

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



April 3, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

While Washington investigates Facebook data and Russian bots, the best shield most Americans have to fight off propaganda is our own knowledge of the world and our capacity to understand what we read. A literate citizenry has become a matter of national defense.

As with children, a literate adult can read individual words and can connect them into sentences. But the literate adult also has the broad background knowledge necessary to make sense of the words she encounters. When adults read that a player rounded the bases, for example, we know that means something more than just running around a field – someone hit a home run.

On today's reading tests, in Louisiana and elsewhere, students read articles and stories they've not encountered before and don't necessarily know anything about. This may explain why older students struggle more than younger students on these tests; there is simply more stuff older students have to know to be sure they will comprehend an article written for an older audience.

The trouble is that by not requiring that students possess knowledge of any specific book or facts, reading tests have contributed to a false impression that success as a reader is mainly about having skills like being able to summarize, and not about background knowledge. This is not fair to middle school and high school students, who need knowledge of the world to become effective adult readers. It's particularly not fair to students of historically disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, whose summer breaks often don't involve trips abroad or afternoons at the museum, and who are thus at a disadvantage on any test that, whether it's acknowledged or not, measures one's background knowledge.

Yesterday, Louisiana submitted a [proposal](#) to the federal Department of Education to develop a pilot reading test that, contingent on available funding, would address this situation. Rather than administering separate social studies and English tests at the end of the year, Louisiana school systems participating in the pilot will teach short social studies and English curriculum units in tandem over the course of the year, pausing briefly after each unit to assess students' reading, writing, and content knowledge. Students, teachers, and parents will know the knowledge and books covered on the tests well in advance. Knowledge of the world and of specific books will be measured as a co-equal to students' literacy skills.

The pilot will also streamline the number of state tests, will report results throughout the year, and will allow some choice among school systems as to which books and units to pursue. These assessments will not only streamline state assessments, but also expand the options districts have for how to assess students in English and social studies, adjusting to the new model if they choose to. You can find more information about Louisiana's innovative assessment pilot in the [overview](#).

Tests have provided transparency and accountability. They are important and should be sustained. But reading tests also influence what is taught to our children. Knowledge being essential to a literate Louisiana, it's time to put knowledge on the test.

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

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Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events

- [Weekly Support Call for Special Education Planning \(Strategy 1\)](#): April 4 at 2:00 p.m.
- [April Special Education Leader Monthly Webinar Cancelled](#): April 5
- [Monthly Data Coordinator Office Hours](#): April 5 at 3:15 p.m.
- [LEAP 2025 Online Testing Window for Grades 3-8 Opens](#): April 9
- [Assessment Development Educator Review Committees Webinar](#): April 10 at 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.
- [Jump Start Summers Applicant Webinar](#): April 11 at 2:00 p.m.

Important Deadlines

- [Louisiana High School Redesign Network Application](#): April 6
- [Outstanding School Support Employee Awards Program Accepting Applications](#): April 9
- [JAG-LA 2018-2019 Intent to Continue Grant Application](#): April 11
- [Teacher Leader Summit Registration](#): May 18

School System Support

New: Coming Soon - Teacher Leader Summit Registration

The [2018 Louisiana Teacher Leader Summit](#) will take place **May 30 - June 1 at the Morial Convention Center in New Orleans.**

- All sessions, including those that require pre-registration, will be available for registration the week of April 23.
- The deadline to register is May 18.
- Educators must register for each day they plan to attend the Summit.

- Registration is open to all and no school system code is required; however, some sessions require pre-registration.
- All general sessions are first come, first served.

As a reminder, registrants need to coordinate with their school system's Teacher Leader Coordinator if requiring their school system to cover travel expenses.

Please contact louisianateacherleaders@la.gov with questions related to the 2018 Summit.

Family Engagement

Reminder: Family Engagement Policy Materials Released

The Every Student Succeeds Act provides greater clarity and direction to school systems on what meaningful family engagement should look like. These updates necessitate changes to the way school systems and schools design and implement family engagement policies and school and family compacts.

To support schools and school systems in the development of 2018-2019 family engagement policies, the Department has posted the following resources to the [Family Support Toolbox Library](#):

- [Family Engagement Policies and Best Practices](#) presentation
- A sample family engagement policy [checklist](#) and [template](#) for school systems
- A sample family engagement policy [checklist](#) and [template](#) for schools
- [Sample Family-School Compact](#) and [template](#)

Please email annie.morrison@la.gov with questions.

Assessment and Accountability

New: Reminders for District Testing Coordinators

General

- All changes to DTC or accountability staff contacts must be submitted to the Department using the [DTC and Accountability Contact Update](#) form found in the Assessment Library.
- The [Accommodations and Accessibility Features User Guide](#) has been updated and posted in the Assessment Accessibility + Accommodations section of the [Assessment Library](#).

LEAP 360

- LEAP 360 Interim assessment District Item Response Files, School Test Session Summary Reports, and Test Session Summary Reports were posted for all forms on March 23. Scheduled postings will be March 26, April 9, April 23, May 7, May 21, June 4, and June 18.

LEAP 2025

- Test setup for grades 3-8 and high school are now open. Test coordinators can schedule test sessions, assign students to sessions, and verify accommodations. STCs can use the [eDIRECT User Guide](#) for step-by-step directions.
- April 9 - May 4: LEAP 2025 grades 3-8 computer-based testing window
- April 23 - May 18: LEAP 2025 high school computer-based testing window
- April 30 - May 4: LEAP 2025 grades 3-4 paper-based testing window
- DTCs should ensure schools are running the readiness check before testing each day. Schools should open INSIGHT, select the purple check mark in the bottom left corner, and type 7745. If the screen does not show all green check marks, the technology coordinator should be notified.

- District Test Coordinators needing the unsent response flags cleared can now contact the Department assessment hotline to have those flags removed. Please check and ensure all responses are cleared from the TSM prior to calling the Department.

ELPT

- Results will be available in [eDIRECT](#) in May.

LEAP Connect/LAA1

- Results will be available in the [Online Reporting System](#) in May.

ACT and WorkKeys

- April 3 – Last day to administer ACT on paper with accommodation and/or supports
- April 4 – Last day to administer WorkKeys on paper with accommodations and/or supports
- April 5 – Pre-scheduled FedEx pickup for ACT and WorkKeys test booklets, answer documents, and test administration forms from the accommodations testing window
- April 6 – Deadline to order ACT standard time materials for makeup testing
- April 13 – Deadline for ACT to receive materials for scoring (late-arriving answer documents will not be scored)
- April 13 – Last day of the WorkKeys testing window

Reminder: Assessment Development Educator Review Committees

The Department has begun recruiting for LEAP 2025 Assessment Development Educator Review Committees. Committees will convene from May through September. Selected educators will review potential LEAP 2025 assessment items or provide recommendations for scoring extended-response and constructed-response tasks.

Interest survey links, specific information about the different committees, and contact information for the assessment coordinators can be found at [Assessment Development Educator Review Committees](#) in the [Assessment Guidance](#) library.

An Assessment Development Educator Review Committees webinar will take place on **April 10 at 9:30 a.m., with a repeat at 2:30 p.m.** Any supervisors who were not able to attend the committees session at the March collaborations and all teachers who may be interested in serving on any educator review committee should plan to attend. The webinar will be recorded and posted in the [Assessment Guidance](#) library.

To join the meeting:

- go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/assessmentdevelopment2/>; and
- dial 1-855-240-2575 and enter participant pin code: 60265090.

The following [interest surveys](#) close **April 13**:

- Item Content and Bias Reviews: All science and social studies
- Item Alignment Review: All math and ELA
- Ranging: Biology, US History, Algebra I, Geometry, and LEAP Connect ELA

High School Pathways

New: AP® Test Fee Program

Please share with high school administrators and AP coordinators.

The AP® Test Fee Program has historically funded exam subsidies for low-income students who take AP within a given school year. However, with the passage of the ESSA, the AP Test Fee Program was not renewed.

To ensure that **low-income students** are not adversely affected by the changes in ESSA, the Department recommends that **schools and districts use a combination of [funding options](#) to provide exam subsidies for low-income students**, as was intended by the changes made to ESSA.

By subsidizing the AP exam fees for eligible public school students, schools and school districts will ensure that all students have access to opportunities to earn postsecondary credit at minimal cost. To fully replace the federal exam subsidy amount, school systems should **budget \$53 for each eligible AP exam**.

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

New: Jump Start Summers Applicant Webinar

The Department will host a repeat webinar for Jump Start Summers (funded by SCA/Course Choice) applicants who received a “Proceed” rating in the interview and a “Favorable” rating in the independent panel review. The webinar will review the program and Interagency Agreement requirements for providers including the awarding of Carnegie Units, credentialing requirements, participant tracking, and funding. The webinar is a repeat of information previously presented and will be held on **April 11 at 2:00 p.m.**

To join the webinar:

- go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/rhs12svm6gwk/>

Jump Start Summers providers which will be recommended for approval at the April BESE meeting.

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

Reminder: Johns Hopkins High School Redesign Cohort

Please share this entry with principals.

The Department and Johns Hopkins University launched today the Louisiana High School Redesign Cohort. This Cohort will include approximately **25 high schools—alternative and traditional—that will work together to re-think the core components of high school design**. The redesign cohort is an opportunity for high schools to collaborate with their peers and national experts on how to prepare students for the 21st century. This cohort will reimagine both high school structures and services to maximize positive student outcomes, and better prepare students for post-secondary and careers.

In order to be eligible to participate in the initial cohort of 25 sites, a school must be listed on the **Comprehensive Intervention Required list** and submit an [application](#). All applications must be submitted by 3pm on **April 6**. The Department will notify schools of their status by **April 30**.

Schools and school systems will be responsible for their own travel and accommodations for the two convenings, but there will be no other associated costs with cohort membership.

For more information, contact tristen.quillory@la.gov.

Reminder: Jump Start Super Summer Institute Registration

Please share with CTE Supervisors, principals, and CTE instructors.

Registration for the **2018 Jump Start Super Summer Institute (SSI)** opened on March 26 and will close on May 1. Sessions for basic and statewide credentials will be offered at multiple locations and dates.

Sites and Dates:

- **June 4-8:** [Northwest \(Bossier City\)](#)
- **June 11-15:** [Bayou \(Lockport\)](#) and [Southwest \(Lake Charles\)](#)
- **July 16-20:** [Acadiana \(Lafayette\)](#), [Capital \(Gonzales and Livingston\)](#)
- **July 23-27:** [Northwest Louisiana \(Bossier City\)](#)
- **May 1-July 20:** [National EMS Academy \(Lafayette\)](#) - This site has sessions with online trainings that will begin May 1. Registration for trainings at this site will close April 20. On-site training will be from July 9 - 20.

The Department will pay training costs and provide lunch for educators attending SSI. School Systems are responsible for all travel expenses, textbooks and a registration fee (\$250/session) for which School Systems may use their Career Development Funds (CDF) or 2017-2018 Carl Perkins Funds.

Schools Systems will be invoiced after registration closes. All registration fees must be paid at least one week prior to the session beginning. For assistance in planning registration and a list of sessions, view the [SSI 2018 Pre-Planning Document](#).

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

Special Education

New: April Special Education Leader Monthly Webinar CANCELLED

The Department's monthly webinar for school system directors, supervisors, and coordinators of special education scheduled for **Thursday, April 5, has been CANCELLED. The next webinar will take place on May 3 at 2:00 p.m.** Topics in the May webinar will include upcoming deadlines, updates, guidance, and training opportunities.

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

Reminder: Weekly Support Calls for Special Education Planning

Please share with Special Education Directors, Federal Programs and IDEA managers, and Curriculum & Instruction supervisors.

The Department will host a series of weekly calls designed to support school systems in completing the [strategy-based planning template](#) that was introduced at the March Supervisors Collaboratives and is intended to be a helpful tool for planning special education programs for the 2018-2019 school year. **All calls will be on Wednesdays from 2:00-3:00 p.m.** The schedule for the series is below:

- April 4: Identify disabilities early and accurately (Strategy 1)
- April 11: Provide high quality instruction (Strategy 2)
- April 18: Specialized supports and related services (Strategy 3)
- April 25: Coordinate effective transitions (Strategy 4)
- May 2: Program administration and support
- May 9: Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)

To join the **April 4** call:

- go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/strategy1/>; and
- dial 1-855-240-2575 and enter the Pin Code: 30160130.

Data

New: Update Regarding Cohort Graduation Data Certification

The CLEP scores for students who are members of the 2016-2017 graduation cohort have been posted to school system secure ftps, and includes all students who earned a score of 50 or greater. The state cohort file has been updated to reflect additional points earned in the strength of diploma index, so it is not necessary to submit these students in the LA Data Review system. Submissions that were completed prior to this notice will be reviewed and approved.

The data certification system is scheduled to close for new submissions on April 10. Students who were selected for exit code review must have documentation provided in LA Data Review to avoid being reclassified as dropouts.

Please send questions to assessment@la.gov.

New: 2017-2018 Teacher Roster Verification for VAM and TSG

The Curriculum Verification and Results (CVR) Reporting Portal roster verification process ensures that teachers are assigned to the correct courses and classroom rosters for the purposes of value-added (VAM) and transitional student growth (TSG) data analyses.

In 2017-2018, VAM results will account for 35 percent of the Student Growth component of the teacher's final evaluation. Teachers in grades 4-8 in ELA, Mathematics, and Social Studies will receive VAM results. Teachers in Algebra I, Geometry, and English I will receive TSG results in 2017-2018 because these assessments are in transition to new achievement levels. These TSG results are for information purposes only and will not count in teachers' final evaluation.

April 9-20: The CVR portal will be open for view only. During this time, users can view and check the roster data for accuracy but **cannot** make changes in CVR. The CVR Help Desk will be able to assist with any issues that a district must correct in the source data systems.

May 7- 18: The CVR portal will be open for roster verification. During this time, users can view and check the roster data for accuracy, and make changes in the system.

An updated user guide for CVR is available in the [Compass Library](#).

Please email ldoecvr@la.gov with questions regarding roster verification.

Reminder: January and February SNAP Files

Please share with data coordinators and data managers.

There was a delay in the receipt and processing of the January and February Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) files. The January file was loaded to eScholar DirectMatch on March 21. The February file was loaded to DirectMatch on March 30.

Please refer to the [USDA memo](#) dated June 19, 2014 regarding the eligibility effective date for directly certified students (posted on the CNP website under memos).

If you have questions, please contact john.dupre@la.gov.

Reminder: Monthly Data Coordinator Webinar

Please share with data coordinators and data managers.

The Department will hold training for data coordinators and data managers of the Student Transcript System (STS) on **April 5 at 1:00 p.m.** The data management team will be on hand to answer STS questions and to review other important information regarding STS transcript submissions. No pre-registration is required.

To join the webinar:

- go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/dcw/>;
- enter the meeting room as a guest and provide your name; and
- select the "listen only mode."

The presentation will be posted on the INSIGHT coordinator's portal under "Monthly DC Webinars" by April 4.

Please email systemsupport@la.gov with questions.

Policy

Reminder: March 2018 BESE Meeting Summary

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) met on March 13 and approved a number of recommendations. Please see the [March 2018 BESE Summary](#) for the approvals that directly impact the activities of local school systems.

Please contact ryan.n.gremillion@la.gov with questions.

Finance

Reminder: Final Charter School Per-Pupil Amounts for FY2017-2018

The final [FY 2017-2018 charter per-pupil amounts](#) are now available. Please refer the [memorandum](#) for additional information.

Please contact ldoemfphelpdesk@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Mid-year Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) Adjustments

Please share with business managers.

Per [HCR 7](#), the MFP Resolution for the FY2017-2018 MFP Formula, the [March 2018 Allocation](#) has been updated to include the October and February mid-year adjustments for students and the final local per pupil amount for charter schools.

Please contact ldoemfphelpdesk@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Proposed Fiscal Year 2018-2019 MFP

The BESE-adopted MFP Resolution and Formula was submitted to the Legislature on March 15. The proposed MFP documents for FY2017-2018 are provided in the Department's [Minimum Foundation Program Library](#).

If you have questions regarding this information please contact ldoemfhelpdesk@la.gov.