt Day at SEAP on November 29<sup>th</sup> to discuss an implementation plan to address the Louisiana Legislative Auditor's Office recommendations found within the audit report.</p> <p>Additionally, at the October 2023 BESE meeting, the Board directed the LDOE to bring an updated report to the December 2023 Academic Goals and Instructional Improvement Committee. The implementation plan and policy were discussed and endorsed by the SEAP at their November 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. You can view the <a href="#">plan and draft policy</a> shared at the SEAP meeting in addition to the <a href="#">meeting minutes</a>. An <a href="#">Action Alert</a> was sent on December 5<sup>th</sup>, and advocates were encouraged to reach out to BESE before their meeting on December 12<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>Council Staff also attended the BESE meeting on December 12, 2023. There was discussion about a graduation dispute process for students. It was noted during the meeting that Louisiana was the only State that did not currently have a graduation dispute process. There was also updated information on the legislative audit report. See the <a href="#">response plan</a> and timeline from LDOE. Lastly, LDOE presented the updated <a href="#">complaint management procedures</a>.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Initiative</b></p>
<p><b>3.1.3</b> Advocate for educational systems change based on emergent education issues.</p>	<p>On September 20, 2023, the Louisiana Legislative Auditor released a performance audit of the Louisiana Department of Education's (LDOE) process to address complaints related to students with disabilities. The audit, which was conducted in response to legislative interest, is the first in a series of reports that will evaluate LDOE's oversight of students with disabilities who receive special education services in Louisiana. <a href="#">A LaDDC news</a> was shared on October 5<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>During the October 2023 Council meeting, the Education and Employment committee expressed concerns for the new State Ombudsman the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) plans to hire. The Council advocated for the LDOE to consider hiring an Ombudsman outside of the LDOE due to the distrust that already exist between families and the Department. The Council also advocated for more than one Ombudsman for the entire State due to the potential of becoming overwhelmed by complaints to address the concerns of parents.</p>

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	<p>Lastly, during the October Council meeting, the Council requested a letter be sent to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) about <a href="#">Act 392 of the 2023 Legislative Session</a> expressing concerns about allowing convicted felons in the classrooms with students, especially students with disabilities. A <a href="#">letter</a> has been drafted and will be sent to BESE before their January 2024 meeting.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p><b>3.1.4</b> Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.</p>	<p>During the first quarter, three Action Alerts were sent for stakeholder input including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">BESE Committee to Discuss Two Important Issues</a>, October 6, 2023</li> <li>2. <a href="#">SEAP to Discuss LDOE Complaint Process Audit</a>, November 21, 2023</li> <li>3. <a href="#">BESE to Discuss LDOE Dispute Resolution Process</a>, December 5, 2023</li> </ol> <p>Advocates were encouraged to respond to these alerts by contacting the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and attending a Yellow Shirt Day at the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP).</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p><b>3.1.5</b> Provide financial support to build capacity for advocacy regarding education and employment. <b>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$87,000</b></p>	<p>The Council contracted with the Arc of Louisiana as an education and employment consultant by conducting statewide trainings on how to identify and follow new and/or proposed changes in policies around special education and employment for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD). They will Provide a minimum of nine (9) in-person trainings across the state for education and nine (9) in-person trainings across the state for employment (total of 18 in-person trainings at minimum). Trainings will be provided to individuals with I/DD and their families.</p> <p>They will also attend meetings and advocate where education and employment policies and legislation are discussed. Meetings include but are not limited to the Board of Secondary and Elementary Education (BESE), the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP), the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC), the Louisiana Legislature, and other related meetings such as the Accountability Commission, the Superintendents Advisory Council, etc.</p> <p>Since October, The Arc has begun developing education and employment training materials. They have also attended meetings including the Special Education Advisory Panel on November 29<sup>th</sup> and the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) on October 26<sup>th</sup>. The Arc also made recommendations to LDOE based on testimony from parents, and sent language to DDC staff to share in LaCAN alerts for two BESE meetings on <a href="#">October 6</a> and <a href="#">December 5</a> and a SEAP meeting on <a href="#">November 21</a>.</p> <p><b>On target:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>

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**Obj. 3.2** Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities will have increased employment outcomes upon transitioning from secondary educational settings, access to employment opportunities inclusive of services from highly qualified employment support providers, and increased competitive and integrated opportunities from employers who are educated on how to support people with developmental disabilities.

**3.2.1** Advocate for systems change based on emergent employment issues.

No activity this quarter.

**On target:**  **Initiative**