

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



August 2, 2016

Superintendent's Message

Dear Colleagues,

This Thursday, the Department will release to the public and news media results from the 2016 LEAP assessments. As you likely can tell from results in your own school or parish, the scores show students and educators have made adjustments and are showing improvement as the state transitions to more challenging standards. I hope you will be able to join me for a presentation to [discuss the results Thursday morning](#).

The results provide, first and foremost, a snapshot as to individual students' strengths and weaknesses. As students and families head back to school, teachers can use these results as a basis for conversations with parents in upcoming back-to-school nights, to discuss their children's academic progress and areas for growth. You can find several resources to assist principals and teachers with these conversations in the [Back-to-School Guide](#).

Similarly, these results allow educators to consider their role in student achievement through goal-setting and daily instructional planning. To support educators in this process, this fall the Department will release several tools and will provide training on the tools at the September collaborations.

At the state level, BESE and the Department will use the results as part of a four-year "baseline" evaluation of student skills in Louisiana. Having established [Louisiana standards](#) and a baseline assessment of student performance against those standards, BESE will gradually raise expectations in the accountability system. By 2025, schools rated 'A' in the accountability system's assessment index will average 'Mastery' performance, indicating full readiness for the next level of education.

Finally, this year's assessments mark an important transition not just in standards and accountability, but also in how educators use assessments in the first place. In 2017, in order to strengthen student learning in the classroom, the Department will begin to provide optional formative assessments to schools and school systems in addition to the end-of-year assessment. These formative assessments will not only support high-quality teaching, but also provide an opportunity for districts to end the misaligned interim tests long used in classrooms. Districts are also increasing digital literacy in schools by gradually transitioning to online modes of teaching and learning; while schools have used online tests for years in high school, in 2017 all schools will use online assessments for grades 5-8. As part of this transition, the state has also committed to reduced, streamlined assessments, with this past year's tests being reduced in length from two weeks to less than one week, and by 38 percent overall.

The 2016 LEAP results indicate a lesson we learn time and time again: when we challenge students and teachers to improve, they do it. But the tests themselves comprise a transition to a new way of doing our work. Assessment in Louisiana should be concise, informative, and state-of-the-art. It should be useful to parents and teachers alike. It should make us better educators. This year marks an important step in that critical transition too.

As always, thank you for all you do for our children,

John

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Louisiana Department of Education
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District Support

Superintendents' Conference Call

You are invited to participate in the Superintendents' Conference Call hosted by State Superintendent John White on Wednesday, August 17, at 10:30 a.m. CST. You may begin dialing into the call 15 minutes in advance. Please follow the instructions below:

To join the Superintendents' Wednesday, August 17, 2016 Meeting:

1. Go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/suptscall/>
2. Dial into the Phone Bridge: (866) 793-1343
3. When prompted, please give the Meeting ID # 1675111
4. You will need to identify yourself in order to be placed into the meeting.

Monthly District Planning Call

This August district planning call is scheduled for **Wednesday, August 3, from 1 p.m. - 2 p.m.** Please refer to the District Planning Call [presentation](#) to follow along.

The following district supervisors should attend:

- Curriculum and Instruction
- Assessment and Accountability
- Data
- Early Childhood
- High School
- Career and Technical Education
- Principal and Teacher Leader

Webinar Login Information: (**No pre-registration required*)

- Meeting Name: **August District Planning Call**
- Webinar Link: <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/dpc/>
- Enter the meeting room as a guest and provide your name.
- Call-In Information: (800) 832-0736; meeting room #3423625

Email districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

Updated 2016-2017 District Support Calendar

The Department has released an updated [2016-2017 District Support Calendar](#). All new additions or revisions are highlighted in yellow so districts can easily identify these changes:

- Updated location for the September 14 Teacher Leader and Supervisor Collaboration (Ruston, LA)
- Added monthly special education leader calls

Please email districtsupport@la.gov with questions related to this calendar.

Translated Parent Guides

Please share these resources with principals, teachers, and parents.

The Department translated the [Parent Guide to the LEAP Student Reports](#) and the [Parent Guide to the Louisiana Student Standards](#) in the following languages. All guides are located in the [Family Support Toolbox Library](#).

- French
- Spanish
- Vietnamese
- Simplified and Traditional Chinese

Email districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

District Test Coordinator Reminders

This entry provides DTCs with reminders and updates related to testing

ACT

- **2015-2016 ACT Results:** The Department released district- and school-level ACT results to districts via the FTP. These files will be available on the FTP from July 22, 2016, to August 22, 2016, with the filename LEACode_LEAName_2016_ACT 12 Grade Best Score Results.

Developing Skills Checklist (DSC):

- District test coordinators should review and update DSC user workbooks using instructions found in the [DSC Manager Users Guide by August 31, 2016](#). These Excel workbooks are used to create and update [DSC web application](#) user accounts for DSC kindergarten screening.
- Red-e-Set Grow will email user workbooks to district test coordinators **on Wednesday, July 27, 2016**. DTCs should update district account contact information by visiting k.onlinedsc.net.
- Contact Red-e-Set Grow at 888-386-3822 with questions about LEA workbooks and user accounts.

DTC Contact Information

- District test coordinators and accountability contacts should use the DTC and Accountability Contact Update form to submit any new or updated contact information to assessment@la.gov. The form is available on the [Accountability page](#) and in the [Assessment Library](#).

Contact assessment@la.gov with any questions.

Assessment & Accountability

Release of 2016 LEAP Results

Please share with principals and teachers.

The Department released Spring 2016 LEAP ELA and math assessment results in [eDirect](#) on Friday, July 29. Located within eDirect are student reports, school rosters, and CSV files. The Department will release state, district and school-level summary reports in eDirect on August 3, and publicly on August 4.

The Department has also released the following resources to support teachers' and parents' understanding of these results.

- [Parent Guide to the LEAP Student Reports](#): helps parents read and interpret the LEAP student reports, with

accompanying online resources.

- [Parent Conversation Guide for Teachers](#): guiding questions for teachers to prepare for parent conferences regarding LEAP results.
- [Back-to-School Night Presentation](#): customizable presentation that schools can use to provide parents with information on 2016-2017 academic goals, standards and instruction, and understanding student LEAP results.

Please contact assessment@la.gov with any questions.

New Assessment Guides Released

The 2016-2017 Social Studies Assessment Guides for grades 3 through 8 are now available on the [Assessment Guidance](#) page. These guides provide teachers detailed information about the design of the test, the standards assessed, and include links to resources that will help prepare students for the spring 2017 social studies statewide assessments. Timing information and a complete administration schedule will be provided in a September update to the guides.

Also available are the 2016-2017 End-of Course Assessment Guides for Biology and US History. The EOC Biology and US History guides now contain information about the change in EOC testing platform and will be updated with links to the Online Tools Training (OTT) later this month.

2016-2017 Spring ELA and math assessment guides will be released in mid-October.

Please contact assessment@la.gov with any questions.

District Test Coordinator Reminders

This entry provides DTCs with reminders and updates related to testing.

- **2016-2017 Month-by-Month Checklist**: The [2016-2017 Month-by-Month Checklist](#) is available in the [Assessment Library](#). The checklist includes key activities and dates related to testing throughout the school year. Please review and share this document with district staff.
- **LEAP Online Tools Trainings (OTT)**: LEAP OTTs are available in INSIGHT and [here](#) using the Chrome browser. DTCs should share the resource with schools. Students and teachers should utilize the OTTs prior to engaging in online tests to become familiar with online testing tools.
- **August 9 and 24**: DTCs should attend a [WorkKeys Test Groups and Batch Loading Training](#) presented by ACT[®]. This training is designed for staff who use or are interested in using "Groups" and/or "Batch Loading" as part of their ACT WorkKeys[®] online test administration process. Participants should [register](#) here.

Please contact assessment@la.gov with any questions.

Assessment Data Certification

Annually, school systems have the opportunity to certify and make changes to assessment data to ensure its accuracy prior to the calculation of school performance scores (SPS). To facilitate this process, LA Data Review opened on August 1 for accountability contacts to review and request changes to student scores in the system, prior to SPS scores being released. Accountability contacts received an email with user ID/password information and user guides.

- **ACT, DCAI, and high school progress points**: LA Data Review opened **August 1** for accountability contacts to review of ACT[®] scores, DCAI points, and high school progress points. Requests for change should be submitted no later than August 12.
- **Assessment rosters**: Assessment rosters will be available for accountability contacts to review in LA Data Review the **week of August 16**.

Please contact assessment@la.gov with any questions.

Audit Assurances FY2015-2016

The Audit Assurances packet is now available on the [INSIGHT Portal](#) under Announcements. This packet contains information used to facilitate improvement in the data collection and reporting procedures during LEAs annual financial audit. LEAs should download the packet and provide to the appropriate audit staff.

In order to better assist LEAs in this process, the Department has added documentation/reports for various audit assurance schedules which will be available on the data management FTP site beginning August 2, 2016, through December 2, 2016. The filename is "LEACode_LEAName_2015_Assurance Schedules.zip." Contact information for each schedule is included in the packet.

Course Choice 2016-2017 Registration Webinar

Course Choice provides students and schools with access to a broad variety of course offerings from online, face-to-face, industry training, and dual enrollment course providers. These course offerings will enable schools to provide courses not currently available to their students, including:

- Career and technical preparation, supporting the Jump Start program;
- Academic work required to achieve TOPS;
- Advanced course work not available at the school due to limited resources;
- Dual Enrollment; and
- Intensive remediation for students struggling to stay on pace for graduation.

New for 2016-2017, schools will register students directly with the Course Provider. Please refer to the [Course Choice Registration Instructions](#) for details on this process. Once students are registered with the Course Providers, schools should document enrollments in the [Course Choice Registration system](#).

Informational webinars on usage of the new Course Choice Registration System will be held. School administrators, professional school counselors, and district staff are encouraged to participate in one of the three scheduled dates.

- **Wednesday, August 3: 3 p.m. - 4 p.m.**
- **Wednesday, August 10: 3 p.m. - 4 p.m.**

Webinar Login Information: (*No pre-registration required)

- Meeting Name: Course Choice Registration System
- To join the meeting go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/ccr1/>
- Enter meeting room as a **guest** and provide your **name**
- Audio access: 1-800-832-0736; room number: 1053465

2016-2017 Pupil Progression Plan Webinar

The **Pupil Progression Plan (PPP)** is a comprehensive plan developed and adopted by each LEA establishing policies and guidelines local school systems use to determine whether students will be promoted to the next grade, retained in the current grade, or advanced (or skipped) to higher grades. Pupil Progression Plans also outline the criteria for high school graduation.

The updated [2016-2017 Pupil Progression Plan Template](#) is now available. Each LEA should submit a plan in PDF format to PPP@la.gov by October 14, 2016.

For additional information, please email PPP@la.gov.

Data

Monthly Data Coordinator Webinar

The Department will hold its monthly webinar for LEA managers of SPS, SPC, CUR, SIS, PEP, STS, SER, and AFR on **Thursday, August 4, at 1:00 p.m.** (Please note the **new time**.)

Topics will include upcoming deadlines, updates, enhancements, and best practices.

Webinar Login Information: (*No pre-registration required)

- Meeting Name: **System Data Coordinator Webinar**
- Webinar Link: <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/dcw/>
- Enter the meeting room as a guest and provide your name.
- Select the "listen only mode."

The presentation will be posted on the INSIGHT Coordinator's Portal under [Monthly DC Webinars](#) by Wednesday, August 3.

Please email systemsupport@la.gov with questions.

Data Sharing Agreements and Addenda Updates

Pursuant to R.S. 17:3914, LEAs and charters must have a contract or data sharing agreement in place with private vendors that deliver services in order to share personally identifiable student data. Many LEAs and charters have already submitted addenda to become party to our existing data sharing agreements during the 2015-2016 school year. **In preparation for the 2016-2017 school year, the Department has prepared [guidance and next steps](#) regarding previously established MOUs and addenda.**

To verify which agreements LEAs and charters have opted into, please review the [tracking chart](#). The tracking chart is updated weekly as additional addenda are submitted to the Department.

UPDATE: The contract with Pacific Metrics for the purpose of providing services related to the online formative assessment system, EAGLE, has ended; therefore, the Department **has terminated** the corresponding data-sharing agreement with Pacific Metrics. This announcement is notification to LEAs who opted into the agreement of this termination.

Please email ldedata@la.gov with questions.

Finance

\$20 Million to MFP Appropriation in Second Extraordinary Legislative Session

Please forward to business managers and financial officials.

The Legislature, through Act 14 of 2016, provided \$20 million to local public school districts and schools outside of the MFP appropriation. The law states:

"Payable out of the state general funds to the Minimum Foundation Program to increase funding for city, parish, special schools, lab schools, and charter schools, and the Recovery School District, which shall be allocated in the same manner as provided in Fiscal year 2014-15 MFP formula in order to fund expenses related to high cost special needs students, costs related to Supplemental Course Allocation, to sustain the certificated classroom teacher pay raise provided for by appropriation in Fiscal years 2013-14, or other operational or educational expenses related to the education of children."

The methodology for allocating these funds refers back to the total MFP funds allocated in 2014-2015 to school districts and schools including Level 1, 2, and 3 amounts plus Level 4 Supplementary Allocations based on program participation. The proportion of the total 2014-2015 allocation for each entity is calculated and that same proportion is applied to the \$20 million provided in 2016-2017.

There is no one specific required use of this allocation, but instead, school districts and schools have flexibility to dedicate these funds among the four purposes noted in the law. But as you recall, specific dedications were provided in the past for High Cost Services, Supplemental Course Allocation, and pay supplements from funds appropriated outside the formula. Districts and schools are encouraged but not required to continue to budget for similar program related expenses in the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Also, districts and schools should verify any program requirements, regulations, or statutes related to any of these three areas to ensure required activities are funded even if funding is not provided via this appropriation. Each [LEA's allocation](#) is provided on the Department's website.

Contact [Melanie Ruiz](#) if you have any questions or need additional information.

Accountability for Weighted Student Funds in the MFP

Please forward to business managers.

R.S. 17:7(2)(f)(i) provides for the accountability for weighted student funds included in the MFP. Per R.S.17:7(2)(f)(i), city, parish and other local public school districts, RSD schools, LSU and Southern Lab schools, LSMSA, NOCCA and Type 2 and Type 3B charter schools are required to expend funds generated by applying the weighted factors contained in the formula for low income students, career and technical education course units, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students on items that serve the unique needs of students who generate such funds. Funds must be expended on the following items:

- Personnel
- Professional Services
- Instructional Materials
- Equipment
- Supplies

The following items are attached for your reference:

- [FY2016-2017 Weighted Calculations - City-Parish LEAs](#)
- [FY2016-2017 Weighted Calculations - Charters and Other Public Schools](#)
- [AFR Reporting Details](#) (Contains clarification on reporting specifics for each weight as it pertains to the AFR.)

If you have any questions or need further information, please email [Kristen Smith](#).

USDA Required School Lunch Match

Please forward to business managers.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires that districts and schools participating in the School Lunch Program contribute a portion of their state funds to the operation of this program. The contribution required of districts and schools must be supported by the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) allocations. This [memo](#) and [spreadsheet](#) provide details regarding each district's and school's required school lunch amount for FY2016-2017.

If you have any questions or need further information, please email [Melanie Ruiz](#).

FY2016-2017 General Fund Budget

Please forward to business managers and financial officials.

Louisiana R.S. 17:88 requires district school boards to adopt, no later than September 15, a budget of expected revenues and probable expenditures for the year and submit copies of the budget to the State Superintendent of Education for review and approval. The following items outline the General Fund Budget requirements and collection process:

- [FY2016-2017 General Fund Budget - memo](#)
- [Instructions and Signature Sheet](#)
- [FY2016-2017 General Fund Budget - Form A](#)
- [Steps for Budget Adoption](#) (Legislative Auditor document for reference)

If you have any questions or need additional information, please e-mail [Kristen Smith](#).

Policy

USDOE Releases Guidance on ADHD Students and Homeless Students related to ESSA

The U.S. Department of Education released guidance last week on two topics as they relate to ESSA: [Students with ADHD](#) and [Homeless Students](#). The Department also released a [fact sheet](#) on homeless students. Education Week has summaries of the students with [ADHD guidance](#) and of the [homeless student guidance](#).

Grants Management

2016-2017 Coordinated Monitoring Schedule for School Districts and Charter Schools

The Division of Statewide Monitoring conducts annual monitoring activities of local education agencies (LEAs) to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements. To assist our school districts and charter schools in thoughtful planning and preparation for the upcoming school year, we have provided an [annual, consolidated monitoring schedule](#) for the 2016-2017 school year. The schedule is tentative and the agency reserves the right to make adjustments as necessary.

For the 2016-2017 monitoring year, the Department has implemented a risk-based monitoring selection process which incorporates both compliance and performance risks. This approach is expected to be beneficial in identifying key areas which may be targeted for monitoring. Additionally, other programs may have been identified for monitoring support as a result of a targeted or cyclical monitoring as determined by a specific program or affiliated program grant requirement. A monitoring rubric, which is the equivalent to a monitoring report card, will be made available to every LEA. This document will provide a detailed preview of risk indicators, both compliance and performance, analyzed to determine the most appropriate monitoring experience for LEAs. Rubrics are available for download via FTP now and will remain available until September 1, 2016.

The Early Childhood annual monitoring schedule for Cecil J. Picard LA 4, Title I Pre-Kindergarten, and the Preschool Development (Expansion and Non-public) programs will be included in the Department's Early Childhood newsletter.

[Quarterly updates](#) will follow this newsletter announcement. Additionally, the assigned Statewide Monitoring Team Leader will send a more detailed monitoring notification reminder along with any necessary planning documents or instructions directly to the District Superintendent, Federal Programs Director, and/or IDEA Director of each school district or charter school appearing on the monitoring schedule.

If you have any questions about the monitoring schedule, please contact [Linda Tindall](#) for program monitoring related to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) or [Dr. Chauncey McElwee](#) for monitoring related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Questions related to Early Childhood monitoring may be directed to [Terry Simoneaux](#).

2016-2017 Grant Applications Releases

Please forward this item to federal program directors, business managers and financial officials.

The 2016-2017 applications for the following programs are released and ready for original application submission:

- Early Childhood Consolidated (LA4)
- Assistive Technology (LATI)
- Positive Behavior Support (PBIS)
- State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG)

Original applications should be submitted by **August 15, 2016**. For further information, email [Randy Littleton](#).

Special Education

July 28 Special Education Leader Collaborative Update

The Special Education Leader Collaborative on July 28 was a huge success. Thank you to all who were able to participate. The [PowerPoint presentation](#), [seclusion and restraint guidance](#), and [alternative graduation pathway guidance](#) can be found in the guidance section of the [students with disabilities library](#).

Request for Information

The Special Education Policy Office is seeking input on topics for policy to practice discussions during the Special Education Leader Collaborative events. Please complete the [survey](#) by August 17.

We are also requesting updated contact information for the Special Education Supervisor/Director, 504 Coordinator, and Early Resolution Process Representative within each LEA. Please take a few minutes to complete the [survey](#).

Lighthouse Louisiana Offering Educational Interpreter Mentoring for 2016-2017

Through a federal grant from the Department, Lighthouse Louisiana will be providing structured mentoring to develop the skills of educational interpreters working in K-12 settings in fourteen school districts across southeast Louisiana. [Applications](#) are due August 15.

For more information, please contact [Nicky Gillies](#), Director of Deaf Services.

Other

Zika Virus: Information and Resources to Guard Against Spread

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed [interim guidance](#) for kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) district and school administrators on public health actions pertaining to Zika virus infection. The CDC guidance is intended to address concerns about the risk of Zika virus infection in K-12 schools, provide school districts with information for planning school-related activities, and recommend actions that can be taken, in consultation with local public health authorities, to reduce the potential risk of Zika virus transmission on school premises or among members of the school community.

Complete information about Zika and how to prevent it is given on the CDC's [Zika virus webpage](#) and in the [Zika Communication Toolkit](#).

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