

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
<p>Goal 1 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>Obj. 1.1 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>1.1.1 Provide financial support and technical assistance for Partners in Policymaking and its alumni network. Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$90,000</p>	<p>Of the 24 applicants who were accepted into the 2024 PiP class, 20 attended the January session, thus beginning the program. Due to unforeseen circumstances, 2 participants had to drop out of the program during the March session. We currently have 18 participants set to graduate the program in June.</p> <p>Three sessions of the 2024 Partners in Policymaking class took place this quarter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first PiP session of the 2024 class took place in January. The speakers were Ebony Haven, Liz Gary, Jamie Duplechine, and Guy Caruso. • The second PiP session took place in February. There were representatives who spoke on LaTAN, FHF centers, the YLF program, LaPIE and ABA therapies. Additionally, we had special guests Cindy Arceneaux and Rose Gilbert who spoke on the ABS's of Special Education. • The third PiP session focusing on the Legislative Process took place in March. The speakers were Ebony Haven, Julie Smith, Brenton Andrus, and Liz Gary. The participants prepared mock testimony and were able to practice their testimony and receive feedback in front of a panel that included Representative Kim Coates. <p>Previous Quarter(s): There were 35 eligible applicants comprised of 4 self-advocates and 31 parents. 25 applicants and 5 alternates were selected. Of the selected, 24 applicants accepted and were scheduled to begin January 4th, 2024.</p>

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	<p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.1.2 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. Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$240,000</p>	<p>As of March 2024, LaCAN has over 6,771 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 ten (10) LaCAN action alerts and five (5) yellow shirt days.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Action Alerts – 884 actions taken • 5 Yellow Shirt Days – 93 attended; 7 testimony provided <p>LaCAN Leaders are in the process of scheduling and completing formal legislative visits with key committee members to discuss this year’s advocacy agenda. To date, members were supported at 29 formal legislative visits of which 18 were with key committee members. These visits will continue throughout the legislative session which began 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>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.1.3 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.</p>	<p>LaCAN Leaders planned regional legislative roundtables in collaboration with their Families Helping Families Centers. Roundtables were held in-person and with the option of virtual participation.</p> <p>Nine Legislative Roundtables were held across the state with 389 participants in attendance, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 33 Self-Advocates • 142 Family Members • 179 Professionals • 26 Other/Unknown • 9 Policy Makers (i.e. legislators, legislative aides, and/or BESE members)

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<p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$30,000</p>	<p>Previous Quarter(s): 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.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.1.4 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 21,000 individuals with disabilities and families with information, referral, peer to peer and other supports. There have been over 38,000 units of information and referral completed with 259 trainings conducted with 4,576 individuals in attendance. Centers have conducted 262 outreach activities to hospitals, pediatricians, school districts, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) clinics and physical therapy clinics.</p> <p>For the past three years, an additional \$500,000 in state general funds 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. A fact sheet about the need for additional funding for Families Helping Families Resource Centers was 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. This need has been discussed at nine legislative roundtables and legislative visits across the state as well as House Appropriations Committee Public Testimony. Two action alerts (AA7 & AA8) were sent to the LaCAN listserv asking advocates to reach out to House Appropriations and Senate Finance who are discussing the budget.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): In October, the Council added to its 2024 Legislative Advocacy Agenda reoccurring funding for the Families Helping Families Centers currently contracting with the Council.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.1.5 Share videos and other visual materials featuring information important to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.</p>	<p>So far in this Quarter (January – March), the following videos were shared on social media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your Next Best Hire: Impact for Employers, January 3rd • Your Next Best Hire: Benefits for Employers, January 5th • Your Next Best Hire: Recruiting Employees with Disabilities, January 8th • Your Next Best Hire: Building DEI in the Workplace, February 26th

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	<p>These were all the videos made in FY23 for the Working Together – Your Next Best Hire! Series. We have place to share the employment videos made in previous fiscal years. The videos are also on the Council's website and YouTube page for the public to utilize.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): All 6 videos made in FY23 for the Fully Included HOW TO series were shared on social media.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.1.6 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 March 18, 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council's listserv has 6,771 active subscribers.• The Council's Facebook has 6,250 page followers.• The Council's Twitter has 533 followers. <p>The following 18 LaDDC Newsletters were released via listserv and advertised on the Council's Facebook and Twitter:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Council's 2024 Legislative Agenda, January 4, 20242. Public Notice of LaDDC January 2024 Council Meeting, January 5, 20243. January Council Meeting, January 16, 20244. Recruiting Staff for 2024 Youth Leadership Forum, January 23, 20245. 2024 Legislative Roundtables, January 25, 20246. Louisiana Rehabilitation Council Recruiting Members, January 29, 20247. Bayou Land Families Helping Families: Hiring Executive Director, February 2, 20248. Recruiting Delegates for 2024 Youth Leadership Forum, February 14, 20249. LDOE Seeks Input on 2024-25 IDEA Application, February 21, 202410. Public Notice of FFY25 Planning Ad Hoc Committee, March 4, 202411. 2024 Youth Leadership Forum – Last Chance to Apply, March 5, 202412. Upcoming Emergency Preparedness and Disability Awareness Trainings, March 6, 202413. Special Education Advisory Panel Applications Open, March 7, 202414. Making a Difference through Advocacy in Education and Employment Training Opportunity, March 14, 202415. Public Notice of LaDDC April 2024 Council Meeting, March 18, 202416. FFY24 LDOE IDEA Grant Application out for Public Comment, March 21, 202417. OCDD and START hosting Self-Advocate Meeting, March 27, 2024

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	<p>18. Public Notice of Executive Committee Meeting, March 28, 2024.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s):</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2"></th> <th style="text-align: left;">Listserv Active Subscribers</th> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: left;">Facebook</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Twitter Followers</th> <th rowspan="2">LaDDC News Shared to Listserv</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>Followers</th> <th>Page likes</th> <th></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Quarter 1</td> <td>6,755</td> <td>6,205</td> <td>5,756</td> <td>533</td> <td>7</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>		Listserv Active Subscribers	Facebook		Twitter Followers	LaDDC News Shared to Listserv		Followers	Page likes		Quarter 1	6,755	6,205	5,756	533	7
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<p>1.1.7 Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.</p>	<p>Shared an LaDDC News on January 25, 2024 announcing the upcoming LaCAN legislative roundtables where the Council’s 2024 Legislative Advocacy agenda was presented along with advocacy tips and tools. Also shared a LaDDC News on March 27th encouraging self-advocates to participate in a feedback group with The Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) and the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability and their systemic therapeutic assessment resources and treatment (START) team discussing mental health crisis services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Louisiana.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): Shared LaDDC News on October 17th and October 25th to announce OCDD’s roadshows to discuss their statewide initiative and advertise virtual sessions for foster parents interested in fostering children with I/DD.</p> <p>Shared an LaDDC News on October 25th to announce OCDD and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) hosting 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.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>																
<p>1.1.8 Provide financial support and technical assistance for the Louisiana Youth Leadership Forum.</p>	<p>Staff and delegate recruitment for the 2024 Youth Leadership Forum is complete. 19 people applied as staff and are in the process of being interviewed. 16 delegate applications have been received. LAYLF now has four total funding sources: the LaDDC, the Department of Education, Enbridge (5 year grant) and the Brown Foundation (1 year grant). Additionally, LAYLF hosted its first alumni event on January 27th at Rock N Bowl in Lafayette. 4 delegates and 9 staff were able to attend.</p>																

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<p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$45,000</p>	<p>Previous Quarter(s): The LAYLF Team finalized the dates and location for the 2024 class. It will be held June 20th – 24th, 2024 at the University of Lafayette. They are currently working on developing the application process, finalizing the budget, recruiting guest speakers, and planning the detailed schedule of the 2024 Youth Leadership Forum.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.1.9 Provide financial support, technical assistance to educate and train individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities on voting awareness, rights and accessibility. Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$30,000</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.</p> <p>As of October 2023, one (1) web-based training occurred with four (4) participants in attendance and three (3) in-person training with twenty-four (24) 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> <p>The training schedule will continued 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. Training schedule will also be listed there. Adults with disabilities, their families and other interested organizations and stakeholders are encouraged to attend.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): Last quarter, one (1) web-based training occurred with four (4) participants in attendance and one (1) in-person training with eleven (11) participants in attendance.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>Obj. 1.2 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>1.2.1 Provide technical assistance and training opportunities designed to strengthen the self-advocacy network and the</p>	<p>People First had 10 participants attend the Together in Harmony and Hope conference on March 22nd and 23rd. This conference focused on Traumatic Brain Injuries, promoting successful transitions, useful SMART technology for wheelchairs, building self-advocates, person-centered planning, and other educational resources.</p>

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<p>effectiveness of its systems change activities and promote self-advocacy participation in training of other self-advocates in leadership positions.</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$25,000</p>	<p>A few self-advocates are interested in attending the Disability Policy Seminar in Washington in April.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): The Arc's National Convention was held in New Orleans from November 6-November 8. 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>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>1.2.2 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>Shared a LaDDC News on January 29th and March 7th announcing membership opportunities for the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) and the Special Education Advisory Council (SEAP). Also shared a LaDDC News on March 27th encouraging self-advocates to participate in an advisory group discussing mental health crisis services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Louisiana.</p> <p>On target: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>1.2.3 Support Council members' participation in training and educational opportunities and Council leadership's participation in national training, networking events and advocacy opportunities.</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$15,000</p>	<p>The Interim Executive Director conducted a new member orientation for members appointed in October 2023 on January 9th. Additionally, new self-advocate members also attended parliamentary procedure training with new members on January 9th.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): The Interim Executive Director conducted two orientation sessions for new self-advocate Council members. These members also participated in parliamentary procedure training with other new members.</p> <p>The Interim Executive Director attended a training for New Executive Directors hosted by the National Association for Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD).</p> <p>The Interim Executive Director held a New Officer Training with the Executive Committee and Parliamentarian, 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.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>

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Goal 2 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.

Obj. 2.1 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.

2.1.1 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).

In January, LDH agreed to our request and has submitted a request to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to use those funds to complete the rate methodology. In February Caroline Meehan, the Executive Director of the Community Providers Association of Louisiana, also put together an information sheet providing detailed information about the rate methodology which can be found [here](#).

Fact sheets created with regard to eliminating the [Flexible Family Fund Waitlist](#) and [increasing the night rate in waivers](#) for individuals with I/DD. These needs have been discussed at nine legislative roundtables and legislative visits across the state as well as House Appropriations Committee Public Testimony. Two action alerts ([AA7](#) & [AA8](#)) were sent to the LaCAN listserv asking advocates to reach out to House Appropriations and Senate Finance who are discussing the budget.

Previous Quarter(s):

Council added to its 2024 Advocacy Agenda eliminating the Flexible Family Fund Waitlist (~\$9.4 million in state general fund) and increasing night rates in waivers for individuals with I/DD (\$10.1 million in state general fund). In November, the Executive Committee removed an agenda item to advocate for increased rates and direct support worker pay until after the rate methodology was completed. This methodology will help guide advocacy efforts with regard to this ask. The Council collaborated with the Community Provider Association of Louisiana, The Arc of Louisiana, and the Supported Living Network and sent a [letter to the Louisiana Department of Health](#) (LDH) to consider utilizing unused enhanced Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the development of rate methodologies for the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) and the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) home- and community-based services (HCBS) programs.

On target: Initiative

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<p>2.1.2 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>Council staff researched other states that have similar initiatives for input on how to accomplish this activity in the future. Staff contacted other state Councils and their contractors. The DD Councils in Maine and California purchased curriculum and staff conducted the training. Available training sessions include topics such as youth, LGBTQ+, workplace, and more. Attendance was high for one council, but low for the other. Staff met with a contractor March 5th for more information about training. The curriculum is available to be purchased and customized to specific needs. The Council would have to find someone to purchase curriculum, become a certified trainer, and then open trainings to the public.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): Staff emailed Maine DD Council and California DD Council to get information on similar activity. Staff also emailed the curriculum developers that the Councils used to get more information on trainings.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>2.1.3 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. Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$30,000</p>	<p>Hustle & Grow collaborated with Pleasant Counseling & Consulting, Freedom Behavioral Health, and Finding Solace Counseling to develop topics and information for the second installment of the trainings focused on de-escalation tactics in times of behavioral health crisis. The first session of this installment was held February 27th in Monroe. The next two sessions are scheduled for April 4th in Alexandria and April 9th in Mandeville.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): Hustle & Grow provided 3 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 installment of the trainings is focused on how to identify co-occurring I/DD and mental health disorders. These sessions are to equip you with the knowledge and tools to identify and address these conditions effectively. The first session was held November 14th in Pineville, the second session was held on December 15th in Monroe and the third session was held on December 16th in Baton Rouge.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>Obj. 2.2 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>2.2.1 Provide financial support to conduct training sessions on first-responder tactics, approaches and</p>	<p>Council contracted for a fourth year with Interaction Advisory Group (IAG) to conduct in-person training sessions for first responders. To date, no trainings have occurred. The contractor reports difficulty scheduling trainings and believes this is related to a use-of-force lawsuit involving Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office. The settlement will require the Office to hire an outside expert to develop a program to</p>

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<p>resources in fostering relationships with and dealing with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and training for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities on how to interact with first responders.</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$80,000</p>	<p>train JPSO deputies on their interactions with the disability population. This has impacted our contractor’s future trainings with JPSO and other regional offices. The contractor is currently working with Autism Society of Acadiana to offer a training for first responders at one of their upcoming meetings in June. Contractor has also been in communication with Vermillion, Tensas, Avoyelles, West Carroll and Rapides parish sheriff’s offices regarding training opportunities. They are also looking a gauging interest in virtual trainings as well.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): No trainings held in previous quarters due to little turnout over the holiday timeframe and mandated first responder training/certifications by their departments.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>2.2.2 Provide financial support to establish a training program on emergency preparedness and response relative to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities</p> <p>Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$50,000</p>	<p>Council contracted for a fourth year with Niagara University to bring its emergency preparedness and disability awareness training to Louisiana. The contractor hosted a refresher virtual training on January 11th for participants from all five states currently contracting for this initiative. There were 74 registered participants with 28 from Louisiana (the largest attendance of any state).</p> <p>Shared an LaDDC News on March 6th to announce upcoming trainings in Alexandria (April 29 – 30) and Baton Rouge (May 1 – 2). Those interested in attending these trainings can click on the LaDDC News link to see the flyer for each training and registration information.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): No trainings were held in the first quarter. Contractor planned to conduct a virtual refresher training in December, but that was moved to quarter two.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>2.2.3 Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.</p>	<p>Shared a LaDDC News on March 27th encouraging self-advocates to participate in an advisory group with the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) and the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability and their systemic therapeutic assessment resources and treatment (START) team discussing mental health crisis services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Louisiana.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): Council members were emailed and encouraged to participate on a focus group to obtain feedback on the Patient Liability (PLI) notice in order to improve the PLI Notice readability.</p>

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	<p>The DD Council shared an LaDDC Newsletter and encouraged all stakeholders to participate on 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.</p> <p>The DD Council encouraged all stakeholders to participate in the sessions and shared an LaDDC Newsletter in OCDD and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) informational sessions on fostering children and teens with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>Obj. 2.3. 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>2.3.1 Collaborate with the Louisiana Department of Health to address accessible, educational materials on Women's health topics.</p>	<p>The new Administration under Governor Landry made some changes in leadership under the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) including the Office of Women's Health and Community Health (OWHCH). The Council has identified potential topics to address accessible educational materials on Women's health topics being considered during the 2024 legislative session including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SB55 which requires hospitals and birthing centers to provide information regarding post-birth warning signs to new mothers and their families upon discharge and LDH to make the information available to hospitals and birthing centers and to include the information on the department's website.• SB325 provides that, no more than 48-eight hours after a pregnant woman is informed that her unborn child has a fetal genetic abnormality diagnosis, the physician or health facility that gave the diagnosis shall provide to the woman an informational document including resources, programs, and services for pregnant women and for infants and children born with disabilities. It also requires LDH to develop and make available the informational document. <p>Once new leadership is in place, Council staff will collaborate with LDH and potentially OWHCH on these educational materials included in these bills.</p> <p>On target: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>Goal 3 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>	

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Obj. 3.1 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.

3.1.1 Advocate for increased focus and capacity within Louisiana Department of Education to address Special Education, including specific areas/issues (i.e., disability/topical/etc.)

An [Action Alert](#) was sent on January 10th informing advocates that Governor Landry, by [Executive Order](#), vetoed the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's (BESE) new policy establishing an appeals process for qualifying high school seniors who do not meet the state's LEAP test scoring requirement for graduation. Advocates were encouraged to reach out to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) before their meeting January 16th.

An [Action Alert](#) was sent on January 22nd about the Special Education Advisory panel (SEAP) considering several important topics that would affect focus and capacity within the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) to address Special Education including:

- Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grant priorities, and
- Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) reports

Advocates were encouraged to reach out to SEAP before their meeting January 24th.

Council Staff attended Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) on January 24. SEAP members gave recommendations on topics included on the agenda including:

- Remote participation procedures, including a live transcriptionist.
- Act 128- ASL interpreting qualification changes for K-12 (LDOE has outdated standards so Louisiana Commission for the Deaf (LCD) created proposed rules.
- Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) report template.
- Bulletin 1706 - SEAP recommended some language changes before it goes to Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).
- Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) grant application, specifically accessibility to curriculum but this was not during quorum.

Council Staff participated as a proxy in the SEAP meeting March 20. SEAP discussed legislation that would affect students with disabilities. Staff shared the Council's stance on various legislation. As a panel, SEAP cannot have a stance on legislation, but BESE can, so SEAP members were encouraged to reach out to their local BESE members and Legislators to express their concerns and give testimony.

Previous Quarter(s):

An [Action Alert](#) was sent 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.

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	<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 for special education monitoring.</p> <p>Additionally, a legislative audit specific to monitoring is upcoming.</p> <p>On target: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>3.1.2 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>An Action Alert was sent on January 22nd about the Special Education Advisory panel (SEAP) considering several important topics that would affect monitoring of local school districts including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) grant priorities, and• Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) reports <p>Advocates were encouraged to reach out to SEAP before their meeting January 24th.</p> <p>SEAP gave recommendations on Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) report template at the January 24th meeting, including what information should be on the report.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): 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 Action Alert was sent which highlighted several areas of concern.</p> <p>The Legislative Auditor report was referred to the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP). An Action Alert was sent and a yellow shirt day was scheduled.</p> <p>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 meeting. You can view the plan and draft policy shared at the SEAP meeting. An Action Alert was sent and a yellow shirt day scheduled for BESE.</p> <p>Council Staff also attended the BESE meeting on December 12, 2023. See the response plan and timeline from LDOE. Lastly, LDOE presented the updated complaint management procedures.</p> <p>On target: <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>

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3.1.3 Advocate for educational systems change based on emergent education issues.

On February 20, 2024, Council Chair, Christi Gonzales, and Council Staff attended a Zoom meeting with LDOE to discuss the concerns over Act 392 in response to [the letter](#) the Council sent to BESE. Council Chair and Staff were advised that the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) does have safeguards in place for students in their policy that prohibit convicted felons to obtain a teaching certificate.

An [Action Alert](#) was sent on January 10th informing advocates that Governor Landry, by [Executive Order](#), vetoed the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education's (BESE) new policy establishing an appeals process for qualifying high school seniors who do not meet the state's LEAP test scoring requirement for graduation. Advocates were encouraged to reach out to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) before their meeting January 16th.

An [Action Alert](#) was sent on February 26th due to the unexpected dismissal of the entire membership of the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP). Advocates were encouraged to reach out to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and attend a Yellow Shirt Day at the Academic Goals and Instructions Committee meeting of BESE on March 5th. BESE voted to allow for SEAP to meet for the March quarterly meeting with the current members, and current members were encouraged to reapply for SEAP.

An [Action Alert](#) was sent on March 18th about the legislature making Governor Landry's veto of BESE's new policy establishing an appeals process for qualifying high school seniors who do not meet the state's EOC/LEAP test scoring requirement for graduation a permanent decision with House Bill 8 ([HB8](#)) by Representative Melerine. Advocates were encouraged to reach out to the House Education Committee before their meeting March 21st.

An [Action Alert](#) was sent on March 21st on multiple bills creating Education Savings Accounts/Scholarships and their impact on students with disabilities. These bills include [House Bill \(HB\) 191](#) by Rep. Freiberg, [HB745](#) by Rep. Emerson, [SB313](#) by Sen. Edmonds and [HB66](#) by Rep. Butler. Advocates were encouraged to reach out their State Representatives and/or Senators about the potential impact on students with disabilities. Advocates will continue to be encouraged to reach out to legislators and legislative committees throughout the 2024 Legislative Session.

Previous Quarter(s):

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, in October, [A LaDDC news](#).

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	<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. Lastly, the Council requested a letter be sent to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) before their January 2024 meeting about Act 392 of the 2023 Legislative Session expressing concerns about allowing convicted felons in the classrooms with students, especially students with disabilities.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>3.1.4 Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.</p>	<p>During the second quarter, four LaDDC News and three Action Alerts were shared for stakeholder input including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Louisiana Rehabilitation Council Recruiting Members, January 29, 2024 2. LDOE Seeks Input on 2024-25 IDEA Application, February 21, 2024 3. Special Education Advisory Panel Members Dismissed, February 26, 2024 4. Special Education Advisory Panel Applications Open, March 7, 2024 5. LEAP Appeals Up for Debate in House Education, March 18, 2024 6. FFY24 LDOE IDEA Grant Application out for Public Comment, March 20, 2024 7. Education Savings/Scholarships Accounts and the Impacts on Students with Disabilities, March 21, 2024 <p>Previous Quarter(s): During the first quarter, three Action Alerts were sent for stakeholder input including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. BESE Committee to Discuss Two Important Issues, October 6, 2023 9. SEAP to Discuss LDOE Complaint Process Audit, November 21, 2023 10. BESE to Discuss LDOE Dispute Resolution Process, December 5, 2023 <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>
<p>3.1.5 Provide financial support to build capacity for advocacy regarding education and employment. Approx. FFY 2024 Cost: \$87,000</p>	<p>The Arc watched the MFP Taskforce meeting and BESE retreat. Additionally, they sent an email to all BESE members regarding the dismissal of SEAP members.</p> <p>They also met with several legislators and helped develop a concurrent resolution to urge the Louisiana Department of Health to update its policies in the Medicaid Buy-In program to increase the amount of income individuals can earn when working. The Arc shared the Medicaid Buy-In fact sheet with LRS, OCDD, Legislators, Self-Advocates, Provider agencies, and families.</p>

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	<p>Lastly, The Arc sent language to staff to share in LaCAN Action Alerts on January 10, January 22, February 26, and March 18.</p> <p>Previous Quarter(s): 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 29th and the Louisiana Rehabilitation Council (LRC) on October 26th. 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 October 6 and December 5 and a SEAP meeting on November 21.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Expenditures</p>
<p>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.</p>	
<p>3.2.1 Advocate for systems change based on emergent employment issues.</p>	<p>There were no emergent employment issues this quarter.</p> <p>On target: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initiative</p>