Dear Colleagues,

Recently the Louisiana Legislature adopted a midyear spending plan that will sustain state government through the end of the 2016-2017 fiscal year. The plan uses a combination of reductions in state spending and withdrawals from the state’s “rainy day fund” to make up for a $300 million mid-year gap between revenues and planned expenditures. Fortunately, pre-K-12 schools were not cut in the process. While the state’s education budget did see modest reductions, only unused prekindergarten seats will be reduced. No child or educator will experience a reduction in services or supports from this round of cuts.

Immediately after passage of the midyear spending measure, the Governor presented the 2017-2018 executive budget, which will be taken up by the Legislature in the regular session, starting in April. Pre-K-12 education spending in the executive budget is projected to be stable.

The Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) formula is projected to increase by $36 million in the executive budget, out of an overall state MFP spend of roughly $3.7 billion. Of this increase, $18 million is attributable to growth in the statewide student count, while the other $18 million is attributable to a potential increase in the High Cost Services Allocation and Supplemental Course Allocations. If the formula is adopted by BESE and passed by the Legislature, these increases would serve the interests of students with dual enrollment and special education needs.

It is important to note that this potential increase in the formula comes after two years of there being no increase in the formula. Instead, legislators tacked on extra funding outside the formula at the end of the 2015 and 2016 sessions. While we should appreciate these funds, for they were and remain needed, the fact that they are appropriated outside of the formula makes their continuation vulnerable each year.

Next week I will propose to BESE a formula that includes the profound increases included in the Governor’s budget, as it is of great importance that BESE and the Legislature adopt and pass a formula for next year. If this does not happen, schools will again be forced to rely on unstable funding outside the formula.

You will receive a copy of the proposed MFP resolution this Friday, along with a chart outlining projected changes to state funding across school systems and reasons for the changes unique to each school system. As you know, the reasons for increases and decreases at a local level—local revenue and student count fluctuations, most often—typically have little to do with changes in the formula. But it is important that projections be outlined before the formula is put forward.

If you have questions now or later in the week about the MFP or funding in your schools, please contact beth.scioneaux@la.gov.

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

John

Twitter @LouisianaSupe

In This Issue

- District Support
- Assessment and Accountability
Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming events:
- **LEAP Practice Test Webinar for Teachers**: March 1 at 3:30 p.m.
- **Superintendents’ Conference Call**: March 6 at 10:30 a.m.
- **Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call**: March 7 at 1:00 p.m.
- **District Planning Call**: March 8 at 1:00 p.m.

Important deadlines:
- **By March 3**: Contact Caveon to purchase test security services
- **By March 3**: Complete the Believe and Prepare Community Meeting feedback survey
- **By March 10**: Register for March Supervisor Collaborations
- **By March 15**: Apply for school redesign planning grant -- Round 2

District Support

**New: Join the March District Planning Call**

The district planning call for March will take place on **Wednesday, March 8, 2017 from 1:00-2:00 p.m.** The following district supervisors should participate:
- Assessment
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Technology
- Early Childhood
- High School
- Career and Technical Education
- Principal and Teacher Leader

To join the March 8 call:
- Webinar link: https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/dpc/
- Phone number: 1-855-2402575
- Meeting room number: PIN # 89147656

Please email districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

**New: Register for March Supervisor Collaborations**

Registration for the March Supervisor Collaborations is now open. Please review the overview document for more information about sessions, recommended attendees, and registration. **Participants should register by Friday, March 10.**

- Tuesday, March 14: Harvey
- Wednesday, March 15: Baton Rouge
Thursday, March 16: Ruston

Please email districtsupport@la.gov for more information.

**New: Louisiana's Draft ESSA Plan Released**

On February 20, the Department posted for public comment a draft copy of a plan to comply with ESSA. This draft document, developed through nine months of intensive meetings and public dialogue, will be posted for comment to the Department’s website until the end of March so that the Department can continue to receive public input. The Department will submit its final plan to the federal government on April 3, with the purpose of receiving feedback on the plan prior to the start of the 2017-2018 school year, when the law takes full effect.

Please submit feedback on the draft plan to essalouisiana@la.gov or attend one of these upcoming meetings.

**New: Submit Principal Support Grant Application**

The Department released the Principal Support Grant Application for the 2017-2018 school year today. This grant is a continuation of support to help leverage proven leadership development systems (TAP and the Principal Fellowship) to promote student achievement. For more details on this application, see below.

- **Application** released to school systems on March 1
- Grant applications due to compass@la.gov by April 7
- School systems notified of grant status by the end of April

For support with this application, please attend one of the March Supervisor Collaborations or schedule a consultation with the Department by emailing compass@la.gov.

Please email compass@la.gov with questions.

**New: Submit Requests for Foreign Associate Teachers**

LDOE and CODOFIL partner with the U.S. Department of State’s Teacher Exchange program to offer students in K–8 access to high-quality academic enrichment programs in World Languages. Requests for K–8 French and/or Spanish teachers for the 2017–2018 school year are being accepted until March 22, 2017. School systems interested in finding out more about hosting a foreign associate teacher should email michele.braud@la.gov.

**Reminder: Superintendents' Conference Call**

You are invited to participate in the Superintendents' Conference Call hosted by State Superintendent John White on **Monday, March 6, 2017, at 10:30 a.m.** You may begin dialing into the call 15 minutes in advance. Please follow the instructions below.

To join the Superintendents' March 6 meeting:

- Go to https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/suptscall/.
- Dial into the phone bridge: 877-475-0109.
- When prompted, please give the meeting ID # 74604496.

You will need to identify yourself in order to be placed into the meeting.
Reminder: Apply for a School Redesign Planning Grant—Round 2

ESSA requires every local school system to design a plan for improving student performance in their struggling schools. For many school systems, this will necessitate researching new partner organizations. The Department launched the School Redesign Planning Grant with the express purpose of supporting that process. Eligible school systems can receive up to $50,000 to defray the costs associated with meeting with potential partner organizations and evaluating what they have to offer.

Applications for Round 2 will be accepted until March 15, 2017.

Please visit the School Redesign web page for a list of eligible schools, the grant application form, and additional information; contact your network leader or email hunter.brown@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Transitional Student Growth Data

Please share this entry with principals and teachers.

2015-2016 Transitional Student Growth Data has been released and is available to school systems, principals, and teachers in the Compass Information System (CIS). Please email compass@la.gov for more information.

Reminder: Professional Development for Social Studies Teachers

Please share this entry with social studies teachers.

In June of 2017, the Library of Congress will host a professional development opportunity for social studies teachers entitled, “Teaching with Primary Sources”. The four-day training will be held at Southeastern Louisiana University in the Teacher Education Building from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Educators will learn how to use Library of Congress primary sources to enhance instruction in social studies classrooms. Please download and submit the agreement to participate by May 1, 2017.

For specific questions about the training, please contact the Library of Congress-Teaching with Primary Sources assistant director Stefanie Sorbet at Stefanie.sorbet@selu.edu.

Assessment and Accountability

New: District Test Coordinator and Accountability Contact Announcements and Reminders

- Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call:
  - **Call Date:** Tuesday, March 7, 2017 at 1:00 p.m.
  - **Webinar Link:** https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/dtc/
  - **Call-In Information:** (646) 307-1380; PIN 17428453

- School systems that are administering LEAP or EOC in the evening or at night should email the name of the school and the times they will be testing to assessment@la.gov by March 10.

- **LEAP 2025 Practice Tests:**
  - The Practice Test Quick Start Guide and other resources are located on the Practice Tests webpage. The social studies practice tests are now live.
March 1, 2017

- The LEA Process for Testing Nonpublic School Students document and Participation Form for Nonpublic School Students are located in the Assessment Library. These two documents outline the process for ordering and purchasing tests for LEAP 2025.
- Test setup will open March 2, 2017 in eDIRECT.

- ACT:
  - This week: school systems will begin receiving initial shipments containing nonsecure and secure standard time and accommodated materials. ACT will include an overage of accommodated materials based off of the number of students entered in to PearsonAccessnext by February 23. Only order additional materials if the overage sent is depleted.
  - March 15: Deadline to enter all students taking paper tests into PearsonAccessnext. All students taking ACT must be entered into PearsonAccessnext to receive an ACT student code. The ACT Student Code must be hand coded on all answer documents without barcode labels.
  - March 17: Window closes for late considerations for ACT-approved accommodations.

- ACT Online Pilot: (only for schools participating in the pilot)
  - March 14: Deadline for technical coordinators to perform final system check/app check and lock down system.
  - March 29: Deadline to load all students into PearsonAccessnext for online testing
  - In order for your technical coordinator to help with online testing, a user account needs to be setup for him or her in PearsonAccessnext. The instructions can be located in the “How to Create a User Account” section of the Managing Contacts and Participation Guide.

- ACT WorkKeys:
  - Register for the Test Administration Training for Online Testing webinar being held on March 6, 2017 at 2:00 p.m.

Please email assessment@la.gov with any questions.

Reminder: Attend a LEAP Practice Test Webinar

Please encourage teachers to participate in today’s webinar.

The Department is hosting a final webinar today to share information about the 2016-2017 LEAP 2025 Practice Tests for ELA, math, and social studies. Facilitators will share information about the scoring process as well as information about accessing the tests and developing best practices for using them.

- Practice Test Webinar for Teachers: Wednesday, March 1 at 3:30 p.m.
- Webinar Link: https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/ac/
- Phone: 1-855-240-2575

A recording of the webinar will be posted to the practice test library. For more information, please email assessment@la.gov.

High School Opportunities

New: Carl Perkins Core Indicator Guidance for 2015-2016 Reporting Year

Please share this entry with career and technical education supervisors.

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Act provides grants to assist states with supporting development of “the academic, career, and technical skills of Secondary and Postsecondary students who elect to enroll in CTE programs.” To account for funding, states are required to assess the progress of schools and school systems in career and technical education and to report annually on the core indicators of performance. The Carl Perkins
Core Indicator Guidance for the 2015-2016 reporting year is designed to assist schools and school systems with reviewing the Perkins Core Indicator Profiles. The Guidance is now available under Reports in CATE.

For further information, please contact martha.moore@la.gov.

**New: 2017 Jump Start Super Summer Institute**

**Save the date!** The Department will co-host the 2017 Jump Start Super Summer Institute (SSI) with South Louisiana Community College and Louisiana Community and Technical College System July 17-21, 2017 in Lafayette, Louisiana. One SSI session, Emergency Medical Responder, will be offered the week of July 10 at the Acadian Ambulance facility. Prerequisite trainings for the session (Basic Life Support and CPR Instructor) will be offered July 8-9, 2017. The Department will pay training costs and provide lunch for secondary instructors attending SSI.

Districts are responsible for all travel expenses and a registration fee of $249 per instructor, for which districts may use their Career Development Funds (CDF) or 2016-2017 Carl Perkins Funds. **Registration will open March 7 via the LDOE newsletter.**

Please direct all questions about Super Summer Institute to jumpstart@la.gov.

**Reminder: CLEP Professional Development Opportunity**

Please share this entry with district and high school personnel.

The Department is partnering with the College Board to provide a free, pre-conference session at the 2017 ACCUPLACER and CLEP National Conference, in New Orleans on June 20–22, 2017. The dedicated pre-conference session highlighting CLEP best practices and Louisiana high schools will be held on June 20, from 10:15 to 11:30 a.m.

- Pre-conference registration link: [https://clepandlouisianahighschools.eventbrite.com](https://clepandlouisianahighschools.eventbrite.com)
- Full conference registration link: [https://accuclep-conference.collegeboard.org/](https://accuclep-conference.collegeboard.org/)

Please email collegereadiness@la.gov with questions.

**Talent**

**Update: Believe and Prepare Residency Expansion Grant**

The Believe and Prepare Residency Expansion Grant was released on February 14, 2017. BESE-approved providers may apply for up to $250,000. In response to feedback from district and preparation leaders, the submission timeline has been extended. The Notice of Intent is due March 24, and the full application is due on April 28, 2017.

**Reminder: Winter Believe and Prepare Community Meeting**

If you attended the Believe and Prepare Community Meeting on February 13, please complete the feedback survey by Friday, March 3. All meeting materials are available in the preparation library under Winter 2017 Community Meeting.

Please email believeandprepare@la.gov for more information.
Update: Believe and Prepare Newsletter

The February Believe and Prepare Newsletter is now available in the LDOE Newsroom. Please email believeandprepare@la.gov for more information.

Grants Management

Reminder: High Cost Services

The competitive application for FY 2016-2017 High Costs Services Round 2 is currently available in eGMS. The submission deadline is March 17, 2017.

For further assistance, contact randy.littleton@la.gov.

Update: eGMS 2016-2017 Final Allocations Completed

eGMS has been updated to include the 2016-2017 final allocations listed below:
  - NCLB Consolidated Application
    - Title I 2016-2017 Supplement
    - Title I Excess Funds Reallocation
    - Title II
    - Title III
    - Title III–Immigrant
    - Title VIB–REAP
    - Title I–Neglected or Delinquent
    - Title I–Part C Migrant Education
    - McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance
    - McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance–FY 15/16 Reallocation
  - IDEA Consolidated Application
    - IDEA FY16/17 Supplement
    - Preschool FY16/17 Supplement
    - High Cost Services 16/17 Reallocation

Any expired funds will be removed from the current allocation at the time of uploading the supplemental 2016-2017 awards to facilitate all changes through one amendment. All final allocations have been completed and school systems may now submit their applications.

For further assistance, contact Randy Littleton at randy.littleton@la.gov.

Policy

Reminder: School System Polices on Student Fees

House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 137 of the 2016 Regular Legislative Session urged and requested BESE to conduct a comprehensive study on the charging of fees to students enrolled in Louisiana public schools. In response, the LDOE conducted a survey of school systems that revealed a number of fees being charged in the absence of a local policy governing the same, including the granting of waivers based on economic hardship.

In lieu of legislation being offered to address this, the author of HCR 137 has requested that each school system adopt a policy on this matter, ideally prior to the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year. The LDOE, in
collaboration with the Louisiana School Boards Association and the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools, will provide further guidance in the near future, including a model policy. In the meantime, please begin planning for the adoption of such a policy.

Please contact erin.bendily@la.gov with questions or for more information.

**Statewide Monitoring**


The Division of Statewide Monitoring conducts annual monitoring activities of school systems to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements. To assist our school systems in thoughtful planning and preparation, we have provided links to the full schedule and to the fourth quarter schedule for the 2016-2017 school year. The schedules are tentative, and the agency reserves the right to make adjustments as necessary. The assigned statewide monitoring team leader will send a more detailed monitoring notification along with any necessary planning documents and instructions directly to the charter CEO or district superintendent and the federal programs director of each school system appearing on the monitoring schedule.

If you have any questions about the monitoring schedule or program monitoring related to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), please contact linda.tindall@la.gov. Email chauncey.mcelwee@la.gov for monitoring related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Questions related to Early Childhood monitoring may be directed to terry.simoneaux@la.gov.


The Division of Statewide Monitoring will conduct the annual review of special education programming for students with disabilities enrolled in particular school systems in Spring 2017. The purpose of the review is to ensure that targeted activities are in compliance with established federal and state programmatic regulatory requirements. To assist our school systems in thoughtful planning and preparation, we have provided the attached IDEA monitoring schedule.

An assigned statewide monitoring team leader will send a more detailed monitoring notification along with any necessary planning documents or instructions directly to the school system special education director/coordinator.

If you have any questions about the monitoring schedule, please contact chauncey.mcelwee@la.gov.