BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN ONLINE ASSOCIATE AND BACCALAUREATE WORK GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

Elements of Birth to Kindergarten Online Degree Collaborative (5.30.14)

A work group has been created by the Louisiana Board of Regents and Louisiana Department of Education to provide input into the development of an online degree that will be offered by multiple colleges and universities across different university systems in Louisiana. The workgroup is composed of educators from two-year colleges, universities, child care centers, state agencies, community groups, etc. The following are elements recommended by the workgroup for online associate and baccalaureate degrees for birth to kindergarten education.

Description: Online Associate of Science and Bachelor of Science degrees created for educators who want to take a series of stackable courses and degrees to prepare them to educate children from birth to kindergarten.

Names of Degrees: Associate of Science Degree: Birth to Kindergarten Associate
Bachelor of Science Degree: Birth to Kindergarten Education

Number of Credit Hours: Associate of Science Degree: 60 credit hours
Bachelor of Science Degree: 120 credit hours *(Note: All 60 credit hours for the Associate of Science degree will transfer to the Bachelor of Science degree)*

Method of Delivery: Online (*100% of delivery*) or hybrid (*51%-99% of delivery*) asynchronous or synchronous courses will be offered by *(# to be determined*) colleges and universities.

Maximum # of Students Per Course: 25

System Partners: The following university systems will be invited to be partners in the development of the online degrees: Louisiana Community and Technical College System, Louisiana State University System, and Southern University System, and University of Louisiana System

Colleges & Universities Offering the Online Degrees:
College/university #1   College/university #4
College/university #2   College/university #5
College/university #3   College/university #6

Proposed Date for Implementation: August 2015

Cost and Payment Policies: A one-time application fee will be charged when students apply for the program. The college/university will charge a graduation or diploma fee when the program is finished.

Teacher candidates will be required to pay a specific cost per credit hour that will include appropriate additional fees. The university systems will reach consensus on the cost and charge the same amount across universities and across systems.

Textbooks: Textbook costs typically run from $100 to $200 per course.

Centralized System: A centralized system will be created for teacher candidates to access and manipulate all required courses in a familiar electronic environment.

Technical Equipment Requirements: A web page will be provided for teacher candidates to determine if they have the minimum computer hardware and software required to take the online courses.

Assumptions about Technological Competence: Information will be provided on a web site that will identify the technical competence that students will be required to demonstrate to successfully participate in the online courses.

Nature of Faculty/ Student Interaction: Faculty will develop a common set of shared expectations that must be addressed within each course by faculty and teacher candidates. Faculty and teacher candidates will be required to read and agree to the expectations before delivering or taking the online courses.

Availability of Academic Support: Faculty will clearly identify the availability of academic support within each online course syllabus.

Student Access to Resources for Learning: Teacher candidates will be provided electronic access to essential resources for learning.

Admission to College/University: Students will be required to meet minimum institution requirements to be admitted to a home institution.

Entry into Teacher Preparation Program: Minimum requirements must be met for teacher candidates to be approved to enter the birth to kindergarten teacher preparation online programs at two and four year institutions.

Teacher candidates who complete an Associate of Science degree in Birth to Kindergarten Associate will be required to pass Praxis I

assessments, possess the required GPA, and meet other entry requirements to be officially admitted to the teacher preparation program.

CDA Credential: Teacher candidates who complete the first three courses for the birth to kindergarten program will possess the knowledge, skills, and artifacts to pursue a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) after completing a minimum of 480 clock hours working with young children and passing the CDA credential assessment.

If early childhood teachers already hold a CDA credential that was issued during the last three years, they may submit a portfolio to the institution that provides artifacts that demonstrate that they have addressed all CDA standards and have received positive evaluations from early childhood superiors during the last three years. Institutions will review all artifacts and will award 9 credit hours of college coursework for work-related expertise if all CDA standards have been fully addressed. These teacher candidates will be allowed to enter the birth to kindergarten program without taking the first three birth to kindergarten courses.

Process to Apply for the Online Program:

1. Select a home institution and examine the (1) admission requirements; (2) technology expectations for online courses; and (3) Birth to Kindergarten requirements to be admitted to take courses.

2. Submit an application and determine if admission requirements are met to be admitted to the home institution.

3. (If appropriate) Once admitted, submit all financial information to the home college/university

4. Pay tuition and tees to the home college/university.

5. Receive communication from the institution to be assigned a college/university advisor.

6. Apply for entry into the Birth to Kindergarten program.

7. Once admitted, examine the *Birth to Kindergarten Course Offering by College Matrix* at the following web site to determine the courses offered each semester.

8. Electronically communicate with the home college/university advisor to select courses that are within the birth to kindergarten program of study.

9. Purchase books.

10. Access courses on the first day of the semester at the appropriate web site.

Clinical Experiences: All birth to kindergarten courses will require clinical experiences (e.g., critique of videos, observations, small group teaching, whole class teaching, etc.) with young children from birth to age five. In addition, all Bachelor of Science degrees with a concentration in Birth to Kindergarten Education will require a one year residency in different licensed and non-licensed settings that educate children from birth to kindergarten (e.g., Head Start, day care, public schools, private schools, etc.). Teacher candidates who are employed full time in birth to kindergarten settings will be allowed to use their existing employment for the residency provided there are effective clinical educators available to mentor the teacher candidate during the residency.

Access to Student Services and Student Rights: The home institution will ensure that teacher candidates are provided appropriate auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities in an effort to ensure their full participation in all activities, programs, and services. They will ensure that all students have access to the same materials/resources/activities. If in need of special accommodations due to a disability, teacher candidates will contact the office of disability services at the home institution.

Faculty Qualifications: *(Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS) Standard 3.7.)* The institution will employ competent faculty qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, the institution will give primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The institution will also consider competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes.

Faculty Support: Adequate equipment, software, communications, and support services will be provided to faculty for interaction with students, the institution, and other faculty. Faculty will be provided professional opportunities to develop new knowledge and skills to deliver online courses and will be provided professional support to enhance existing knowledge for delivery of online courses.

SACS Minimum Course Requirements For Collaborative Degrees: To receive an undergraduate academic award, students must earn 25 percent or more of the credits required for the award through the SACSCOC member institution's own direct instruction.

Cross Enrollment if Admitted to Regular Degree:	If a home institution doesn't offer a course that a student intends to take, he/she may apply and register with another institution that does offer the course. The Birth to Kindergarten Collaborative will develop a system that will prevent teacher candidates from experiencing financial aid implications associated with their financial aid packages.
Common Standards for Online Courses:	Common standards based on the SREB Principles of Good Practice and QualityMatters Rubric (to be released August 1, 2014) will be used to develop and evaluate the program and courses.
Evaluation & Assessment:	The consortium will evaluate programs and course effectiveness, including assessments of student learning outcomes, student retention, and student and faculty satisfaction.

Student Evaluation

Teacher candidates will be required to demonstrate specific competencies at various decision points as they progress through the associate and baccalaureate degrees. Decision points include the following:

Decision Point 1:	**Admission to Institution and Degree Pathway** (e.g., High school diploma; high school GPA; ACT/SAT, etc.)
Decision Point 2:	**Entry into Birth to Kindergarten Methods courses** (e.g., Grade of C or better in first five required Birth to Kindergarten courses; Birth to Kindergarten Portfolio – Phase 1; background check; etc.)
Decision Point 3:	**Awarding of Associate Degree** (e.g., Grade of C or better in all ten Birth to Kindergarten courses; Birth to Kindergarten Portfolio – Phase 2, etc.)
Decision Point 4:	**Official Entry into Birth to Kindergarten Teacher Preparation Program**. (e.g., GPA; passage on Praxis I assessments; Birth to Kindergarten Portfolio – Phase 2; background check; etc.)
Decision Point 5:	**Entrance into Birth to Kindergarten Residency** (e.g., Grade of C or better in all education courses; GPA; Birth to Kindergarten Portfolio – Phase 3; background check; etc.)

Decision Point 6: **Awarding of Baccalaureate Degree** (e.g., Grades of B or better in Residency; GPA; passage of Praxis Professional Knowledge assessment; Birth to Kindergarten Portfolio – Phase 4; etc.)

Program Evaluation

An evaluation system will be used to evaluate the consortium's program, including assessment of student learning, student retention, and student and faculty satisfactory.

Birth to Kindergarten Online Associate and Baccalaureate Degrees – Initial First Steps

		Tasks	Persons Responsible	Timelines
1.		Communication		
	1.1	Disseminate the revised online overview to team members.	BoR	5/30/14
	1.2	Have team member review the document and provide feedback.	Work Group Members	5/30/14 – 6/11/14
	1.3	Make final changes to online overview.	BoR & LDOE	6/12/14 – 6/17/14
	1.4	Disseminate the online overview to Board of Regents staff, LDOE staff, and university system chief academic officers and request input.	BoR	6/17/18
	1.5	Have BoR staff, LDOE staff, and university system chief academic officers provide input.	BoR, LDOE, University System Staff	6/19/14 – 6/27/14
	1.6	Form a team of state and system staff to have deeper discussions about specific elements within the program.	BoR & LDOE	6/19/14 – 6/27/14
	1.7	Revise the online overview based upon input.	BoR & LDOE	6/30/14 – 7/3/14
	1.8	Disseminate the revised online overview to institutions.	BoR	7/7/14
	1.9	Identify campuses that want to pilot the first three courses.	BoR	7/7/14 – 7/11/14
	1.10	Identify campuses that are interested in delivering the online courses and degrees	BoR	7/7/14 – 7/11/14
2.		Administration of the Online Degrees		
	2.1	Identify/create centralized system to access and manipulate required courses.	State & System Staff	7/7/14 – 7/31/14
	2.2	Determine the costs for the online birth to kindergarten courses.	State & System Staff	7/7/14 – 7/25/14
	2.3	Identify the process for credit hour fees to be transferred across institutions	State & System Staff	7/7/14 – 7/25/14
3.		Create syllabi for Birth to Kindergarten online courses.		
	3.1	Develop syllabi for first 3 birth to kindergarten courses for associate and baccalaureate online degrees.	B2K Syllabus Workgroup – First 3 B2K Courses	5/1/14 - 6/30/14
	3.2	Develop syllabi for next 7 birth to kindergarten courses for associate and baccalaureate online degrees.	B2K Syllabus Workgroup – Next 7 B2K Courses	7/1/14 – 8/31/14

		Tasks	Persons Responsible	Timelines
3.		Create syllabi for Birth to Kindergarten online courses. (Cont'd.)		
	3.3	Identify online General Education courses for the associate and baccalaureate online degrees.	B2K General Education Workgroup	7/1/14 – 8/31/14
	3.4	Develop syllabi for junior and senior level birth to kindergarten courses for baccalaureate degree.	B2K Syllabus Workgroup – B2K Jr. & Sr. Courses	9/1/14 – 10/30/14
4.		Develop elements of program.		
	4.2	Create web page for students to use to determine if they have minimum hardware and software to participate in the program.	Partner Institutions	8/1/14 – 9/30/14
	4.3	Identify assumptions about technological competence and nature of faculty/student interaction	Partner Institutions	8/1/14 – 9/30/14
	4.4	Identify the nature of faculty/student interaction.	Partner Institutions	8/1/14 – 9/30/14
	4.5	Identify process to verify authenticity of students taking the courses.	Partner Institutions	8/1/14 – 9/30/14
	4.5	Identify program evaluation system.	Partner Institutions	8/1/14 – 9/30/14