



LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES COUNCIL
QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT

Quarter 1: October 1, 2024 – December 31, 2025

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 2025 Cost: \$145,000</p>	<p>There were 55 applications received by the deadline for the 2025 Partners in Policymaking (PiP) class. The 2025 PiP Selection Committee met on October 10, 2024. The committee was made up of four PiP graduates from various classes, including one Council member, and the previous PiP Coordinator. Twelve applications were found to be ineligible leaving 43 applicants for consideration. The Selection Committee selected 24 applicants and 7 alternates. Of the selected and alternates, 23 applicants - 18 parents and 7 self-advocates - accepted and will begin the program in January 2025. The first PiP session is scheduled for January 9-11, 2025.</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 2025 Cost: \$240,000</p>	<p>As of December 2024, LaCAN has over 6,797 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>Since October 1, 2024, there have been a total of two LaCAN action alerts and one yellow shirt day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Action Alerts – 219 actions taken • 1 Yellow Shirt Day – 12 attended <p><u>Trainings/ Meetings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LaCAN leaders participated in a 2-day retreat in December (12/13-14/2024) to discuss advocacy strategies, ways to improve as a leader, and team building.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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>LaCAN Leaders are in the process of scheduling and completing formal legislative visits with key committee members to discuss this year’s advocacy agenda. These visits will continue throughout the legislative session which begins on April 14, 2025.</p> <p>All LaCAN leader positions are currently filled.</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. Approx. FFY 2025 Cost: \$40,000</p>	<p>LaCAN Leaders are currently in the process of planning for regional legislative roundtables in collaboration with their Families Helping Families Centers. Roundtables will be held virtually prior to the start of legislative session. The Roundtable schedule has been finalized and can be found here. Information is being shared across all Council platforms and includes information on how to register and participate.</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, 2024, Centers have assisted 7,000 individuals with disabilities and families with information, referral, peer to peer and other supports. There have been over 14,251 units of information and referral completed with 66 trainings conducted with 1,195 individuals in attendance. Centers have also conducted 22 outreach activities to hospitals, pediatricians, school districts, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) clinics and physical therapy clinics.</p> <p>The Council added to its 2025 Legislative Advocacy Agenda funding for the Families Helping Families Centers currently contracting with the Council. For the past four years, an additional \$500,000 in state general fund has been added to the Council’s budget for FHF Centers, but the request to annualize these dollars in the Fiscal Year 26 budget was denied. A fact sheet was created and shared publicly.</p> <p>After ending our contract with Families Helping Families of New Orleans (FHF NOLA), the Council has entered into a contract with Families Helping Families of Greater New Orleans (FHF GNO) to ensure families in the Greater New Orleans area continue to have a reliable source of support and information.</p>
<p>1.1.5 Provide financial support to produce and provide information including videos and other visuals, a website overhaul, plain language materials and rebranding of materials important to individuals with</p>	<p>The Council’s social media presence on Facebook and Twitter continues to grow each quarter.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Data as of January 8, 2025:</p> </div>

intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families through a variety of electronic and social media (Council website, Facebook, and LaDDC News).

Approx. FFY 2025 Cost: \$55,000

	Listserv Subscribers	Facebook Followers	Twitter Followers	LaDDC News sent
Quarter 1	6,790	6,400	535	14
Quarter 2				
Quarter 3				
Quarter 4				

The Council contracted with GatorWorks to rebrand and revamp the council’s website. Staff met with GatorWorks team October 9th for a website kickoff meeting and December 18th for a wireframes presentation meeting.

The Council also contracted with Brian Cox to help with plain language documents on the website. He has begun working on converting council materials. Staff will replace and further update as materials become available.

1.1.6 Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.

There were 13 LaDDC News articles that were sent this quarter sharing opportunities for stakeholder input. The news articles can be found on the [Council’s website](#).

The Council announced the beginning of [Tax Reform Special Session](#) on November 6th by sharing an [Action Alert](#) encouraging stakeholders to get involved by taking action by email or calling.

1.1.7 Provide financial support and technical assistance for the Louisiana Youth Leadership Forum.

Approx. FFY 2025 Cost: \$45,000

The LAYLF team finalized the dates and location for the 2025 class. It will be held July 10th – 13th, 2025 at the Louisiana State University at Eunice campus. Applications for delegates and staff are live and can be found at <https://www.layouthleadershipforum.org/>.

1.1.8 Provide financial support, technical assistance and collaborate with the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities to educate and train individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities on abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Approx. FFY 2025 Cost: \$50,000

The Council partnered with Team Dynamics to collaborate with OCDD and provide education and awareness around the abuse and neglect of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) to create a safer, more informed environment that prioritizes the well-being and protection of those most vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

There will be nine statewide interactive training workshops that will include information on the definitions and types of abuse/neglect, reporting mechanisms, trauma-informed

	<p>response, and strategies for self-advocacy and resilience. Once the trainings are scheduled, an LaDDC News will be sent and posted to social media with further information.</p>
<p>1.1.9 Advocate for systems change based on emergent advocacy issues including subject matters on (but not limited to) advocacy, voting, exploitation prevention, financial stability and responsibilities, and decision making.</p>	<p>Louisiana was facing a fiscal cliff next fiscal year (FY26) with an anticipated budget deficit of \$400 – \$700 million. In hopes of addressing the fiscal cliff, the legislature met in November to address tax reform. The Council announced the beginning of Tax Reform Special Session on November 6th by sharing an Action Alert encouraging stakeholders to get involved by taking action by email or calling.</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 effectiveness of its systems change activities and promote self-advocacy participation in training of other self-advocates in leadership positions. Approx. FFY 2025 Cost: \$25,000</p>	<p>People First is a statewide self-advocacy organization made up of and run by individuals with disabilities, to provide opportunities for self-advocates to speak for themselves on the issues that most impact and affect their lives.</p> <p>People First of La is planning for their People First annual meeting and conference, which will be held on Friday, March 28, 2025, in Baton Rouge. Cody Clark will be the guest speaker. Mr. Clark will do two presentations: “A Different Way of Thinking” and “Making Life Magical.” You can find more information on his website, www.codyclarkmagic.com. Additional information will be shared across the Council’s platforms once a flyer is developed and registration is live.</p> <p>People First of La. has started revamping of the People First website. The site should be up and running in January. The changes being made to this site will make the People First website more accessible and direct individuals who have disabilities to support and resources.</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>There were 4 LaDDC News articles that were sent this quarter sharing opportunities for stakeholders to participate in coalitions and advisory bodies. The news articles can be found on the Council’s website.</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>The Information and Technical Assistance Center for Councils on Developmental Disabilities (ITACC) is planning and conducting a series of trainings called "Leadership Labs" to help support Council leadership. Their first event is scheduled for November 14, 2024 and the topic was Boosting Engagement During Council Meetings. The Executive Committee will continue to be informed of these trainings and other networking and advocacy opportunities.</p>

	<p>The Executive Director along with previous Council Chair, Randall Brown, also met with senior policy advisor to Louisiana U.S. Senator Cassidy and other policy advisors who sit on the U. S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) on December 10th about the “Transformation to Competitive Integrated Employment Act” (TCIEA, S. 533 / H.R. 1263) which would phase out the payment of subminimum wages under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act.</p>
<p>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.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	
<p>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).</p>	<p>There were 2 LaDDC News articles sent this quarter sharing opportunities for stakeholders to participate in feedback sessions for the ongoing rate methodology study. These news articles can be found on the Council’s website.</p> <p>In October, the Council added protecting the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) from cuts as one of its 2025 legislative advocacy agenda items. A fact sheet was created and shared publicly. Originally, Louisiana was facing a fiscal cliff next fiscal year with an anticipated budget deficit of \$400 – \$700 million. The legislature met in November to address tax reform. Legislators voted to reduce personal and corporate income taxes, repeal some tax exemptions, and increase the state’s sales tax by .55%. It is believed these steps have addressed the fiscal cliff for this next fiscal year, but many of the actions taken will have consequences in subsequent fiscal years. The administration is also looking at government efficiencies” which will likely result in a reduced budget for LDH. Its important advocacy still occurs to ensure the legislature is aware of how important disability services are and what impacts the disability community will face should services not be protected.</p>
<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>No update this quarter.</p>
<p>2.1.3 Provide financial support for training to individuals with intellectual and developmental</p>	<p>The Council has partnered with The Arc of Louisiana to host a series of training opportunities to learn about navigating Louisiana’s complex service delivery system,</p>

<p>disabilities on how to navigate the Developmental Disability, Behavioral Health and Medicaid/Managed Care Organization Systems. Approx. FFY 2025 Cost: \$30,000</p>	<p>especially for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and behavioral health needs. Ten training opportunities will be hosted across the state (9 in-person & 1 web-based) for individuals with I/DD and their families as well as one web-based training for professionals.</p> <p>As of October 2024, one in-person training occurred with seven participants in attendance. A training in Region 7 (Northwest LA) has been scheduled for 01/29/2025. Upcoming trainings will be shared with stakeholders across all Council platforms.</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 Advocate for increased meaningful opportunities for stakeholder input; improved practices to facilitate stakeholder input and consideration of stakeholder recommendations.</p>	<p>There were 4 LaDDC News articles sent this quarter sharing opportunities for stakeholder input. These news articles can be found on the Council's website.</p>
<p>2.2.2 Collaborate with the LSU Human Development Center to bring more awareness to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). Approx. FFY 2025 Cost: \$10,000</p>	<p>The Council has collaborated with LSU Human Development Center (LSU HDC) to create and conduct an outreach campaign to increase Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder awareness and/or prevention to communities statewide.</p> <p>As of October 2024, LSU HDC has developed, created and received posters made from their collaboration with Arkansas None for Nine regarding FASD. This posters will be distributed statewide as part of the awareness campaign. They have also met with Healthy Child Manitoba Survey to discuss the survey process and have started designing an online FASD Awareness survey for Louisiana.</p>
<p>2.2.3 Collaborate with LSU Human Development Center and provide financial and technical assistance to establish, plan and implement training for professionals and families of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities on treatment of youth with FASD. Approx. FFY 2025 Cost: \$40,000</p>	<p>The Council has collaborated with LSU HDC to conduct FASD trainings for at least 100 social workers within the 9 Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) regions and at least 50 foster/ adoptive parents within the 10 Louisiana Families Helping Families regions.</p> <p>Since October 2024, LSU HDC has created materials for trainings and submitted to DCFS to create a model course for Social Work CEUs and DCFS foster parent training credit. Contractor attempted to schedule with DCFS two trainings in all regions of the state, but was informed DCFS was placing all outside trainings on hold due to some major reconstructing.</p>

	Once the training schedule has been updated, it will be shared across all Council platforms.
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)	
2.3.1 Collaborate with the Louisiana Department of Health to address accessible, educational materials on Women’s health topics.	No activity this quarter.
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.	
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.)	<p>On December 11, 2024, the Louisiana Legislative Auditor released its third audit evaluating the Louisiana Department of Education’s (LDOE) oversight of students with disabilities who receive special education services. This audit focused on seclusion, restraint, and abuse/mistreatment of students with disabilities in public schools.</p> <p>It was found that while LDOE is not required by state or federal law to monitor how school systems use seclusion and restraint, such monitoring would help ensure students with disabilities are provided with the protections specified in state law. LDOE stated that it does not have the legal authority to conduct this monitoring and would need additional resources to do so. An LaDDC News was sent about this audit.</p> <p>This audit and report will be going to Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) January 22, 2025 for their recommendation.</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.	On November 13, 2024, the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) had a meeting focused on reviewing and updating the State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) and Bulletin 1508. The SSIP, which is aimed at improving literacy outcomes for students with disabilities in grades 3-5, is being expanded to include all students with disabilities in grades K-5 across all schools. Discussions emphasized aligning the plan with new statewide literacy initiatives.

	<p>Bulletin 1508 revisions aim to improve guidelines for dyslexia and specific learning disabilities assessments, expand mental health services, and increase flexibility in qualified examiners due to the shortage of school psychologists. Next steps include gathering further input and presenting a draft proposal for final decisions, with implementation planned for the 2025-2026 cycle.</p>
<p>3.1.3 Advocate for educational systems change based on emergent education issues.</p>	<p>An LaDDC News was shared on December 17, 2024 after receiving the third Louisiana Legislative on December 11, 2024. This audit focused on seclusion, restraint, and abuse/mistreatment of students with disabilities in public schools. The audit highlighted several areas of concern on how the LDOE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • should provide more oversight and monitoring to schools and districts when it comes to seclusion and restraints • use of seclusion and restraint in the classrooms is underreported • provides consequences for school teachers and staff who mistreat students and/or improperly use seclusion and restraint • provides oversight and guidance to school districts regarding policies on the use and installation of cameras in classrooms
<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>There were 3 LaDDC News articles that were sent this quarter sharing opportunities for stakeholder input. The news articles can be found on the Council's website.</p>
<p>3.1.5 Provide financial support and technical assistance for training of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities on transitioning to adulthood to include but not limited to financial literacy, health, waivers, employment and voting. Approx. FFY 2025 Cost: \$42,000</p>	<p>The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council has partnered with Team Dynamics to offer a series of trainings on transitioning to adulthood for individuals with I/DD. An LaDDC News was sent on November 1, 2024 and November 13, 2024 with a survey to identify skills, knowledge, and resources that can best empower individuals with I/DD to navigate adult life successfully. Upcoming workshops will be developed and offered in five locations across the state. The number of responses from different areas of the state will determine which topics and locations will be selected. Final dates, topics, and locations will be shared as they are scheduled.</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>No activity this quarter.</p>