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Louisiana Making Progress

LOUISIANA BELIEVES: Louisiana's Technology Footprint



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 **DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION**
Louisiana Believes



Technology has changed the way educators teach, how students learn, and the way teachers and students communicate.



Making the Commitment

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is committed to support its schools in their efforts to ensure technology is available for preparing students to be college and career ready, supporting accountability and more rigorous standards, supporting teaching effectiveness, and ensuring school improvement.

As a result of this commitment, LDOE has created the *Louisiana Believes: Louisiana's Technology Footprint* to serve as a tool for LEAs and schools to analyze their current technology readiness status and to create, implement and evaluate their strategic efforts related to technology devices, infrastructure, bandwidth and support.

This document is a living document that will continue to be updated and enhanced biannually as the state, districts and schools work toward achieving their educational and assessment technology goals.

Seventy-seven (77) public school systems completed the fall 2012 submission of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) Technology Readiness Tool (TRT) survey. The fall data collection,

expanded upon previous submissions by collecting additional data on testing environments, connectivity options, device specifications, and testing parameters. Based on this new information, many schools' readiness statuses have changed. In addition to collecting more information, PARCC released new minimum device specifications in an effort to assist districts who are struggling to meet the recommended standards. Districts should not take this release as a notification that they can relax and not continue to strive toward ensuring all devices meet the recommended specifications. Instead districts and schools should consider these devices as a back-up plan that is hopefully not needed.

PARCC also released new guidance relative to Internet access and

network utilization for the testing window. The calculations provided do not take into account robust enhanced items; however LDOE has attempted to provide estimated usage for districts to use in their planning. As better guidance is developed, LDOE will include that information within its footprint documentation

Future footprints will also provide districts with clear guidance relative to testing times and test scheduling. Each state is required to determine a subset of testing guidance for their schools and districts which fall within the larger broader windows that PARCC must provide to its 28 state consortium. Until this guidance is released, the state has provided estimated calculations for the LEAs to use for planning purposes.

Statewide Improvement

Overall initial baseline data provided via the PARCC Technology Readiness Tool suggests that the state has over 232,692 computer devices with only 82,754 of these devices meeting recommended device readiness specifications as well as testing environment specifications. There are an additional 92,287 computers which meet PARCC minimum hardware specifications for testing in 2014-15. Of the 232,692, there are an additional 5,080 devices that met recommended hardware specifications but their availability for testing was unknown. These devices will be assessed in future footprint reports as more data is collected. Districts also have over 37,000 devices that could potentially be upgraded to meet testing specifications. If none of these devices can be upgraded, LEAs across the state would need to purchase a minimum of 14,913 devices to meet PARCC minimum standards and 46,413 devices to meet recommended standards.

We should note, the PARCC minimum specifications will only be valid for 2014-15 testing. Future testing administrations will require all devices meet the recommended device

specification. In addition, once all of the parameters for administering the PARCC online tests are known, minimum device specifications could change. The state and its districts will continue to monitor and analyze device technology readiness to ensure all schools are prepared for testing.

Survey results also showed that 100% of participating schools have Internet access, however 90% of these schools also reported Internet or network congestion, school-level network hardware that limits connectivity, nonexistent or limited wireless access within school sites and dwindling IT staff to support technology expansions.

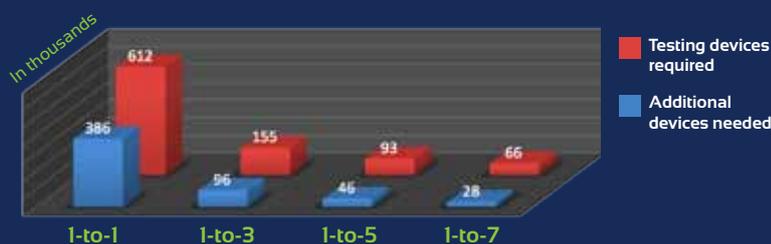
The surveys also sought to identify the levels of concern related to the staffing and training of personnel required for administering statewide online assessments. Although schools indicated various levels of concern in the four areas of questioning, 98% of districts had schools that indicated a need for additional information technology and/or testing administration staff as well as training for testing administration and support personnel.

District and school concern levels varied on the need for training of test coordinators and IT staff. Additional information on both training and staffing needs will need to be collected in future technology readiness surveys in order for LDOE and districts to determine if their current capacity is adequate for testing.

Districts and schools strongly reiterated throughout their surveys the concerns and challenges relative to the increased technology burden, insufficient numbers of computers, and lack of dedicated funding to support the expansion of online assessments.

Statewide Testing Device Needs

Across the state, 22 districts have enough devices to test in 2014-15 based on PARCC minimum standards and 10 districts have enough devices to test based on recommended standards. The chart below demonstrates the number of devices which districts will either need to purchase or upgrade to meet current recommended standards.



Key points

In preparing and planning for online testing, districts and schools should set milestone targets in the 3 key areas of readiness: device readiness, network readiness and staff readiness.



Device Readiness

Schools and districts should plan and implement efforts to upgrade and procure an adequate number of devices to meet, at a minimum, testing needs. All devices should meet the LDOE recommended device specifications. Devices which only meet PARCC minimum specifications will not meet minimum testing specifications starting in 2015.



Network Readiness

Schools and districts should strategically plan any necessary network and Internet upgrades. As a cost saving option, districts can phase in new wireless infrastructures for testing by first creating a wireless network for their testing labs and then expanding that wireless network for classroom learning.



Staff Readiness

Schools and districts need to assess their ability to manage and monitor testing as well as to provide technology support during each testing window. Districts may want to consider short-term staff augmentation to assist in these areas. Districts should also assess if any of their full-time staff needs professional development or further training.



PARCC Minimum Device Specifications

DESKTOP, LAPTOP, NETBOOK, & THIN CLIENT/VDI

Operating Systems:

- Windows XP – Service Pack 3 or newer
- Mac OS Mac OS 10.5 or newer
- Linux (Ubuntu 9-10, Fedora 6)
- Chrome OS 19

Memory: 512 MB of RAM

TABLETS

Operating Systems:

- Android 4.0, Apple iPad 2 running iOS6, Windows 8 Pro

Memory: 1 GB of RAM or greater

ALL DEVICES

Connectivity: Wired or wireless access to the Internet

Screen Size: 9.5 inch screen size or larger

Screen Resolution: 1024 x 768 resolution or better

Input Device Requirements*: Keyboard & Mouse/Touchpad

Headphone/Earphone and Microphone Requirements:

- Headphones/earphones and microphones are required for all students taking the English Language Arts/Literacy Speaking and Listening Assessment.
- Headphones/earphones are required for students using text to speech or other auditory accommodations.
- Microphones are required for students using speech to text accommodations.

LDOE Recommended Device Specifications

DESKTOP, LAPTOP, NETBOOK, & THIN CLIENT/VDI

Operating Systems:

- Windows 7 or newer
- Mac OS 10.7 or newer
- Linux (Ubuntu 11:10, Fedora 16 or newer)
- Chrome OS 19 or newer

Memory: 1 GB of RAM (preferably 2 GB of RAM)

TABLETS

Operating Systems:

- Android 4.0, Apple iPad 2 running iOS6, Windows 8 Pro or newer

Memory: 1 GB of RAM or greater

ALL DEVICES

Connectivity: Wired or wireless access to the Internet

Screen Size: 9.5 inch screen size or larger

Screen Resolution: 1024 x 768 resolution or better

Input Device Requirements*: Keyboard & Mouse/Touchpad

Headphone/Earphone and Microphone Requirements:

- Headphones/earphones and microphones are required for all students taking the English Language Arts/Literacy Speaking and Listening Assessment.
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- Microphones are required for students using speech to text accommodations.

* The input device must allow students to control an on-screen cursor to point, click, drag, and select an area. The input device must allow students to enter letters, numbers, and symbols and shift, tab, return, and backspace. Other assistive technologies may be needed for students requiring accommodations. PARCC and LDOE will release Accessibility and Accommodations Guidelines in June 2013.



LDOE Support Options

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is committed to supporting districts in achieving all of the technology readiness goals in all schools across the state. LDOE will continue to provide new and expanded technology support and services based on district needs and requests.

Below is a list of the initial services and supports that the state would like to implement.

TECHNOLOGY ASSISTANCE TEAMS (TAT)

Technology Assistance Teams will be comprised of LEA staff members who are willing to serve in both an advisory and support capacity for developing and implementing technology policies and plans in both their district and across the state. This team will meet at a regular intervals to assist the state in determining its needs, direction and solutions for meeting technology procurement, training, planning and funding requirements in the classroom.

Technology Planning

LDOE will be working with LEAs to develop technology plans for meeting both the technology readiness goals and their district's educational goals. Through this process, LEAs will be able to properly budget and plan for new acquisitions, training, support, infrastructure, educational resources and platforms, distance learning networks, and other technology initiatives. In addition, to local LEA planning, the state will be working with LEAs to create, design and fund statewide technology initiatives in support of educational goals.

State Contracts

With information and guidance from TAT groups, the state will work to create statewide technology contracts and private partnerships which provide significant discounts and expanded services for LEAs and schools. The first contracts to be created have been laptop, desktop and tablet computers. As new products

or services (e.g. computer software; computer peripherals, devices and support; network hardware and support; technology services; and telecommunication products and services) are created, LDOE will publish purchasing information and costs in the *Connections Catalog*.

Infrastructure Design & Guidance

Through LDOE's newly created TAT groups, the state will work to assist LEAs with additional resources for designing new or upgraded infrastructure designs to support technology goals. This will include, but is not limited to, bringing in private partners and other agencies to work collaboratively on creating the best design to meet the specific needs of a school and/or district based on its particular educational direction and services. This team will also provide training and support options that are tailored to the district needs.



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