LOUISIANA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

Executive Director's Report

Plain Language Version | October 2026 Council Meeting

> **Purpose:** This version uses shorter sentences and clear talking points to make the report easier to review and present.

What Council members need to know

- **State Plan approved:** The Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities approved the 2027–2031 Five-Year State Plan and 2027 Annual Work Plan on September 30th. The new plan began October 1st.
- **December deadline:** The Council's FY26 Program Performance Report is due in December 2026.
- **Federal funding:** Current funding continues at FY26 levels through December 11th while Congress works on the FY27 budget.
- **Community supports:** LDH approved a 3 percent increase in affected service rates and raised the Direct Support Professional wage floor from $9.00 to $9.27 per hour.
- **2027 Advocacy Agenda:** LaCAN community input will help the Council select its legislative priorities.

Budget and planning

Budget reports

- The meeting packet includes the final State Fiscal Year 2026 budget report (July 2025 – June 2026) and the State Fiscal Year 2027 report showing spending through September 2026.

Annual report and state plans

- The FY26 Program Performance Report covers October 2025 through September 2026 and is due in December 2026.

Federal funding

- The President signed a Continuing Resolution on September 2nd.
- It keeps funding for Developmental Disabilities Councils and the rest of the federal government at FY26 levels through December 11th.
- Congress must act on the FY27 federal budget by that date.

Council operations

Membership

- Council members attended one-hour Lunch and Learn orientation sessions on July 9, July 16, and July 23.
- Topics included LaCAN, conflicts of interest, financial forms, Council members' questions, and parliamentary procedure.

Appointments still pending:

Type	People and agencies
New representatives	Ashley Volion — Disability Rights Louisiana Constance Alphonse — LSU Human Development Center Lauren Wells — Louisiana Department of Education Bernard Brown — Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
Reappointments	Gearry Williams — Office of Aging and Adult Services Cheri Crain — Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs Brian Bennett — Medicaid

- Mike Billings resigned effective July 31st. The Council recommended Audrey Gilliam as his replacement to help meet the federal requirement for geographic representation. Her appointment is pending.
- Pasqueal Nguyen resigned September 19th.
- Recruitment notices for current and upcoming vacancies will be shared in November 2026.

Executive Committee

- The Executive Committee met September 11 to select proposals for upcoming Council activities.
- The committee also approved the FY27 Action Plan, which began October 1, 2026.

LaCAN update

- LaCAN Leaders held community input meetings across the state in July and August.
- The Legislative Advocacy Agenda Ad Hoc Committee will meet October 15 to review the feedback and recommend priorities for the Council and LaCAN 2027 Legislative Advocacy Agenda.

Advocacy and public information

Community supports

> **Result:** LDH approved a 3 percent increase in affected home and community-based services rates and raised the Direct Support Professional wage floor from $9.00 to $9.27 per hour.

- The Legislature approved funding to increase home and community-based services rates and Direct Support Professional pay.
- At a July stakeholder summit, LDH presented options that did not include an increase in the Direct Support Professional wage floor.
- Council staff advocated for LDH to include the wage floor increase before LDH made its final decision.

Federal disability rights updates

- The Council worked with NACDD and other State DD Councils to share federal updates that may affect community living and services.
- Updates covered the U.S. Department of Justice decision to stop relying on certain Olmstead guidance and Texas v. Kennedy, a lawsuit involving Louisiana that challenged federal Section 504 community-integration rules.

Sharing information

- The Council shared information through LaDDC newsletters and social media about issues important to people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Staff development

- Council staff completed State Plan Reviewer training on the federal peer review process, requirements, expectations, and review templates used for other states and territories.
- The Executive Director served as a mentor during ITACC training for new Executive Directors in July and joined a mentor check-in on September 22.
- Staff held a day-long retreat on August 28 to strengthen teamwork, review office processes, and assign responsibilities for the FY27 Action Plan.

Outreach and collaboration

State and national partners

- Staff participated in regular calls with NACDD, OIDD, and LaCAN to track federal and state policy issues, discuss services and funding, and prepare for future advocacy.
- Topics included the 2026 Legislative Session, Screening for Urgency of Need concerns, support coordination feedback, additional New Opportunities Waiver funding, home and community-based services rates, and federal community integration policy.

Childcare curriculum

- Staff met with the LSU Human Development Center and the University of Louisiana Monroe about training to help childcare providers better support children with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Staff also met with the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council to learn from its Belonging Project and gather ideas for Louisiana's potential pilot program in early childcare.

Leadership programs

- Stephanie Carmona monitored the four-day 2026 Louisiana Youth Leadership Forum at LSU Eunice.
- The forum helped youth with disabilities build leadership, self-advocacy, and independent living skills.
- Staff conducted debriefings for the Youth Leadership Forum and Partners in Policymaking with and contractors to identify improvements for future sessions.

Other partnerships and oversight

- Capital Area Autism Network: Staff discussed stakeholder meetings, a conference, statewide needs, and possible partnerships with Executive Director Drew Walker.
- Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs: Staff attended a regional meeting where local organizations shared resources and disability support efforts in Southwest Louisiana.
- Special Education Advisory Panel: Staff received updates on performance targets, district monitoring, oversight, and opportunities for public input.
- Annual Financial Report: Staff met with the Louisiana Department of Health to review the Council's FY26 Annual Financial Report.

End of report: Questions and discussion are welcome during the Council meeting.