February 12, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

As the state legislative session approaches, there is welcomed talk this year of increasing the public investment in education. As you know, the governor has proposed an increase to the MFP that would account for both a jump in pay for school system employees -- $1,000 for educators and $500 for support staff -- and a 1.375 percent increase in the base per pupil subsidy school systems receive for general purposes. A statewide panel commissioned by the legislature also recently issued a report calling for significant investment in early childhood care and education. While debate remains over the amount of revenue available to state appropriators, these proposals have been received favorably across the state.

I write today to provide a detailed sense of how and where public dialogue will take place related to these funding proposals prior to the session. It is my hope that school system leaders will be able to participate actively and regularly in these discussions.

- **Executive budget**: We expect the governor’s executive budget to be released in the next two weeks. It will provide guidance as to the administration’s proposals for spending this session, including the MFP and early childhood education.
- **Superintendent Advisory Council**: The council will meet on February 21. On the agenda will be a discussion of funding proposals this year, including the mechanics of the MFP BESE will adopt in March.
- **MFP Task Force**: The task force will meet on February 28 and will consider elements of a new formula, especially in light of the executive budget previously released. The task force will send its recommendations to BESE.
- **BESE**: The state board will meet March on 12 and 13, taking up the MFP formula at these meetings. The board may also determine its positions on other state funding issues, including early childhood education.

Upon submission to the legislature, the MFP will be considered by education and spending committees. Any early childhood spending proposals will be considered within the larger examination of the state’s budget bill.

State investments in early education and K-12 educators are long overdue. How they are accomplished, however, remains in question, with nearly four months of deliberation on the horizon. I look forward to continued conversation on these and other issues.

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

John

**In This Issue**
- School System Support
- Assessment & Accountability
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Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events

- **ACT Test Administration Training Webinar**: February 13 at 1:00 p.m.
- **ReConnect Program Webinar**: February 13 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria Updates Webinar**: February 14 at 9:00 a.m.
- **Early and Accurate ID Lighthouse School System Webinar**: February 14 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Assessment and Accountability Office Hours**: February 19 at 1:00 p.m.
- **2018-2019 NCCER Craft Instructor to Craft Instructor Webinar**: February 21 at 3:00 p.m.
- **Webinar for 2019-2020 Carl Perkins Grant and Super App**: February 27 at 3:00 p.m.
- **Webinar for 2019-2020 Carl Perkins Grant and Super App**: February 28 at 3:00 p.m.

Important Deadlines

- **IDEA Grant Application Feedback Survey** deadline: February 13
- **February BOR Collection** reporting deadline: February 13
- **February 1 MFP Collection** reporting deadline: February 15
- **Spring Data Collection** reporting deadline: February 15
- **Supporting Early and Accurate Identification Interest Survey** deadline: February 21

School System Support

**Reminder: Updated School System Support Calendar**

The Department has updated the [2018-2019 School System Calendar](#). Highlights are in yellow and include the following:

- Cancellation of March Supervisor Collaborations
- Date change for March and May SPED Leader monthly calls

Email [districtsupport@la.gov](mailto:districtsupport@la.gov) with questions.

**Reminder: Supporting Early and Accurate Identification**

When developmental and learning needs are identified early and accurately, children are more likely to receive more timely, appropriate, and effective interventions. Beginning in the spring of 2018-2019, the Department will partner with interested school systems designated as “Lighthouses” to identify the systems and structures necessary for improving the early and accurate identification of children with developmental and learning needs.

Potential partner school systems will be identified based on:

- a review of [system-level data](#);
- completion of [interest survey](#) reflecting a willingness to partner with the Department in this work; and
- results of phone interview and/or site visit in March.

Interested school systems should review the presentation from the [January/February Collaborations](#) and attend an hour-long webinar on Thursday, February 14 that will provide additional details on the pilot:

- **Webinar Date and Time**: February 14 at 1:00 p.m
- **Webinar Link**: [https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/444299304](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/444299304)
• **Webinar Phone Number:** 699-900-6833  
• **Meeting ID #:** 444299304

The **interest survey** is due February 21.

Email classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

**Assessment and Accountability**

**New: CLEP Bulk Purchasing Deadline**  
Please share with school administrators and test coordinators.

The deadline for school systems to order spring CLEP vouchers via the bulk purchasing process is **March 1**. The Bulk Purchase Program allows schools and school systems to purchase exam vouchers in bulk for prospective test takers. Purchasing institutions will receive a list of voucher codes which can be used by students to register for CLEP exams at no cost.

Schools and school systems that participate in bulk purchasing will receive monthly invoices and reports that will include the number of tests taken along with student identifiable scores. These data can be used to inform student support practices and allow schools and school systems to document and report school level test scores for SPS purposes.

A short video is available that highlights a school in Louisiana that is using the right mix of leadership, vision, and support for students through CLEP.

For more information regarding bulk purchasing, contact the CLEP program at clep@collegeboard.org or collegereadiness@la.gov.

**New: For District Testing Coordinators**

**General:**
• The new 2019-2020 Assessment Calendar is now posted in the Assessment Library.
• The 2018-2019 Assessment Month-by-Month Checklist is located in the Assessment Library. The checklist identifies key dates and deadlines for statewide assessment programs and accountability processes for next school year, provides action steps to ensure readiness for administering statewide assessments, and recommends resources for school systems and school staff.
• All changes to DTCs or accountability contacts must be submitted to the Department using the DTC and Accountability Contact Update form found in the Assessment Library.

**LEAP Connect**
• February 4-March 15: LEAP Connect testing window  
• If technical problems occur during testing, school and school system staff should follow the [Technical Assistance Protocol](mailto:technicalassistanceprotocol@la.gov), DTCs can contact the Department at assessment@la.gov, the Assessment Hotline at 844-268-7320, and DRC at lahelpdesk@datarecognitioncorp.com or 888-718-4836.

**ELPT**
• February 4-March 15: ELPT testing window  
• TIDE will be offline for updates this weekend from February 15 - February 17.
• If technical problems occur during testing, school and school system staff should follow the [ELPT Technical Assistance Protocol](mailto:elpttechnicalassistanceprotocol@la.gov). DTCs can contact the Department at assessment@la.gov, the Assessment Hotline at 844-268-7320, and AIR at laelpthelpdesk@air.org or 866-758-0231.

**ACT and WorkKeys**
• On March 18, ACT will be closed in observance of President’s Day. Customer Service for both ACT and WorkKeys will not be accessible on this day.
- February 4- Window opens to create test sessions and assign students to test sessions for ACT online only.
- February 13 at 1:00 p.m. – ACT Test Administration Training webinar hosted by ACT. Please register using the link prior to February 13. The link is also available on the ACT Schedule of Events.
- Now-March 1: Window to order additional standard time and non-college reportable accommodations ACT materials and WorkKeys accommodations and support materials for the initial testing date of March 12.
- By March 8, request late consideration of ACT-approved accommodations and/or supports on the ACT for eligible examinees in TAA using the ACT-Approved Late Consideration form in TAA. This is only for newly enrolled students having accommodation plans or newly diagnosed students. Forgetting to submit requests is not a reason for late consideration.
- Now-March 11 is the window to request for ACT to add and remove students by submitting the Enroll or Unenroll Students file and update student information in PANext.

Assessment Administration Support and Training
The next Assessment and Accountability Office Hours call will be February 19 at 1:00 p.m.
- Webinar Link: https://ldoe.zoom.us/
- Webinar Phone Number: 669-900-6833
- Meeting ID#: 393463942

The Office Hours Questions and Answers document is posted in the Assessment Library. Email assessment@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Interests and Opportunities Review Committees
As part of its ESSA plan, Louisiana is developing an Interests and Opportunities measure to be included in the accountability system starting in 2020-2021, pending approval by BESE at their March meeting. The Interests and Opportunities index will make up five percent of school performance scores and is intended to measure enrichment experiences in schools. Assistant Superintendent Jessica Baghian recently wrote about this work for the Thomas B. Fordham Institute.

The Department is currently seeking Louisiana educators with expertise in visual and performing arts, world language, and fitness and health education to provide feedback on draft Interests and Opportunities rubrics and scoring guides developed in partnership with local and national organizations with expertise in these areas.

Review committee participants should:
- have at least three years of experience in the enrichment content area,
- be credentialed in the content area, and
- have deep knowledge of relevant content standards.

Participants should expect to spend approximately 5-8 hours in March to read and provide feedback on the extent to which the rubrics align to Louisiana’s content standards and reflect Louisiana values. Participants will attend 1-2 virtual meetings.

To volunteer for the review committees, please email jill.zimmerman@la.gov by 5:00 p.m. on March 1 with the following information:
- Name and current job title
- Enrichment area, years of experience in the content area, and any relevant credentials
- School/school system where you work

Email assessment@la.gov with questions.
High School Pathways

New: 2018-2019 Graduate Diploma Orders
Please share with principals, professional school counselors, and data coordinators.

All diploma requests for 2018-2019 graduates must be submitted through the new Diploma Order form by March 14. Only one form should be completed for each school system. The Department will cover the costs for the initial order and distribution.

School systems will be billed directly by State Printing for orders made after March 14.

For more information, please contact jumpstart@la.gov.

New: Webinar for 2019-2020 Carl Perkins Grant and Super App
Please share with CTE Supervisors and Perkins grant staff.

The Department will host two webinars specific to the Carl Perkins Grant and the Super App. School systems will receive information about how Super App seeks to capture the requirements of Perkins V.

- Date and Time: February 27 at 3:00 p.m.
- Webinar Link: https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/207120758
- Webinar Phone Number: 646-876-9923
- Meeting ID#: 207120758

- Date and Time: February 28 at 3:00 p.m.
- Webinar Link: https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/471614604
- Webinar Phone Number: 646-876-9923
- Meeting ID#: 471614604

For more information, please contact jumpstart@la.gov.

New: 2018-2019 NCCER Webinar
Please share with NCCER craft instructors and school administrators.

The Department will host a webinar to support National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) craft instructors planning to offer a NCCER credential (Core Curriculum or Level completion) to other NCCER craft instructors. Participants will receive information about the process as well as expectations for the course.

- Webinar Date and Time: February 21 at 3:00 p.m.
- Webinar Link: https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/364481418
- Webinar Phone Number: 464-876-9923
- Meeting ID#: 364481418

For more information, please e-mail jumpstart@la.gov.

Reminder: Alternative Education School and Program Authorization
Please share with school system staff and administrators and all alternative education site leaders.

The Department has released the new application for alternative education schools and programs. The application should be completed by all school systems that are seeking new alternative schools and programs and/or desire to go through the new authorization process for an existing school for the 2019-2020 academic year. All school systems are required to confirm/verify existing alternative education sites. The deadline to complete this application is March 1.
Please email behaviorintervention@la.gov with any immediate questions.

**Educator Preparation**

**Reminder: Toolkit for Mentoring in Alternate Preparation Programs**
Please share with principals and mentor teachers.

In Louisiana, there are two pathways to teaching - undergraduate and post-baccalaureate. Roughly half of all teachers in Louisiana are prepared through post-baccalaureate or “alternate certification” training programs that require fewer pre-service practice experiences as compared to undergraduate residents.

As part of its research and support of alternate certification programs in Louisiana, the Department released a toolkit on January 28, to help schools provide these teaching candidates with significantly more time to practice with an expert mentor.

Please contact believeandprepare@la.gov with questions.

**Reminder: Louisiana Principal Fellowship/NISL Nomination Forms Available**

The Louisiana Principal Fellowship Program partners with the National Institute for School Leaders (NISL) to offer a yearlong executive development program for school and school system leaders in all stages of their careers.

The enrollment portal for Cohort 5 (2019-2020) of the Louisiana Principal Fellowship is now open and available on the Louisiana Principal Fellowship webpage. This newly developed webpage will contain important information about the Principal Fellowship including: unit overviews, agendas, sign-in sheets, newsletters, and payment information.

Nominations are available on a first come, first served basis and should be completed no later than March 15 to ensure a spot.

Please contact teri.roberts@la.gov with questions.

**Special Education**

**New: Spring Training for TS GOLD OSEP**

In July of 2018, Louisiana transitioned from AEPS to TS GOLD OSEP for the assessment of children ages 3-5 with disabilities required for federal reporting. To continue to support early childhood special education staff in the implementation of TS GOLD OSEP, the Department, in collaboration with TS GOLD, will be hosting the third day of the three-day Accreditation Program for Trainers (APT) Training in March.

Each school system that serves children ages 3-5 with disabilities sent one representative to attend the first two days of APT training in the summer of 2018; the Department is asking that the same representative attend the third and final day of APT training so that he or she can support early childhood special educators throughout the school system in the implementation of TS GOLD.

Attendees should register by selecting the date and location that is most convenient for them. Registration is free, but school systems are responsible for any travel and lodging costs.

Please email brandi.huling@la.gov with questions.
Reminder: Alternate Assessment Eligibility Criteria Updates

The Department will hold a webinar for pupil appraisal representatives and special education coordinators on February 14 at 9:00 a.m. to discuss alternate assessment eligibility revisions to Bulletin 1530 and implications for pupil appraisal and IEP teams. Pre-registration is not required.

- **Webinar Date and Time**: February 14 at 9:00 a.m.
- **Webinar Link**: [https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/297875259](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/297875259)
- **Webinar Phone Number**: 646-876-9923 (For dial-in only)
- **Meeting ID#**: 297875259

For more information, please email specialeducation@la.gov.

Reminder: IDEA Grant Application Feedback Survey Open

Each year, the Department submits a grant application on the use of state-level IDEA funds to the U.S. Department of Education. As part of the this year’s grant application development process, the Department is seeking feedback from members of the special education community on how to prioritize funding for allowable special education activities. An**y interested stakeholders, including school system representatives, parents, and other members of the public should complete this survey by February 13.

Please direct any questions to specialeducation@la.gov.

Data

New: Spring MFP Data Collections

Please share with business and financial supervisors.

The February 1 MFP collection is open for the submission of data to the Student Information System (SIS), School Calendar System (SPC), and Special Education Reporting System (SER). This data is used for MFP funding, federal reporting, economically disadvantaged calculations, and assessments. The reporting deadline for these systems is February 15.

The spring collection period is open for submitting data to the Teacher Student Data Link System (TSDL). This data is used for precoding of student labels for EOC/LEAP 2025 testing. The reporting deadline is February 15.

The February BOR collection is also open for submitting mid-year transcript data to the Student Transcript System (STS). This data is used for financial aid and college admissions. The reporting deadline is February 13.

To assist school systems with verifying data submissions and correcting their data, several iterations of validation reports and rosters have been dropped to the Data Management FTP. Please refer to the 2018-2019 Benchmark Calendar for other important information regarding data submission deadlines.

For support, please contact sherry.randall@la.gov.

New: January Quarterly Home Study Reports

Please share with child welfare/attendance and home study personnel.
The quarterly home study reports for January are available via the Data Management FTP in zipped files named `LEACode_LEAName_Jan2019HomeStudy` and will remain on the FTP until April 1. Within the zipped file, there will be the following:

- statewide enrollment numbers of BESE approved home study students
- detailed list of students enrolled in home study program
- each student’s home study approval notification letter
- statewide enrollment numbers of registered nonpublic schools and student enrollment
- detailed list of school system-level registered schools and student enrollment

Please contact sue.millican@la.gov with questions.

**Reminder: Early and Accurate ID Data**

Please share with curriculum and instruction and special education supervisors.

The Department will release school-system level early and accurate ID data files on the FTP by this Friday, February 8. There will be two files named `LEACode_LEAName_Early and Accurate ID Data Snapshots` and `LEACode_LEAName_Early and Accurate ID Data Spreadsheet`, which depict trends in LEAP results by school system alongside available early literacy and early intervention data.

These snapshot complement the more detailed discussion of the vision for early literacy presented in the *Improving Outcomes for Children Birth to 3rd Grade Through Early and Accurate Identification* presentation at the January/February Collaborations.

Please email melissa.mcconnell@la.gov with questions.

**Grants Management**

**New: Technical Assistance Webinars Available for ReConnect Program**

USDA Rural Development will host a series of informational webinars and workshops to provide more information on the ReConnect Program. The ReConnect Program offers loans, grants, and loan/grant combinations to facilitate internet broadband deployment in areas of rural America without sufficient access to broadband.

The informational webinar is scheduled for tomorrow, February 13, at 1:00 p.m. This hour-long technical assistance webinar will provide a high-level overview of the funding opportunity available under the ReConnect Program including eligibility provisions, proposed service area, and evaluation factors. It will be offered twice. Pre-registration is available. Please note: The webinar link and event details will be emailed following registration.

Please contact melanie.mayeux@la.gov with questions.

**Reminder: High Cost Services Round 1 Allocations**

Allocations for Round 1 of the High Cost Services grant are now visible in eGMS. School systems that have been approved through the application process must now create budgets by creating an amendment in the High Cost Services Round 1 application in eGMS.

Amendment 1 must be created for all students for whom an allocation was received. The Department will review budget amendments for eligibility and allowability as they are submitted by school systems.

For support, please contact ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov.
Safe and Healthy Schools

New: School Safety Training

The U.S. Secret Service and Louisiana State Police are sponsoring a 2019 National Threat Assessment Center Presentation – a free training for law enforcement and school administrators and staff on assessing school threats – on March 15 in Baton Rouge. Registration is mandatory and a block of hotel rooms has been reserved at a rate of $100 per night.

Please see this invitation for additional information and contact Tara McLeese with the U.S. Secret Service at tara.mcleese@ussd.dhs.gov with any questions.

New: Medicaid Claiming and Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment (CPST)

Please share with personnel directors, business managers, special education directors, and third-party billing vendors.

The Louisiana’s Department of Health’s (LDH) Medicaid office has informed the Department that school systems may no longer claim Medicaid reimbursement for behavioral health services provided by certified school psychologists and certified school social workers under the Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment (CPST) code, H0036.

School systems must cease submitting claims for CPST services immediately. For claims already submitted, Medicaid will no longer be able to make interim payments and these claims will be denied beginning February 6. LDH is currently assessing how the FY 2018 cost settlement period will be handled and will provide guidance at a later date.

School systems may continue to claim Medicaid reimbursement for school-based behavioral health services that are provided by licensed clinical social workers, licensed clinical psychologists, and licensed professional counselors under the Other Licensed Professional (OLP) code.

Please reference the available memo for additional information about this change.

Please contact michael.comeaux@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Readiness: Training Identification Preparedness Planning (RTIPP) Course

The Department has partnered with LSU’s National Center for Biomedical Research and Training/Academy of Counter Terrorist Education (LSU-NCBRT/ACE) to provide technical assistance and training to schools and local emergency officials. Ouachita Parish will be hosting the next Readiness: Training Identification Preparedness Planning (RTIPP) training course, scheduled February 14-15 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Monroe. Please note: Seating is limited.

Please contact rlandry@ncbtr.lsu.edu to register and with any additional questions.