Dear Colleagues,

Last week, two teenagers in custody at the Ware Youth Center, one thirteen and one seventeen, separately took their own lives.

I did not know either of them. I am sure that their families, friends, and school communities are in states of deep grief. I am sure their loved ones are knowing a pain we can only pray never visits our own families.

Nonetheless, the thought of two young people choosing to end their lives within days of one another, mere feet from one another, in our state, under the supervision of our government, is a fact I have not been able to get past.

It has called me to consider the scars left on so many homes from the horrors of teen depression, addiction, and suicide, phenomena that are at once so obviously related to one another and yet so elusive and impossible to explain.

It has reminded me of the importance of ceaseless honesty in public service, without need for blame or derision. Whether this was someone’s fault or not, however many people failed these children, however many people did right by them, we will be better parents, teachers, and citizens for there being an honest accounting of what happened, so that, to the extent such events are preventable, they shall be prevented in the future.

And it has reminded me of the irreplaceable force of love. If we learn to love from the children in our lives, we demonstrate what we have learned when we love others’ children as we love our own. I do not know what cures broken homes, persistent substance abuse, or the terrible sense that one does not belong. But I do know that we each have a chance every day to show our deep love of the children in our schools and lives. These tragedies, whatever explains them, remind me of this great daily opportunity.

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

John

In This Issue

- **School System Support**
- **Assessment & Accountability**
- **High School Pathways**
- **Special Education**
- **Data**
- **Safe and Healthy Schools**
Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events
- **2018-2019 NCCER Craft Instructor to Craft Instructor Webinar**: February 21 at 3:00 p.m.
- **Assessment and Accountability Office Hours**: February 26 at 1:00 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
- **Supporting Early and Accurate Identification Interest Survey** deadline: February 21
- **2019 Teacher Leader Summit T-Shirt Design Contest** submission deadline: February 22
- **Jump Start Summer Request for Applications** priority deadline for new applicants: February 28
- **CLEP Bulk Purchasing** deadline: March 1

School System Support

New: **2019 Teacher Leader Summit T-Shirt Design Contest**
Please share with Teacher Leaders.

The Department is seeking inspiration for 2019 Teacher Leader Summit t-shirt design! Teacher Leaders with an artistic flair are encouraged to submit their design for consideration by February 22 to ldoecommunications@la.gov. The winning design will be announced in the March edition of the Teacher Leader newsletter.

See contest rules for details or contact louisianateacherleaders@la.gov with questions.

Assessment and Accountability

New: **Updated U.S. History Practice Test Answer Key with Annotated Student Responses**
Please share with Teacher Leaders and U.S. History teachers.

The updated U.S. History Practice Test Answer Key is available in the Practice Test Library. The key now includes annotated student responses to help teachers and students better understand the scoring of constructed-response and extended-response items.

Practice test answer keys for social studies grades 3-8 with annotated student responses are also available in the Practice Test Library.

Please contact assessment@la.gov with any questions.

New: **For District Testing Coordinators**

General:
- 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
- **Now-March 15**: LEAP Connect testing window
- Testing irregularities should be emailed to assessment@la.gov at the conclusion of testing each week.
- STCs should ensure that TAs, proctors, and monitors are appropriately assigned to testing groups for LEAP Connect testing.

ELPT
- **Now-March 15**: ELPT testing window
- Testing irregularities should be emailed to assessment@la.gov at the conclusion of testing each week.
- The ELPT Data Entry Interface Guide (DEI) is posted in the ELPT portal. The DEI is a component of the Online Testing System that allows authorized users to enter student assessment data, such as item responses and scores. Entering student data is required for the ELPT large print and braille forms.
- STCs should ensure that TAs, proctors, and monitors are appropriately assigned to testing groups for ELPT testing.
- AIR is working closely with Google to address an issue with Chrome OS v72, so that AIR can support the update for online testing. Until this issue is resolved, AIR is asking all Chromebook users to hold off on updating their devices to the newest version if they have not already. If you have any additional questions, please contact the Louisiana ELPT Help Desk at 866-758-0231 or email laelpthelpdesk@air.org.

ACT and WorkKeys
- The window is now open to create test sessions and assign students to test sessions for ACT online only.
- **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**: Window to request for ACT to add and remove students by submitting the Enroll or Unenroll Students file and update student information in PANext.
- **This week**: School systems will receive materials for the March 12 test date.
- **Before March 11**: Conduct sessions for examinees to complete the non-test information on the answer documents for paper testing, train room supervisors and proctors, and prepare rooms and materials.
- **Before March 27**: Conduct sessions for examinees to complete the non-test information for the ACT taken online or provide the information to examinees to complete on their own.

Assessment Administration Support and Training
The next Assessment and Accountability **Office Hours** call will be February 26 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: 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.

High School Pathways

Reminder: 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.

Reminder: 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 can capture the requirements of Perkins V.

- **Date and Time**: February 27 at 3:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link**: [https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/207120758](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](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/471614604)
- **Webinar Phone Number**: 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#**: 471614604

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

Reminder: 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](https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/364481418)
Special Education

Reminder: 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.

Data

Reminder: 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.

Safe and Healthy Schools

Reminder: 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 to attend and a block of hotel rooms has been reserved at a rate of $100 per night.
Reminder: Medicaid Claiming and Community Psychiatric Support and Treatment (CPST) 
Please share with 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. This change is a result of Act 582 of the 2018 Legislative Session.

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.

LDH has developed an alternate service definition that defines the school based behavioral health services provided by certified personnel in the school system and has submitted it to federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) for review.

Please reference the available memo for additional information about this change and contact michael.comeaux@la.gov with questions.