

# Louisiana Believes

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Students with Significant Disabilities:  
Eligibility and Instructional Supports

September 2018 Collaborations

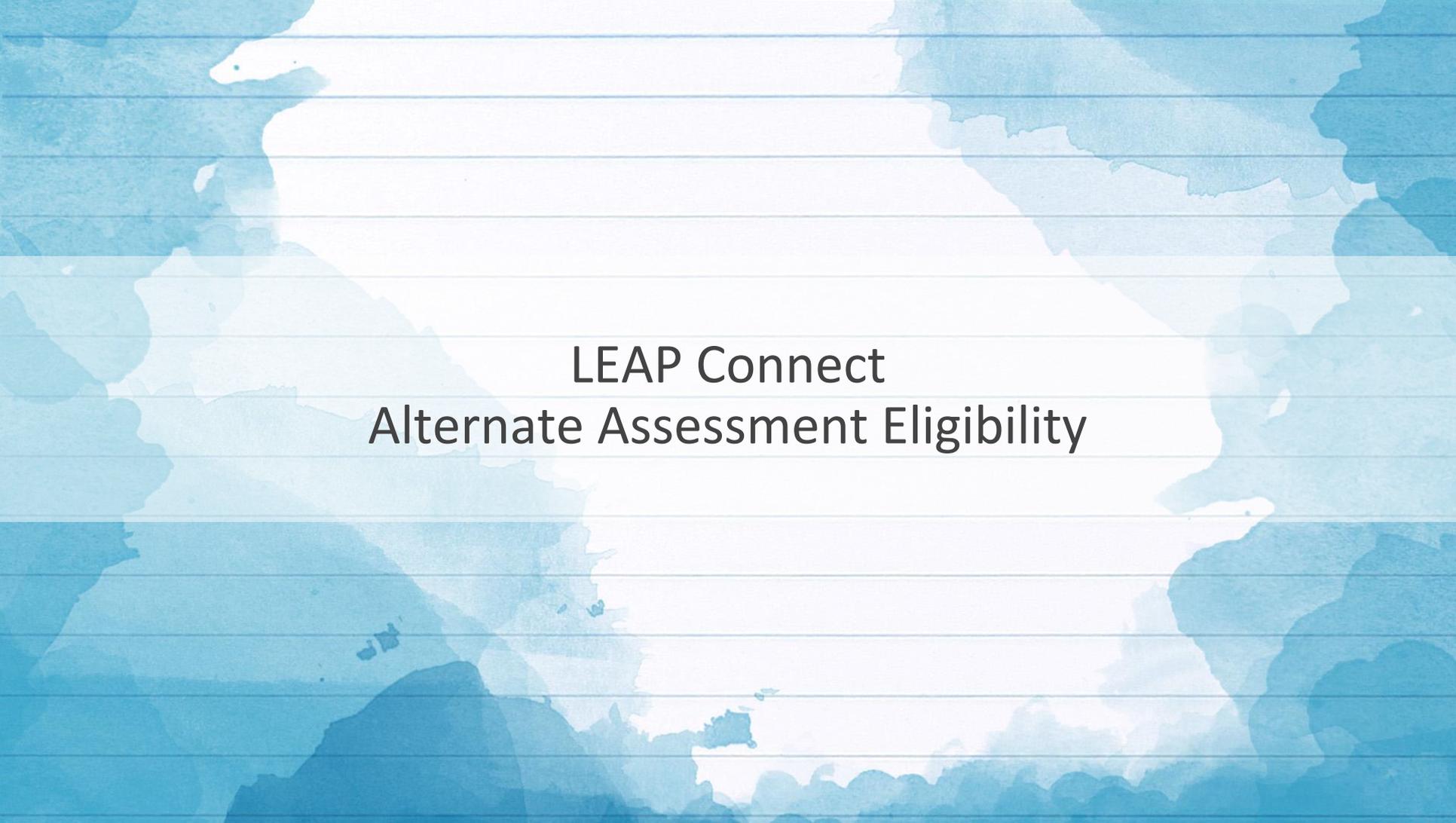
# Objectives

Today we will:

- Apply eligibility criteria to determine whether a student qualifies for the LEAP Connect alternate assessment
- Utilize Louisiana Connector-aligned resources to prepare for planning and instruction of students with significant disabilities

# Agenda

- Criteria for LEAP Connect Alternate Assessment Eligibility
- Louisiana Connector-Aligned Instructional Resources



# LEAP Connect Alternate Assessment Eligibility

# Background

Louisiana believes that all students, including students with the most significant disabilities, should be held to the highest possible grade-level expectations. Over that past three years, much progress has been made to deliver on this belief, including:

- new Louisiana Connectors standards in ELA, mathematics, and science
- aligned LEAP Connect for Students with Significant Disabilities statewide assessment



# State Criteria: Alternate Assessment Participation

BESE policy outlines specific [criteria](#) a student must meet to participate in the LEAP Connect alternate assessment. **IEP teams are responsible** for determining if a student should participate in the alternate assessment, based on the state's criteria:

- 1. The student has a disability that significantly impacts cognitive function and/or adaptive behavior.**
2. The student requires extensive modified instruction aligned with the Louisiana Connectors to acquire, maintain, and generalize skills.
3. The decision to include the student in the alternate assessment is not solely based certain factors (placement, behavior, English learner status, etc.).

# State Criteria: Alternate Assessment Participation

The first criterion states that the student must be functioning **significantly below the mean on an assessment of cognitive and/or adaptive functioning**. Significance varies by grade level:

- A** Not completed the 5th grade: an eligible student is functioning **3 or more standard deviations** below the mean.
- B** Completed 5th grade: an eligible student is functioning **2.3 or more standard deviations** below the mean.
- C** Completed the 5th grade: a student may be eligible if they are functioning **2.0 - 2.29 standard deviations** below the mean with **additional empirical evidence**.

# Cognitive and Adaptive Assessments

The first criterion states that the student must be functioning **significantly below the mean on an assessment of cognitive and/or adaptive functioning**. Cognitive and adaptive assessments are part of a formal psychological evaluation, typically conducted as part of a student's initial evaluation, or as part of a reevaluation, when additional information on the student's performance is needed.

## Cognitive

Cognitive development is characterized by the way a child learns, acquires knowledge and interacts with his or her surrounding environment. A cognitive assessment provides information on a student's ability to reason, to think abstractly, and to solve problems.

## Adaptive

Adaptive behavior is how a child meets the demands of their environment. Assessments of adaptive behavior typically measure conceptual (communication, self-direction, etc.), social (leisure, etc.) and practical (community use, self-care, etc.) functioning.

# Current State

IEP teams do not always have the full evaluation available and/or do not always know how to interpret cognitive and/or adaptive assessment results. **IEP teams need the right information at the right time to make an informed decision** as to whether a student is eligible for the alternate assessment and whether that's the best decision for his/her educational goals.

To help IEP teams in the decision-making process, LDOE is adding enhancements to the special education reporting (SER) system that will capture and display cognitive and adaptive assessment results clearly and transparently. These will:

- Require pupil appraisal teams / SER clerks to add specific elements of cognitive and adaptive evaluation results under the evaluation link in SER.
- Automatically add those results to the IEP's LEAP Connect form, the place where the IEP teams document the student meets the state's criteria.

# Documenting Evaluation Results in SER

Pupil appraisal teams / SER clerks should add specific elements from the cognitive and adaptive assessments under the evaluation link in SER.

## Intellectual Functioning / Cognitive Assessments

Assessment Completed:  Yes  No

Assessment Name: Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities (WJ)

Date Administered: 7/11/2018

Standard Deviation\*: - 3.02

## Adaptive Behavior Assessments

Assessment Completed:  Yes  No

Assessment Name: Adaptive Behavior Assessment System (ABAS)

Date Administered: 7/12/2018

Standard Deviation\*: - 3.42

# Documenting Evaluation Results in SER

SER will automatically add those results to the IEP's LEAP Connect form, the place where the IEP team documents that the student meets the state's criteria.

SER Individualized Education Program | LA Department of Education

IEP Forms | 8. LEAP Connect | Validate | Official / Signed | Delete

System: Vernon Parish | Student Name: DELCO, CHASATIE | Grade: | [add/delete forms to IEP](#)  
Meeting Date(s): 7/17/2018 | DOB: 1/19/1990 | Local Id: 433773124

In order to protect student privacy per RS 17:3914, refrain from using student name, date of birth, and other personally identifiable information.

LEAP Alternate Assessment, LEAP Connect Participation Criteria Grades 3-11

Exceptionality Detail(s)

Primary: -- SELECT ONE --  
Other: -- SELECT ONE --

Evaluation Results Detail

| Assessment Type                                  | Complete | Name of Assessment   | Date Administered | Standard Deviation |
|--|----------|--|-------------------|--------------------|
| Intellectual Functioning / Cognitive Assessments | Yes      | Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI) | 7/2/2018          | -1.11              |
| Adaptive Behavior Assessments                    | Yes      | Scales of Independent Behavior - Revised (SIB)               | 7/2/2018          | 3.33               |

LEAP Alternate Assessment, LEAP Connect was developed for students for whom there is evidence of a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact cognitive functioning and/or adaptive behavior. To be eligible to participate in LEAP Connect, the response to each of the four statements below must be "Agree."

Criterion #1

Evidence of a Significant Cognitive Disability or Multiple Disabilities (select one)

Agree  Disagree

The student's cognitive and/or adaptive behavior has been assessed and the student is functioning:

- A. 3 or more standard deviations below the mean.
- B. Between 2.3 and 2.9 standard deviations below the mean and has completed fifth grade.
- C. Between 2.0 and 2.29 standard deviations below the mean and has completed fifth grade - additional documentation required.

# Documenting Evaluation Results in SER

School systems need to ensure cognitive and adaptive evaluation results are captured for all students with disabilities on the following timeline:

## Now

- By **January 4, 2019**, enter evaluation results to verify eligibility of any student who will take the alternate assessment.

## Over Time

- During the next evaluation, enter evaluation results for all other students with disabilities.

# Common Questions

Do students have to participate in LEAP Connect if they meet the state's participation criteria?

What happens if a student does not have a cognitive or adaptive assessment?

Does the school system need to complete a new evaluation with cognitive and adaptive assessment every 3 years?

What should the school system do if the cognitive assessment results are reported as a range?

What should the school system do if there are multiple evaluations with cognitive and adaptive results?

Do school systems need to document cognitive and adaptive results for students who are gifted / talented or 504?

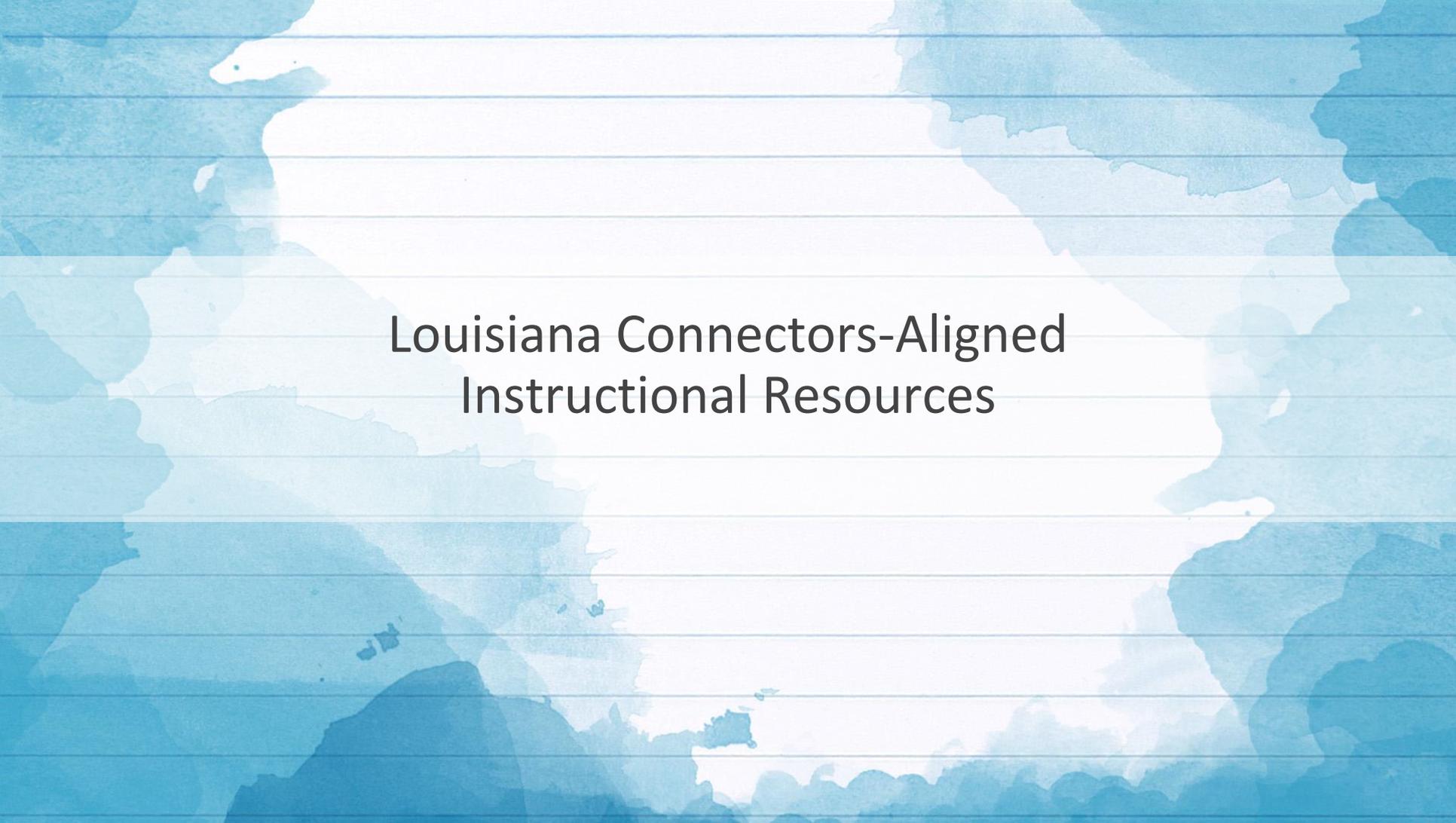
# Documenting Evaluation Results in SER

School systems can access resources to help IEP teams and pupil appraisal / SER personnel navigate the documentation requirements:

- [Alternate Assessment Eligible FAQ for IEP Teams](#)
- [Evaluation Updates in SER Q&A for School Systems](#)

In addition, the Department school systems will be able to track progress through:

- Validation report updates during fall 2018
- SER evaluation results and alternate assessment eligibility report *coming soon*



# Louisiana Connectors-Aligned Instructional Resources

# Louisiana Connectors

Louisiana believes that all students, including students with the most significant disabilities, should be held to the highest possible grade-level expectations. Over that past three years, much progress has been made to deliver on this belief, including:

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# Louisiana Connectors



The Louisiana Connectors for Students with Significant Disabilities are a set of aligned standards that have been developed to provide access to and support towards mastery of the Louisiana Student Standards.

The Louisiana Connectors are predicated on a belief in

- High Expectations
- Access and Achievement
- Specially-Designed Instruction
- Least Restrictive Environment

# Louisiana Connectors

## The Louisiana Connectors

- provide concrete pathways for academic achievement
- represent the major benchmarks along the pathway to achieving the standards
- ensure developmentally-appropriate, scaffolded instruction for all grades



# Mathematics Connectors

| Grade 8 Math  |  |
|---|--|
| Louisiana Student Standards   | Draft Louisiana Connectors (LAC)   |
| <b>8.NS.A.1</b> Know that numbers that are not rational are called irrational. Understand informally that every number has a decimal expansion; for rational numbers, show that the decimal expansion repeats eventually. Convert a decimal expansion that repeats eventually into a rational number by analyzing repeating patterns. | <b>LAC.8.NS.A.1a</b> Identify $\pi$ as an irrational number.<br><b>LAC.8.NS.A.1b</b> Round irrational numbers to the hundredths place. |

# English Language Arts Connectors

| Grade 3 English Language Arts   |  |
|---|--|
| Louisiana Student Standards   | Louisiana Connectors   |
| <b>RL.3.1</b> Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. | <b>LAC.RL.3.1a</b> Answer questions related to the relationship between characters, setting, events, or conflicts (e.g., characters and events, characters and conflicts, setting and conflicts).<br><b>LAC.RL.3.1b</b> Answer questions (literal and inferential) and refer to text to support your answer.<br><b>LAC.RL.3.1c</b> Support inferences, opinions, and conclusions using evidence from the text including illustrations. |

# Science Connectors

| Grade 5 Science<br>EARTH'S PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE   |  |
|--|--|
| Louisiana Student Standards  | Louisiana Connectors (LC)  |
| 5-ESS1-2 Represent data in graphical displays to reveal patterns of daily changes in length and direction of shadows, day and night, and the seasonal appearance of some stars in the night sky. | LC-5-ESS1-2a Describe similarities and differences in the timing of observable changes in shadows.   |
|  | LC-5-ESS1-2b Describe similarities and differences in the timing of observable changes in day and night.   |
|  | LC-5-ESS1-2c Describe similarities and differences in the timing of observable changes in the appearance of stars that are visible only in particular months |

# Aligned Resources

To assist teachers in providing standards-based instruction for students with significant disabilities, aligned resources include:

- **Louisiana Connectors (aligned with Louisiana Student Standards)** – a document which presents the Louisiana Connectors which are aligned to the Louisiana Student Standards and represent the most salient grade-level, core academic content in Science.

| Kindergarten Science<br>MOTION AND STABILITY: FORCES AND INTERACTIONS   |   |
|---|---|
| Louisiana Student Standards   | Louisiana Connectors (LC)   |
| K-PS2-1 Plan and conduct an investigation to compare the effects of different strengths or different directions of pushes and pulls on the motion of an object. | LC-K-PS2-1a Identify the effect caused by different strengths or directions of pushes and pulls on the motion of an object. |
|   | LC-K-PS2-1b Explain the effect of pushes and pulls on the motion of an object.  |
|   | LC-K-PS2-1c Identify the effect of different strengths and directions of pushes and pulls on the motion of an object.       |
|   | LC-K-PS2-1d Compare different strengths or different directions of pushes and pulls on an object.                           |
| K-PS2-2 Analyze data to determine if a design solution works as intended to change the speed or direction of an object with a push or a pull.                   | LC-K-PS2-2a Identify if something designed to push or pull an object makes it move the way it is intended.                  |
|   | LC-K-PS2-2b Identify if something designed to change the speed of an object makes it move the way it is intended.           |
|   | LC-K-PS2-2c Identify if something designed to change the direction of an object makes it move the way it is intended.       |

# Aligned Resources

To assist teachers in providing standards-based instruction for students with significant disabilities, aligned resources include:

- **Case Studies** – which provide models for how teachers and specialists may best modify objectives, assessments, activities, and materials for students based on LDOE’s available resources.

High-Quality, Standards-Based Instruction

For Students with Significant Disabilities

## Vignette: Tara

**Student Background:** Tara is beginning third grade at age 8. She has cerebral palsy with spasticity and limited use of her arms and legs. She relies on a wheelchair for mobility. Tara also is legally blind. She can perceive some enlarged images. Although Tara’s intellectual level is uncertain, she is currently diagnosed as having a severe intellectual disability. Tara’s strength is her social ability. Tara loves read-aloud stories and has learned to show recall by selecting between two objects placed on her lap tray by moving her arm right or left. She has learned to make simple sets in math by pushing large checkers across a line. One of Tara’s interests is dogs. Her parents hope that someday she might learn to work with a therapy dog. Her teacher worries about how Tara will perform in her first experience with the state’s alternate assessment this spring. Tara needs a lot of adaptations in the form of objects to supplement the assessment materials.

| Louisiana Student Standard  | Louisiana Connector   |
|---|---|
| <b>RL.3.3</b> Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events. | <b>LC.RL.3.3b</b> Describe a character’s traits in a story using details from the text and illustrations. |

**High-Quality, Standards-Based, Instruction:** The third-grade class will spend the next six-to-eight weeks using “[Because of Winn Dixie](#)” as a foundational text to explore how characters change based on their relationships with one another. Tara’s teacher is excited for the focus of this theme because it plays to

# Aligned Resources

To assist teachers in providing standards-based instruction for students with significant disabilities, aligned resources include:

- **Lesson Plan Adaptation** – a document which serves as a template for adapting whole class lesson plans to more individualized instruction for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

## Template

Teaching Louisiana Student Standards to students who participate in the LEAP Connect for Students with Significant Disabilities ensures teachers create educational opportunities for all students to work toward grade-level content. While the content remains constant, differential expectations for achievement are established by simplifying and prioritizing content and creating individualized adaptations for students with significant disabilities to learn the same concepts.

General education teachers know what content is most important for each grade and they often have developed activities and materials that can be readily adapted for students with significant disabilities. For those students who participate in the general education setting, the logical point of departure would be for specialists to work with the classroom teacher to create universally designed lesson plans that include all students. For others, additional adaptations will be needed to address unique learning differences. For examples of approaches with both, please refer to the case studies found on the [Louisiana Believes website](#). The following table outlines a simplified process for thinking through lesson plan adaptation for students with significant disabilities.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>Step 1 –<br/>Identify whole class standard<br/>and lesson</i>         |  |
| <i>Step 2 –<br/>Identify aligned<br/>Louisiana Connector</i>             |  |
| <i>Step 3 –<br/>Create student-specific<br/>objective and assessment</i> |  |
| <i>Step 4 –<br/>Create aligned activities</i>                            |  |
| <i>Step 5 –<br/>Identify appropriate supports<br/>and scaffolds</i>      |  |

# Aligned Resources

To assist teachers in providing standards-based instruction for students with significant disabilities, aligned resources include:

- **Student Response Modes** – a document which supports teachers in identifying the best way for all students to demonstrate their understanding in each lesson.

It is important to identify the best way for your student to show what they know in each lesson. Here are some options to consider:

- **Point to the correct response when given an array** - The number of options in the array may vary depending on the student's current skills. An array of four is often used with one correct answer, at least one plausible incorrect answer, and two other distractors. Be sure to vary the location of the correct answer in the array. This array can be placed on the students' communication system.
- **Pull-off** - Some students have difficulty pointing but may be able to make a selection when the responses are attached to a page. The array of four options is used, but the student pulls the correct response.
- **Eye gaze** - Students who do not have the motor skills to point, but have vision, may be able to indicate the response by looking at the correct option. The array can be attached to each corner of a piece of see-through plexiglass (available from most hardware stores). By looking through the plexiglass, the teacher can see where the student focuses his or her eyes to indicate the answer.
- **Say or Type** - Some students can verbalize the correct answer. This answer may be given after viewing an array of options or by generating the answer when asked a question. Other students may be able to generate the answer by typing a response. Saying or typing the answer provides students with the most flexibility to describe what they know.
- **Show** - Some learning can be demonstrated through showing the answer. The student may be able to indicate the area of the rectangle by moving his or her hand across the shape. Or, a student may answer a comprehension question by pantomiming the answer.
- **Write or type on computer** - Sometimes the student may be able to write the answer, for example, by writing the correct number in an equation or writing the name of the main character in a story.
- **Use material from the lesson** - Students may be able to show the correct math answer by using a number card or plastic numbers or with other manipulatives. Similarly, in language arts, the student may use a picture on the page in the book or prop that is used with a story to answer a comprehension question. Remember the

# Aligned Resources

To assist teachers in providing standards-based instruction for students with significant disabilities, aligned resources include:

- **Louisiana Connectors Essential Elements Cards** - The cards, which are a primer for differentiating instruction for students with significant disabilities, break down the instructional task into knowledge and skills, suggested instructional strategies, and possible supports and scaffolds for student learning.



LOUISIANA CONNECTORS Essential Elements Cards  
Grades K-2 English Language Arts



| ELA Grades K-2 – Informational Text – #8 Analyzing Across Texts   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| Grade K   | Grade 1   | Grade 2  |
| <b>Louisiana Standard</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>RI.K.9</b> With prompting and support, identify similarities and differences between two texts on the same topic.</li></ul>  | <b>Louisiana Standard</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>RI.1.9</b> Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).</li></ul>     | <b>Louisiana Standard</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>RI.2.9</b> Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.</li></ul>     |
| <b>Louisiana Connector</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>LC.RI.K.9</b> With prompting and support, identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., imaginary or real bear; photo versus illustration of something not real).</li></ul> | <b>Louisiana Connector</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>LC.RI.1.9</b> Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).</li></ul> | <b>Louisiana Connector</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>LC.RI.2.9</b> Compare and contrast the most important points presented by two texts on the same topic.</li></ul> |

**Suggested Instructional Strategies:**

**Write to Understand**

- **Informational Venn Diagrams:** For texts that use a compare/contrast text structure, brainstorm (individually, in a small group, or with the whole class) how two texts about the same topic are similar and how the two texts are different.

# Aligned Resources

To assist teachers in providing standards-based instruction for students with significant disabilities, aligned resources include:

- Science Component Cards** – The cards are arranged by grade levels for kindergarten through grade 8 and content areas for high school. The Component Cards include detailed Connectors for element of the performance expectations found in the LSS.



**Performance Expectation and Louisiana Connectors**  
**4-PS3-1** Use evidence to construct an explanation relating the speed of an object to the energy of that object.  
*LC-4-PS3-1a Identify that moving objects contain energy.*  
*LC-4-PS3-1b Demonstrate that objects moving faster possess more energy than objects moving slower.*

| Science and Engineering Practice  | Disciplinary Core Idea   | Crosscutting Concept   |
|---|--|--|
| <b>Constructing explanations and designing solutions:</b> Constructing explanations (science) and designing solutions (engineering) in 3-5 builds on K-2 experiences and progresses to the use of evidence in constructing explanations that specify variables that describe and predict phenomena and in designing multiple solutions to design problems.<br>• Use evidence (e.g., measurements, observations, patterns) to construct or support an explanation or design a solution to a problem.<br><br><i>Support an explanation using evidence (e.g., measurements, observations, patterns).</i><br><i>Construct an explanation using evidence (e.g., measurements, observations, patterns).</i> | <b>DEFINITIONS OF ENERGY</b><br>The faster a given object is moving, the more energy it possesses. (UE.PS3A.a)<br><br><i>The speed of an object is related to the energy it possesses.</i><br><i>The energy of a moving object depends on its speed.</i><br><i>Objects moving faster possess more energy than objects moving slower.</i> | <b>ENERGY AND MATTER</b><br>Energy can be transferred in various ways and between objects.<br><br><i>Energy can be transferred in a system.</i><br><i>Energy can be transferred between objects.</i> |

*Clarification Statement*

# Next Steps

## Find

- The LEAP Connect eligibility resources for school systems and IEP teams.
- The Louisiana Connectors for ELA, Mathematics and Science, and all aligned resources, on the Louisiana Believes website.

## Email

- [specialeducation@la.gov](mailto:specialeducation@la.gov) with questions about LEAP Connect eligibility
- [louisianastandards@la.gov](mailto:louisianastandards@la.gov) with questions on standards and instruction
- [assessment@la.gov](mailto:assessment@la.gov) with questions about the LEAP Connect assessment