



## Office of School System Relations

# Award Initiatives Overview

The Louisiana Department of Education recognizes that educators are valued professionals and that students, educators, schools, school systems and staff are invaluable to our communities and state. With that, the Department is committed to acknowledging, honoring and spotlighting these education stakeholders for exemplifying Louisiana's education profession and for their commitment to success. Below is information regarding the various award initiatives at the Louisiana Department of Education.

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## Award Types

- Application-Based Recognition of Achievement
  - Application is required for award consideration.
- Advisory Capacity/Professional Learning
  - The selection process results in opportunities to serve on advisory committees and/or further professional development activities.
- Certification/Endorsement Recognition
  - This recognition results in a certification or endorsement for the honoree.
- Metric-Based Recognition of Achievement
  - There is a predetermined metric such as LEAP scores to identify honorees. No application is needed.
- Recognition of Achievement from an Outside Entity
  - This recognition is led by an outside organization and supported by the Department.

## Award Categories

- [Students](#)
- [Staff/Educators](#)
- [Schools and/or School System](#)

## Students

| Award Program  | Award Type  | Description  | Process Opens | Contact  |
|--|---|--|---------------|--|
| <a href="#">Community Service</a>                                | Certification/Endorsement Recognition             | School systems may award a Community Service Endorsement to students completing a minimum of 80 hours of service anytime between ninth and twelfth grade   |               |  |
| <a href="#">Jump Start Construction Connect Scholars Program</a> | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement      | The Jump Start Construction Connect Scholars Program offers up to 40 \$1000 scholarships to Jump Start TOPS Tech Career Diploma students possessing and NCCER IBC who enroll in an LCTCS or ABC postsecondary construction program.  | February      | <a href="mailto:jumpstart@la.gov">jumpstart@la.gov</a>                       |
| <a href="#">Louisiana Seal of Biliteracy</a>                     | Certification/Endorsement Recognition             | The Louisiana State Seal of Biliteracy is a diploma endorsement that aims to encourage students to study languages, certify attainment of biliteracy, provide employers with a method of identifying people with language and biliteracy skills, provide universities with a method to recognize and give academic credit to applicants seeking admission, recognize and promote world language instruction in public schools and continue Louisiana's historical tradition of bilingualism. | January       | <a href="mailto:language.acquisition@la.gov">language.acquisition@la.gov</a> |
| <a href="#">National Merit Scholar Finalists</a>                 | Recognition of Achievement from an Outside Entity | The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and college scholarships that began in 1955. United States high school students enter the National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which serves as an initial screen of over 1.5 million entrants each year, and by meeting published program entry and participation requirements.                                      | Fall          | <a href="mailto:highschoolacademics@la.gov">highschoolacademics@la.gov</a>   |

| Award Program                                      | Award Type  | Description   | Process Opens | Contact  |
|--|---|---|---------------|--|
| <a href="#">STEM Diploma Seal</a>                  | Certification/<br>Endorsement<br>Recognition            | The gold and silver STEM Diploma Endorsements recognize students who have completed one of Louisiana's eight STEM Pathways.   | February      | <a href="mailto:STEM@la.gov">STEM@la.gov</a>                               |
| <a href="#">Student of the Year</a>                | Application-Based<br>Recognition of<br>Achievement      | The Students of the Year Awards Program recognizes outstanding students who have demonstrated excellence in all of the following areas: leadership, service, citizenship, academic and/or career and technical achievement in grades 5, 8 and 12.                           | September     | <a href="mailto:marian.johnson@la.gov">marian.johnson@la.gov</a>           |
| <a href="#">United States Presidential Scholar</a> | Recognition of<br>Achievement from<br>an Outside Entity | The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established to recognize and honor some of our nation's most distinguished graduating high school students selected on the basis of outstanding scholarship.   | October       | <a href="mailto:highschoolacademics@la.gov">highschoolacademics@la.gov</a> |
| <a href="#">U. S. Senate Youth Scholarship</a>     | Application-Based<br>Recognition of<br>Achievement      | Through this program, two delegates and two alternates are annually selected to represent Louisiana at the U.S. Senate Youth Washington Week in Washington, D.C. at the beginning of March. After full attendance by the delegates, each is awarded a \$10,000 scholarship. | August        | <a href="mailto:marian.johnson@la.gov">marian.johnson@la.gov</a>           |

## Staff/Educators

| Award Program  | Award Type                                   | Description  | Process Opens | Contact  |
|--|--|--|---------------|--|
| <a href="#">Aspiring Principal Fellowship</a>                    | Advisory Capacity/ Professional Learning     | The Aspiring Principal Fellowship prepares future principals for success in their first year as a principal by providing opportunities for the fellows to explore best practices with regional experts, participate in school visits, and provide opportunities for reflection.  | February      | <a href="mailto:louisianaleaders@la.gov">louisianaleaders@la.gov</a>   |
| <a href="#">Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year</a>   | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement | The LDOE's goal is to recognize the great teachers and leaders who are critical to the success of children. This award provides an opportunity to acknowledge those educators and leaders who are achieving excellence in their profession by fostering a nurturing environment in their classroom and program, where children are learning and developing in a way that prepares them for kindergarten and beyond and where staff are supported and provided with growth opportunities. | October       | <a href="mailto:shallan.jones@la.gov">shallan.jones@la.gov</a>         |
| <a href="#">Homeless Liaison of the Year</a>                     | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement | The goal is to identify and recognize individuals who exemplify leadership and innovation in regard to the implementation and compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.  | June          | <a href="mailto:antiqua.hunter@la.gov">antiqua.hunter@la.gov</a>       |
| <a href="#">Louisiana Exemplary Educator Recognition Program</a> | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement | The Louisiana Exemplary Educator Recognition Program was created to honor and elevate exceptional early- to mid-career teachers, teacher specialists, assistant principals and principals who exemplify Louisiana's education profession.  | October       | <a href="mailto:exemplaryeducator@la.gov">exemplaryeducator@la.gov</a> |

| Award Program  | Award Type                                   | Description  | Process Opens | Contact  |
|--|--|--|---------------|--|
| <a href="#">Louisiana Public Interest Fellowship</a>                                   | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement | The Louisiana Public Interest Fellowship provides educators the opportunity to spend a school year advocating for a key education initiative of their choosing.  | August        | <a href="mailto:exemplaryeducator@la.gov">exemplaryeducator@la.gov</a>                                 |
| <a href="#">New Teacher of the Year</a>  | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement | The New Teacher of the Year program provides an opportunity to acknowledge those new teachers who are already demonstrating excellence in the classroom and their commitment to student success.   | October       | <a href="mailto:laurie.carlton@la.gov">laurie.carlton@la.gov</a>                                       |
| <a href="#">Outstanding School Support Employee Award</a>                              | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement | The Outstanding School Support Employee Awards Program provides an opportunity to honor an outstanding employee at the elementary, middle/junior high, and high school levels that supports and provides leadership in the operation of non-instructional activities within the school year. | October       | <a href="mailto:childnutritionprograms@la.gov">childnutritionprograms@la.gov</a>                       |
| <a href="#">Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching</a> | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement | This award program honors teachers of Science Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. This is the Nation's highest honor for these teachers.   | August        | <a href="mailto:info@paemst.org">info@paemst.org</a> ;<br><a href="mailto:STEM@la.gov">STEM@la.gov</a> |
| <a href="#">Recruitment and Retention Fellows</a>                                      | Advisory Capacity/ Professional Learning     | The Recruitment and Retention Fellowship gives Louisiana human resources directors the opportunity to collaborate with human capital professionals from across Louisiana and the country to learn best practices for attracting and retaining effective educators.                           | February      | <a href="mailto:louisianaleaders@a.gov">louisianaleaders@a.gov</a>                                     |
| <a href="#">School Health Service Provider of the Year</a>                             | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement | This program recognizes and celebrates some of the state's most exceptional school health service providers.   | October       | <a href="mailto:healthyschools@a.gov">healthyschools@a.gov</a>   |

| Award Program                                     | Award Type                                      | Description   | Process Opens        | Contact  |
|---|---|---|----------------------|--|
| <a href="#">SPED Fellow Academy</a>               | Advisory Capacity/<br>Professional Learning     | The SPED Fellow is a year-long, comprehensive development program that provides in-person training, coaching, and a community of practice. Fellows complete the learning cycle and complete an executive learning cycle.  | March/<br>April      | <a href="mailto:shanae.herron@la.gov">shanae.herron@la.gov</a>                     |
| <a href="#">Teacher and Principal of the Year</a> | Application Based<br>Recognition of Achievement | The Louisiana Department of Education recognizes that great teachers and school leaders are critical to student success. Annually, the Department honors some of the state's most exceptional teachers and leaders through the Teacher and Principal of the Year programs. These programs provide an opportunity to acknowledge educators who are achieving excellence and exemplify the education profession.          | October              | <a href="mailto:excellenteducators@la.gov">excellenteducators@la.gov</a>           |
| <a href="#">Teacher Leader Advisors</a>           | Advisory Capacity/<br>Professional Learning     | Teacher Leader Advisors (TLAs) are a group of exceptional educators from across Louisiana who play an influential role in raising expectations for students and supporting the success of teachers. TLAs use their robust knowledge of teaching and learning to review and create the next wave of high-quality instructional materials and training tools that will be used by thousands of teachers across the state. | January/<br>February | <a href="mailto:classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov">classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov</a> |

## Schools and/or School Systems

| Award Program                             | Award Type                              | Description  | Process Opens | Contact  |
|---|---|--|---------------|--|
| <a href="#">Blue Ribbon Schools Award</a> | Metric-Based Recognition of Achievement | Annually, the U.S. Department of Education recognizes schools across the nation in one of two categories. Schools can be nominated by having high academic performance or by reducing the achievement gaps of subgroups. Louisiana is allowed to nominate six public schools.  | December      | <a href="mailto:jennifer.baird@la.gov">jennifer.baird@la.gov</a>   |
| Charter Board Governance Program          |   | LDOE launched a Charter Board Governance Program in an effort to provide consultancy, intervention, robust professional development, and collaborative mentoring opportunities designed to support public charter school leaders and charter board member efficacy.  |               |  |
| <a href="#">Comeback Campuses</a>         | Metric-Based Recognition of Achievement | Schools demonstrating significant gains will be recognized as a “Louisiana Comeback Campus.”   |               |  |
| Distinguished Schools                     | Metric-Based Recognition of Achievement | Distinguished schools are selected by the State Education Agency and are recognized under the following categories of excellence.<br>Category 1: Exceptional student performance and academic growth, as determined by each state<br>Category 2: Closing the achievement gap between student groups, as determined by each state<br>Category 3: Excellence in serving special populations of students. | October       | <a href="mailto:edeltress.brown@la.gov">edeltress.brown@la.gov</a> |

| Award Program   | Award Type                                   | Description   | Process Opens | Contact  |
|---|--|---|---------------|--|
| Excellence In Authorizing Fellows   |  | Fellowship was developed to build the individual and collective capacities of school systems in Louisiana to authorize charter schools using best practices. In conjunction with the Louisiana Department of Education, The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) will provide fellows with resources, professional development, and collaboration opportunities targeting charter school authorizing. |               |  |
| <a href="#">Louisiana Models of Excellence</a>                                      | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement | The Louisiana Models of Excellence initiative was created in an effort to acknowledge, honor, and spotlight schools serving as exemplary models for implementing the Department’s Believe to Achieve educational priorities that leads to the advancement of student success.   | August        | <a href="mailto:modelsofexcellence@la.gov">modelsofexcellence@la.gov</a>     |
| <a href="#">Louisiana School, District and State Accountability Top Gains Award</a> | Metric-Based Recognition of Achievement      | The Top Gains Award recognizes schools and systems that earn an equivalent of an A (a progress index of 90 or greater) in the progress index that is a component of the school performance score.   | N/A           | <a href="mailto:accountability@la.gov">accountability@la.gov</a>             |
| <a href="#">Louisiana State Certified World Language Immersion Site</a>             | Certification/Endorsement Recognition        | The purpose of this program is to recognize exemplary World Languages Immersion programs across Louisiana   | September     | <a href="mailto:language.acquisition@la.gov">language.acquisition@la.gov</a> |



| Award Program   | Award Type                                   | Description  | Process Opens | Contact  |
|---|--|--|---------------|--|
| <a href="#">Opportunity Honorees</a>                              | Metric-Based Recognition of Achievement      | This award is issued at the same time that annual school performance scores are released. The award is bestowed to schools that are in the 90th or greater percentile for subgroups special education, English Learners, and economically disadvantaged and are not in any form of Urgent Intervention Required. | N/A           | <a href="mailto:accountability@la.gov">accountability@la.gov</a>                 |
| <a href="#">Purple Star School Award Program</a>                  | Certification/Endorsement Recognition        | This award recognizes schools that show a major commitment to serving students and families connected to the United States Armed Forces.   |               | <a href="mailto:highschoolacademics@la.gov">highschoolacademics@la.gov</a>       |
| <a href="#">U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools</a> | Application-Based Recognition of Achievement | The Green Ribbon School program recognizes and honors select schools in their innovative efforts to reduce environmental impact and utility costs, improve health and wellness, and ensure effective environmental and sustainability education.   | October       | <a href="mailto:Environmentaleducation@la.gov">Environmentaleducation@la.gov</a> |