

Louisiana Believes

School System Updates
March 17, 2020

To access a recording of this webinar, [click here](#).

ATTENTION

Due to the enforcement of social separation, many staff members are working remotely. As a result, many phone bridges and virtual modalities are intermittent.

If you are having trouble accessing one of the dial in numbers for the Zoom phone bridge, then please try to connect using your computer audio.

Agenda

- I. Assessment and Accountability Guidance**
- II. Special Education**
- III. Food and Nutrition Services**
- IV. Fiscal Matters**
- V. Distance Education**
- VI. Academic Resources**
- VII. Technology and E-Rate**
- VIII. Internet Access for Families and Students**
- IX. Legal and Regulatory Flexibilities**
- X. Next Steps**

Assessment and Accountability Guidance

Jessica Baghian

Spring 2020 Waivers of Policy and Law: Accountability for K-12

Accountability Release

Bulletin 111, Section 4501 and 4503 already provides for a one-year waiver of school and district performances scores and letter grades for schools closed from disaster for 18 or more consecutive days. The waiver is limited to the year in which the disaster occurred. In a [memo from the BESE president](#), additional policy requirements around instructional time and graduation credential attainment were waived.

The BESE president and chairman from House Education Committee sent a [memo](#) to the Governor reiterating this rule and further requesting that state law requiring school performance scores and letter grades be waived for one year.

The state superintendent is submitting a letter to the U.S. Department of Education asking for a waiver of compulsory testing and reporting of accountability results.

Spring 2020 Waivers of Policy and Law: Accountability for ECE

BESE waived the following early childhood policies:

- All classroom observations are suspended until schools reopen
- Observation period has been extended by two weeks
- Requirements related to shadow scoring observations are waived for this semester

Important notes:

- 18-day provision applies to ECE ratings
- Note: many centers will want their rating for the purposes of SRTC
- LDOE can calculate ratings now for 85% of sites and will focus on collecting information for remaining 15% of sites once schools and centers reopen
- If needed, the Department will work with sites to extend star ratings from previous year

Spring 2020 Waivers of Policy and Law: Assessment

The state superintendent will be submitting a request to the U.S. Department of Education asking for a waiver for required annual testing of students in grades 3 through 12, including English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

The BESE president and chairman of House Education Committee [requested a waiver](#) of state law related to required annual assessments and laws that use student assessment results, such as VAM.

The LDOE is committed to working to offer optional state assessments, as desired by schools and parents.

Spring 2020 Waivers of Policy and Law: Educator Evaluation

In line with BESE's previous actions, the Governor is expected to waive laws relative to educator evaluation for the 2019-2020 academic year. This includes laws that require effective evaluations in order to renew or advance teacher or leader credentials. In the coming weeks, the Department will provide detailed guidance on:

- How evaluations will be recorded and closed in the Compass Information System (CIS) for the 2019-2020 year
- How certification renewal and advancement requests will be handled

The Department will request additional policy waivers regarding requirements for VAM, which will not be produced this year.

Spring 2020 Waivers of Policy and Law: Graduation and Promotion

Last week, BESE waived policy related to graduation and promotion that included:

- Career Diploma IBC requirement through August 31
- Instructional minute flexibility for course credits
- Annual instructional minutes

The state superintendent will request a waiver of BESE policy that requires passing specific high school assessments in order to graduate, as well as promotion requirements for grades 4 and 8.

The BESE president and chairman of the House Education Committee requested a waiver of state law regarding compulsory attendance and assessments required for graduating seniors

2020 Request for Waivers of Louisiana State Law

BESE and the chairman of the House Education Committee have requested that the following Louisiana state laws be waived for the entirety of the 2019-2020 academic year.

RS 17.10.1	School and district accountability and the inclusion of value-added in educator evaluation
RS 17:24:2	LEAP statewide testing and pupil progression
RS 17:154.3	Minimum number of days a classroom teacher must work in a school year
RS 17:391.2, et seq.	Public school accountability and assessments
RS 17:3881, et seq.	Teacher performance evaluation, teacher credentials based up value-added data
RS 17:3901, et seq.	Teacher evaluation, 50% of evaluation based on value-added data derived from student assessments

2020 Request for Waiver of State Law, cont.

List of requested state waivers, cont.

R.S. 17:3997(D)	Charter school teacher evaluations based upon value-added data derived from student assessments
R.S. 17:4023	Required student assessments for non-public school students participating in the Louisiana Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence program
R.S. 17 221	Compulsory attendance law

2020 Request for Waiver of ESEA Law

The state superintendent will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Education asking for a waiver of the following requirements included in ESEA law:

- Administration of statewide LEAP 2025 testing in grades 3-8 and high school for English, mathematics, science and social studies.
- Reporting of accountability results for long-term goals and interim progress relative to student performance, student growth, and other academic measures used in school performance scores and subgroup performance scores.
- Publication and dissemination of annual report cards
- Identification of new schools for comprehensive support and improvement

The Department will request that assessments remain an option for schools and parents who desire them.

ACT Rescheduling and Return of Secure Materials

The national test administration scheduled for April 4 has been rescheduled for June 13. All students who were registered for April testing will receive an email in the next few days from ACT with instructions for free rescheduling to June or other future dates. This notice is posted on the ACT website as well.

The LDOE is working with ACT to identify new dates for state-administration testing windows.

Schools that selected March 17 standard time paper-based testing currently have secure materials stored in a secure location. To the extent possible, ACT is asking school system staff to meet Fed Ex on Thursday, March 19th for the regularly scheduled pickup of secure materials. If this is not possible, schools can opt to do one of the following:

- Contact ACT directly to arrange an alternative pickup date at 1.800.553.6244, ext. 2800
- Bring secure materials to a FedEx location for return to ACT

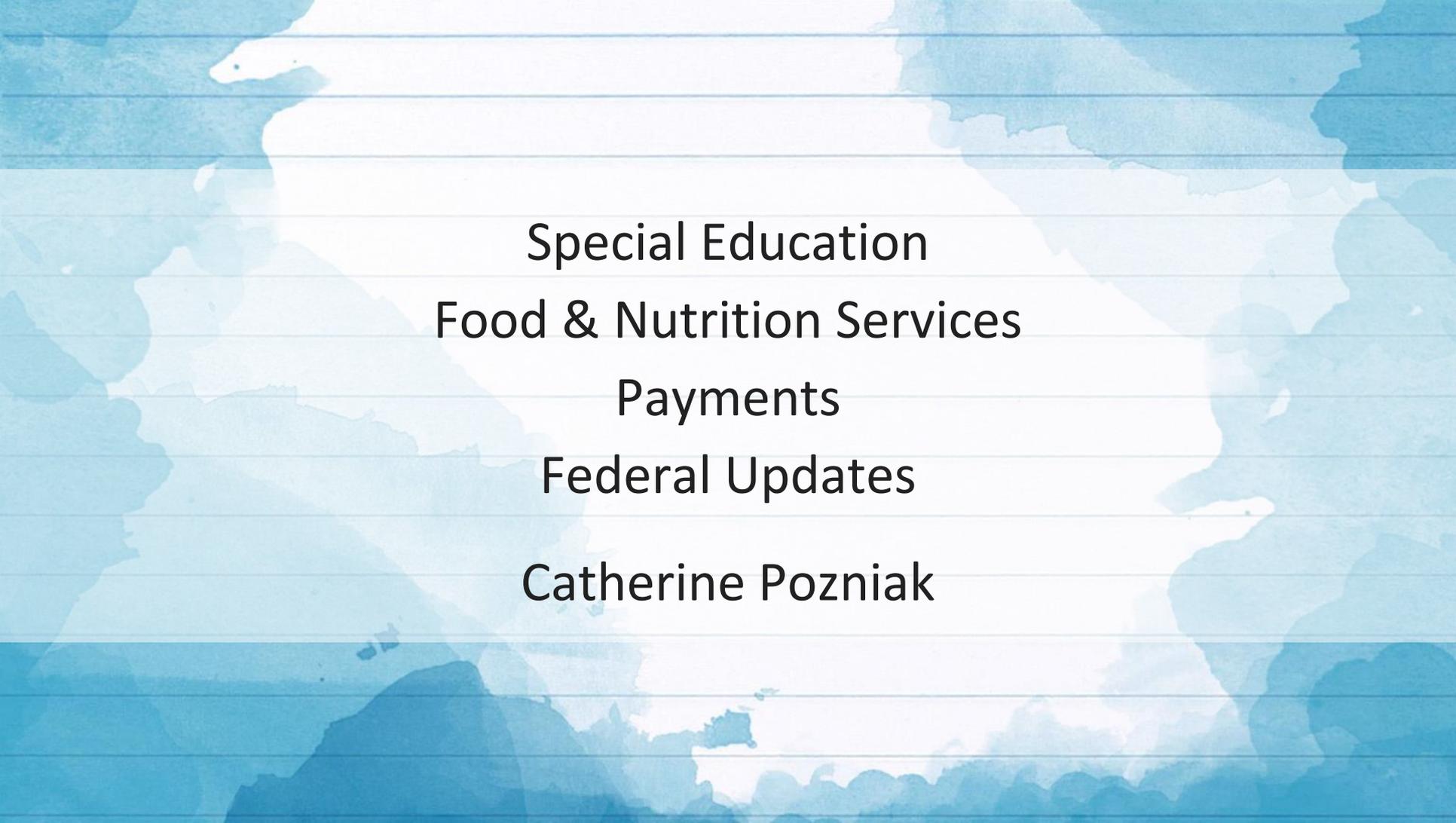
Cohort Graduation Data Certification

Cohort Graduation Data Certification has been postponed. The Department will work with school system accountability contacts to revise schedules.

Assessment and Accountability Office Hours

The Department will host Office Hours on Wednesday, March 18 at 2 p.m. Please see Zoom information below to join the meeting.

- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/202189164>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 202 189 164



Special Education
Food & Nutrition Services
Payments
Federal Updates
Catherine Pozniak

Special Education - School Closure

When the school closure causes educational services for all students to pause within a school or school system, then the school/school system is **not** required to provide services to students with disabilities during the closure.

- **Clarification:** A school closure does not constitute a change of placement. School systems do not need to follow prior notice rules or have an IEP team meeting to make a formal placement determination.
- After an extended closure, school systems are responsible for reviewing how the closure impacted the delivery of special education and related services on each student. If the student lost progress, teams will need to reassess services and determine whether the student requires compensatory education.

[Access the U.S. Department of Education's Q&A on special education.](#)

Special Education - Compliance Timelines

Federal timelines. Most special education compliance timelines are governed by federal law. Congress is considering a pause on timelines. In the meantime, school systems should conduct IEP meetings, evaluations, and reevaluations virtually or through teleconference, to the extent possible. Further:

- If an IEP meeting, evaluation, or reevaluation cannot be held, document the delay, including the reason for the delay.
- If an evaluation or reevaluation of a student with a disability requires a face-to-face assessment or observation, the evaluation would need to be delayed until school reopens.
- If an evaluation or reevaluation does not require face-to-face assessments or observations, it may take place while schools are closed, so long as a student's parent or legal guardian consents.

Special Education - Compliance Timelines

State-defined timelines. A small number of special education compliance timelines are defined by state policy. BESE approved initial waivers for these timelines:

- **Initial evaluation timelines** extended from 60 to 90 calendar days of receiving parental consent. This applies to initial evaluations due during the school closure period and initial evaluations due within 15 calendar days of school reopening.
- **Reevaluations timelines** extended for students classified with developmental delay, due by their 9th birthday, during the school closure to 30 calendar days after school reopens.

See the [BESE Emergency Waiver Memo](#) for additional information.

School Closure with Distance Education

If a school system makes distance education available for all students during a closure, it must ensure equal access, to the greatest extent possible, for students with disabilities and/or students in need of accommodations pursuant to a 504 plan (e.g. closed captioning for deaf/hard of hearing students).

- School systems must, to the greatest extent possible, ensure each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP developed under IDEA, or a plan developed under Section 504.
- A compensatory education review still applies. School systems are responsible for reviewing how this period of distance learning impacted the delivery of services for each student. If the student lost progress, teams will need to reassess services and determine whether the student requires compensatory education.

Food and Nutrition Services

There are currently 235 open feeding locations serving children in 61 of 64 parishes.

- USDA has granted flexibilities to schools to provide free meals to children age 18 and under as well as overage K-12 students, including students with disabilities through 22.
 - Louisiana has waivers for both non-congregant feeding, area-eligibility, time separation requirements, and alternate meal delivery
 - Louisiana has applied for waivers for meal pattern requirements, monitoring, and CEP reporting deadline. USDA approval is required before schools can proceed.
- Districts must update the [CNP online application](#) so that they can claim these meals for reimbursement.
- LDOE has posted [a list of school locations](#) operating feeding programs. Please provide up-to-date information on your locations and times at childnutritionprograms@la.gov

Payments

LDOE staff will continue processing payments and reimbursements as usual:

- MFP payments will be issued per the payment schedule.
- Grant reimbursement requests via eGMS will be processed within 14 days, per usual.
- CCAP payments for childcare will run on the standard weekly schedule.
- LA 4: during the closures, payments will be based on enrollment rather than attendance.
 - State-funded seats - payments for January, February, and March will be issued on Thursday, March 19
 - TANF-funded seats - February payments will be issued by the end of the month. Please submit attendance data through March 13 as soon as possible via Google attendance sheets.

Federal Funding

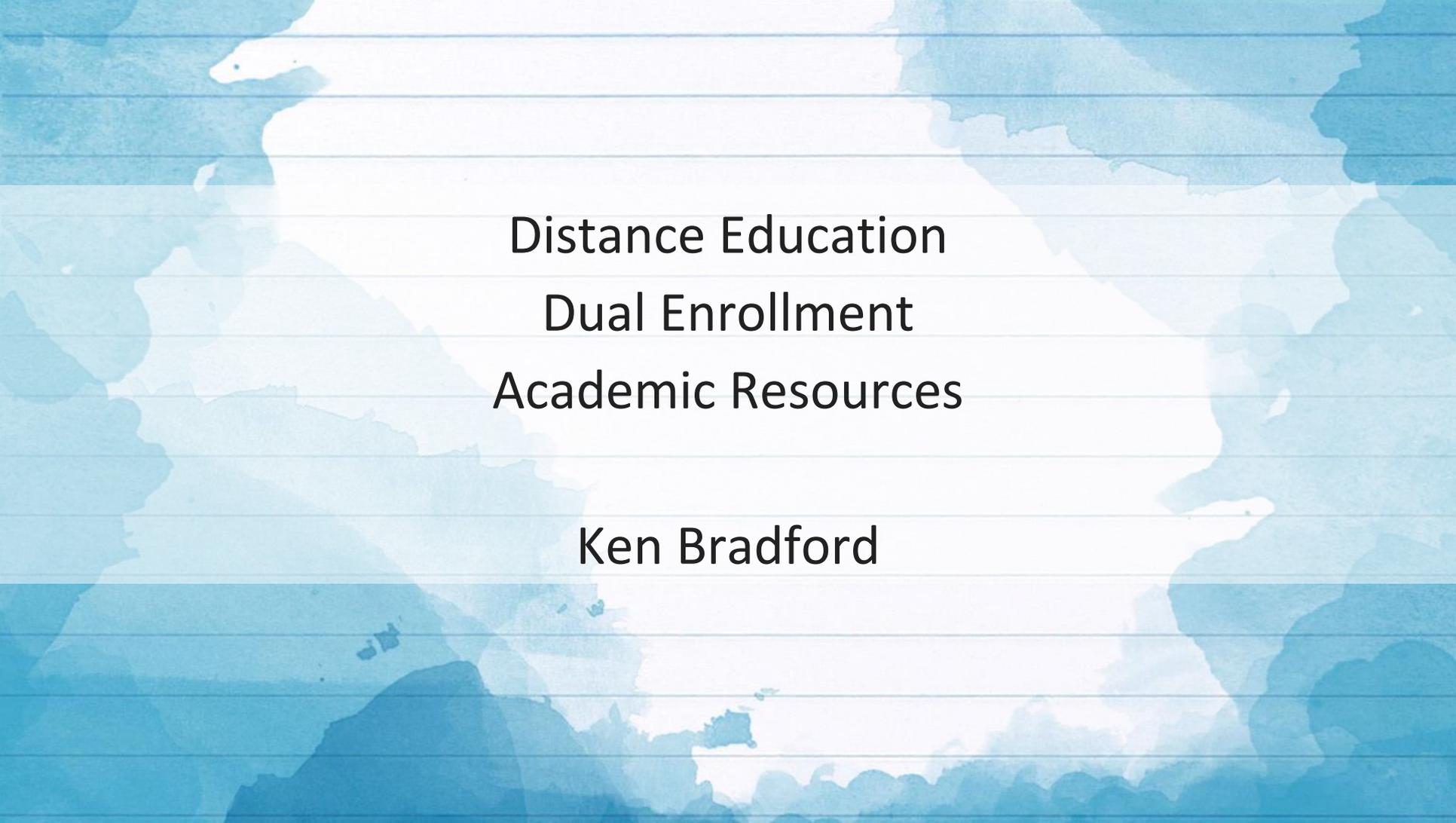
Federal regulations require that any expense charged to federal grant funds “be consistent with policies and procedures that apply uniformly to both federally-financed and other activities.” In other words, **when spending federal funds, school districts should follow the same policies and procedures they apply when spending state, local, or other non-federal funds.**

- This requirement applies to employee compensation policies and procedures. To be supported with federal funds, employee compensation must “[conform] to the established written policy of the non-Federal entity consistently applied to both Federal and non-Federal activities.
- Accordingly, ED has taken the position that if a district has a policy of paying employees during a closure, it should follow that policy for its ED-funded staff as well. In other words, the district may use ED funds to pay its ED-funded staff during a closure if it uses state or local funds to pay state- and locally-funded staff during the closure. For example, if state funds will pay state-funded staff during a closure, then Title I funds can pay Title I-funded staff, IDEA funds can pay IDEA-funded staff, etc.

Federal Updates

- Regarding federal grant expenses related to non-refundable costs (e.g. travel-related costs for cancelled conferences) - treatment should be consistent with non-federal funds.
- While not yet official, ED is considering federal grant flexibilities, including:
 - Waiving the Title I 15 percent carryover cap
 - Extending grant obligation periods
 - Removing Title IV A SSAE percentage requirements

We strongly recommend that districts track all expenses related to COVID-19.



Distance Education
Dual Enrollment
Academic Resources

Ken Bradford

Distance Education Requirements

Distance Education includes ongoing and regular **teacher-initiated interaction for the purposes of teaching, evaluating, and providing assistance** throughout the duration of the course and curriculum delivery. This may include but is not limited to synchronous or asynchronous instructive interaction, including emails, videoconferencing, satellite learning, online chats, phone calls, and feedback on homework and assessments.

Distance Education Flexibility

- Instructional minute requirements have been suspended for distance education courses and curriculum delivery
- The minimum 63,270 annual instructional time requirement has been suspended

A request has been made in the Governor's Executive Order to suspend the requirement that the school system must take student attendance when there is teacher-initiated interaction, and the teacher of record for each class must take attendance at the beginning of the learning session. If school systems offer distance education, the school system must take student attendance every school day, and the teacher of record for each class must take attendance at the beginning of each interactive learning session.

Dual Enrollment

The **Louisiana Board of Regents** will pursue the following policy recommendations for **students currently enrolled in Dual Enrollment course offerings** relative to the college credit portion of the course:

- An opportunity to complete the coursework during this academic year
- Transition the course status to “in-progress” and complete by August 31, 2020 (if “in-progress” is selected, the course will end in a final grade)
- Withdraw from the course via an “Administrative Withdrawal” (nothing posted to the official college transcript)

TOPS Scholarships

On March 16, 2020, ACT announced that it will postpone the April National Test to June. The TOPS law provides that graduating seniors must achieve a qualifying score no later than the April National ACT Test date to qualify for TOPS without penalty.

The Board of Regents will be asking the Legislature to take action to make an exception to this provision in light of this ACT test date change related to COVID-19, including **allowing a student to qualify with a June test date at no penalty to the student**. LOSFA will update schools, students, and parents as soon as there is any change to this requirement

Distance Education Providers

Utilization of Distance Education Online Providers

- There is not a state approval process for general online education providers. School systems have the choice and autonomy to approve and use any online provider that delivers instruction within the provisions of [Bulletin 741 Section 2326](#).
- School systems also have an option to utilize online providers that have been vetted and approved as [Course Choice providers](#) by BESE. Supplemental Course Allocation (SCA) funds can continue to be used to pay associated course costs with these providers through June 30, 2020.
- The Department will be providing a list of Course Choice providers who will extend course enrollment/ participation options through June 30, 2020.

Academic Resources

In partnership with **Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB)**, the Department will provide distance and home learning tools for educators, students, and caregivers. This will include:

- **An online hub for distance learning supports** set to launch by March 18. It will include:
 - Resources for math, ELA, social studies, science and early childhood, including links to Tier 1 [curriculum resources](#).
 - Increased access to Tier 1 curriculum digital content, including virtual lessons.
 - Resources to teach young children about COVID-19.
- **Broadcasted educational programming** through LPB and YouTube Channels, which will launch within the next two weeks.

The Department will announce the availability of these resources through all upcoming school system planning calls and newsletters.

Distance Learning Resources

Google

Google has extended [Google Hangouts Meet](#) premium features to all G-Suite customers through July 1, 2020. This includes:

- Larger meetings for up to 250 participants per call
- Live streaming for up to 100K viewers within domain
- Record meetings to Google Drive for replay

Cisco

90 day FREE trial use of WebEx, it can be set up instantly with no financial commitment. To sign up **Free Webex Personal Account** available on webex.com to include:

- Full featured HD video meetings (temporarily removing the 40-minute meeting cap)
- Unlimited meetings for up to 100 participants (temporarily increasing the number of participants from 50 to 100)
- Toll Dial-In and high-quality VoIP meeting join experience (temporarily adding Toll Dial-In)
- Ability to experience meetings on your desktop, mobile, or video device
- Screen sharing and recording with 1GB cloud storage
- Webex Teams unlimited messaging

Cisco has also provided resources for teachers on how to teach virtually, preparing students for remote classes, facilitating group projects, etc.

Distance Learning Resources

Zoom

Providing FREE zoom webinar basic accounts for schools and teachers affected by Coronavirus. Zoom will also waive the 40 minute time-limit for schools. To get access for your school:

- Step 1 - Sign up for a free Basic account [here](#) using your school's email address.
- Step 2 - Fill out this [form](#) for your school to remove the 40 minute time limit for anyone on your school's domain after verification. Personal email addresses such as Gmail, Yahoo, or Outlook are not eligible.

Zoom has also partnered with Clever to easily set up accounts. [Clever](#) is the most widely used single sign-on portal in K-12 districts, making it easy for schools to roll out Zoom quickly. Zoom accounts set up through Clever will include:

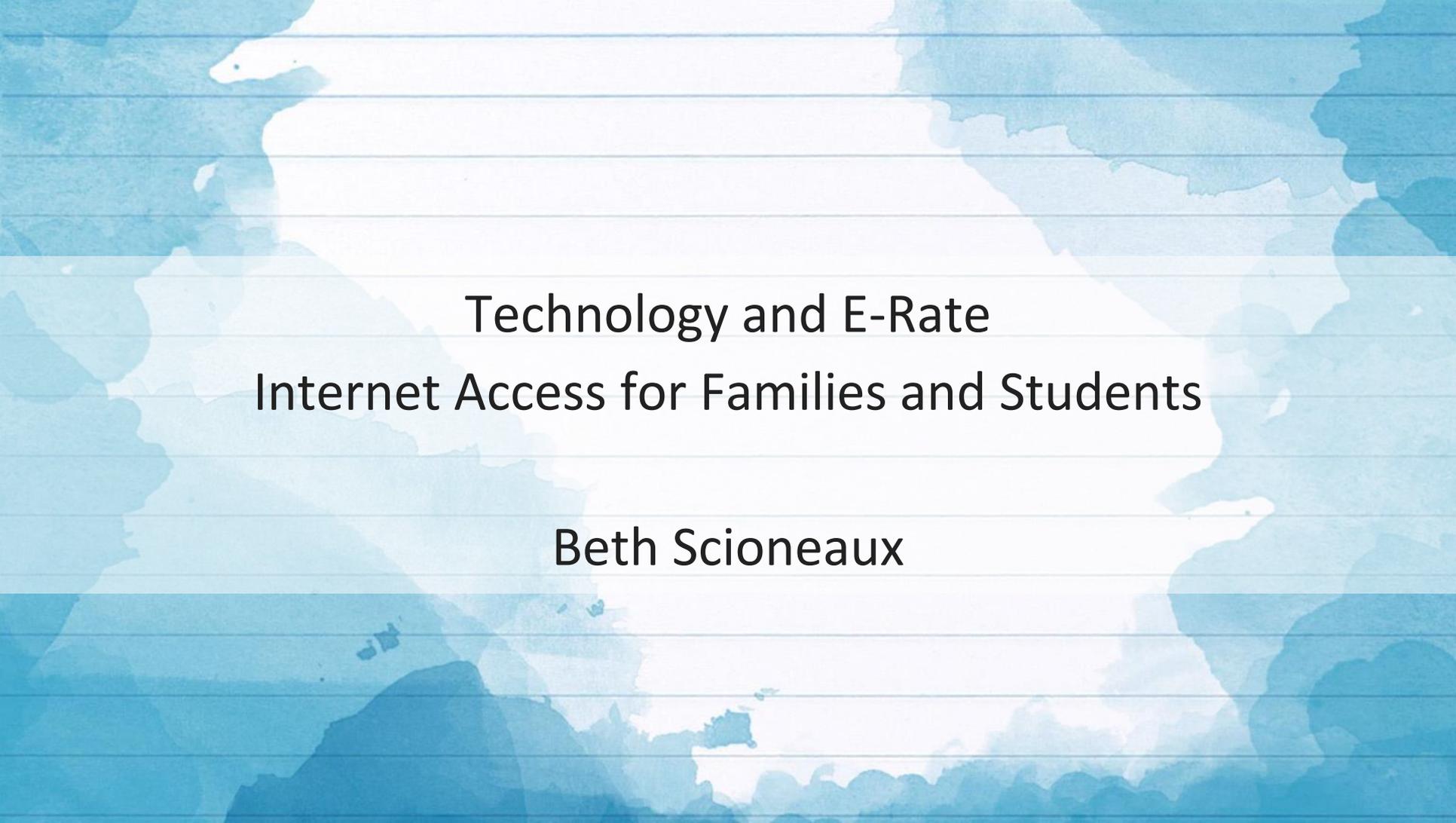
- Unlimited teacher accounts
- No time limit on virtual class sessions
- Single sign-on via the Clever Portal
- Support for PCs, Macs, Chromebooks, iPads, Android phones & iPhones

Zoom is making features available at no charge through July 1, 2020, for Clever districts. Additionally, Zoom is providing [daily live training](#) for students and educators, [recorded tips](#) for instructors via [Twitter](#) from USC Ph.D. student and online instructor [Alana Kennedy](#) on some of the most useful features and best practices for teaching over Zoom.

Distance Learning Resources

Outschool, a marketplace for live online classes, has made available [Free Remote Teacher Training Webinars](#) demonstrating how to adapt teaching practices and curriculum to a live video chat classroom. These webinars are led by Outschool's experienced teachers who have transitioned from in-person to online teaching. Educators can sign up and find available times/dates [here](#).

Instructional platform **Nearpod** is temporarily offering [free online learning](#) access to schools impacted by closures. Access includes [live weekly webinars](#), a guide to using [Nearpod for distance learning](#), and lessons on the [coronavirus](#) to keep students, teachers, and parents informed.

The background features a light blue watercolor wash with a white outline of a globe centered in the upper half. The globe shows the continents of North and South America. The overall aesthetic is clean and professional.

Technology and E-Rate Internet Access for Families and Students

Beth Scioneaux

Technology and E-Rate

The FCC has extended the deadline for schools to submit FY2020 Form 471 applications:

- **E-Rate applicants will now have until April 29 at 11:59 p.m. EDT to submit.**
- Any school system that may need to post a new Form 470 for additional service(s) can file a Form 470, post an RFP for 28 days and file a Form 471 for FY2020 E-Rate funding.

The FCC has also directed USAC to provide all applicants undergoing Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) reviews with an automatic, 14-day extension for all PIA requests.

Waivers for additional deadlines and requests (Form 486, Form 472, COMAD, invoicing, etc.) have been requested and are under review.

Applicants should monitor [USAC's website](#).

Internet Access for Families and Students

Internet Access for Students: FCC Chairman Ajit Pai has launched the Keep Americans Connected Pledge, which many [broadband carriers](#) have signed. For the next 60 days, its core provisions will:

- not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic;
- waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic; and
- open its Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them

Additionally limited income households can apply for \$5 to \$10 per month internet access ([AT&T Access](#), [CenturyLink Lifeline](#)). [Charter Communication](#) will offer free Spectrum broadband and Wi-Fi access for 60 days to households with K-12 and/or college students who do not already have a subscription.

Cox Communications is offering

- Limited-time, first month free of [Connect2Compete service](#), 9.95/month thereafter
- Until May 15, 2020, provide phone and remote desktop support through Cox Complete Care at no charge
- Resources for [discounted, refurbished equipment](#) through our association with PCs for People
- A [Learn from Home toolkit](#) for schools, including instructions on how to fast-track eligible students without internet access

Internet Hotspots for Schools

Kajeet SmartSpot

Kajeet is providing schools two offers for Internet Hotspots for teachers and students:

- Free LTE SmartSpot hotspot device OR \$100 off w/ 12-mo service available until March 31.
- 6 month access plans with the purchase of a SmartSpot. Access averages \$14.97 + 6.9% /month for service for 12 months comes to \$192.03 for a year.

Contact: Michael Flood mflood@kajeet.com

Mobile Beacon:

Mobile Beacon is providing schools hotspots for \$10 a month - devices range from \$70 - \$300.

Contact: Katherine Messier kmessier@mobilebeacon.org

Note: These hotspots utilize the mobile networks of most large carriers; therefore they have a broader range of access.



Legal and Regulatory Flexibilities

Beth Scioneaux

Legal and Regulatory Flexibilities

- [BESE Emergency Waiver Memo](#)
 - Rules impacting school requirements
 - Rules impacting Students with Disabilities
 - Rules impacting Educators
 - Rules impacting Nonpublic and Charter Public Schools
 - Rules impacting Early Learning Centers
- [BESE request to waive statues per an Executive Order](#)

Next Steps

Please complete the following survey by Wednesday, March 18, at COB to notify the Department as to whether you will provide educational services while school facilities are closed to children.

[School District/Charter School COVID-19 Education Planning Survey](#)

[LDOE COVID-19 Information and Resources](#)

For education-specific information, contact the Department at LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov.