

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



August 16, 2016

Superintendent's Message

Dear Colleagues,

For as much as no one could have predicted the tragedies and the losses of the last several days, no one should be surprised at the compassion, dedication, and professionalism your teams have exhibited in this difficult time. Their willingness to jump in and do what is needed for communities and families is something that will stick with me for some time, as will be the efforts of so many volunteers who have done so much to assist their friends and neighbors across south Louisiana.

In the days and weeks to come, we will continue to share updates related to the recovery. I will start by providing some basic facts in this letter.

First, as you know, there have been thousands of families displaced across the state. Some of these families will have children of school age and will be in need of a school at which to enroll their children. Please accept all impacted students that arrive to attend your schools. The Department will work with school systems and charter schools on any operational or regulatory issues, some of which I will detail later in this letter.

The following statewide meetings or presentations have been cancelled:

- Superintendents' monthly call (originally scheduled for Wednesday, August 17)
- School Food Service Training (originally scheduled for Wednesday, August 17)
- Science Standards Review: Baton Rouge (originally scheduled for Wednesday, August 17 and Thursday, August 18)
- Compass Training: Baton Rouge (originally scheduled for Friday, August 19)
- Accountability Commission Meeting (originally scheduled for Monday, August 22)

The following data submission and grant deadlines have been extended:

- Data certification for ACT, DCAI, high school progress points: extended to **August 19**
- Teacher exit survey: extended to **August 26**
- Compass final evaluations entered into CIS: extended to **August 31**
- PEP Closure: extended to **August 31**
- School Improvement Grants: extended to **September 1** for applicants in flood impacted areas
- Early Childhood data certification: extended to **September 9**
- Data certification for assessments: extended to **September 9**

The Department will be gathering information regarding student enrollment, student mobility, financial impact, accountability impact, and instructional time. It will be some time before the full impact of the floods can be assessed - we will not know all student counts until after October 1, for example - but I have apprised BESE these concerns are likely to arise. Department staff will be closely monitoring each of these issues in impacted areas of the state and will consult with you as we consider how to address each. In those areas significantly impacted by floods, I have asked network leaders to be in close contact with superintendents so the Department can assist with enrollment, transportation, or other essential operational services.

The Department is also contacting technology and curriculum vendors so they can assist districts to replace damaged assets and to get school up and running. If there are other basic support needs with which we can assist your district, please contact your district's network team or me directly.

Finally, given the areas impacted by the floods, there are, as you can imagine, a large number of state workers who have been displaced by the storms. The same is true in school systems throughout Acadiana and the Capital region, where thousands of parents, employees, and students remain without a place of their own to call home. I ask your prayers for all members of the education community and all Louisianans in this trying time.

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

John

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