

# LDOE Weekly Newsletter



**April 21, 2020**

Dear Colleagues,

Last week, the Governor officially [extended the closure of school facilities](#) through the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year to curb the spread of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). This extension, while necessary for public health and safety, has amplified the uneasiness felt by the graduating high school Class of 2020, many of whom were hopeful their traditional senior proms, senior trips, and other seminal events of their high school years may still be possible.

As a parent of a current high school senior, I understand their dismay. I, too, looked forward to watching my daughter experience the pomp and circumstance that comes with this important and exciting time.

But, as I have told her and as I remind all of you: Though graduation celebrations may look different this year, the accomplishments of our high school seniors are no less valuable. The Class of 2020 can—and must—still be honored.

Many school systems have started to communicate graduation ceremony plans to families. Some have opted to postpone in-person graduation ceremonies to later in the summer, if and when it is safe to gather. Others, particularly those who have a large number of graduates who will soon head off to military service, have scheduled [virtual graduation ceremonies](#).

Many school systems have also found unique, alternative ways to celebrate seniors ahead of graduation ceremonies. Among the highlights:

- **Instagram Prom:** Though it does plan to host a traditional prom dance as soon as possible, MSA West in Iberville Parish is hosting an “Insta Prom 2020” on the originally scheduled prom night. Insta Prom, which will be hosted through the school’s Instagram account, will feature teacher appearances, fun challenges, and the release of Senior Superlatives every five minutes. Students are encouraged to dress up. On April 25, at 7 p.m., follow along using #MSAInstaProm2020.
- **Drive-through cap and gown pick-up:** Some Louisiana schools are organizing drive-through pickup for graduation caps and gowns for seniors. “They stay in their cars, and we put it in their passenger side or trunk,” said Jim Rabb, a sales representative for memorabilia company Jostens. “...We clap for them, and they start honking their horns. We try to make it as fun as possible.” [Learn more.](#)
- **Senior parade:** As social distancing has become the new norm, people have come up with new and creative ways to celebrate birthdays, baby showers, and other events with “drive-by parades.” Teachers at Eunice High School in St. Landry Parish put a twist on the parade as seniors stopped by the campus to retrieve their caps and gowns. They lined up, congratulatory signs in hand, and cheered along the road. [Learn more.](#)
- **Congratulatory signage:** DeSoto Parish Schools honored seniors at Stanley and Logansport high schools by printing banners with photographs of each student to display along the roadside. [Learn more.](#) Other schools have printed yard signs for each of their seniors to display at home.

We appreciate these creative efforts to recognize this special group of students, and we look forward to joining you all as you continue to celebrate the Class of 2020 throughout the coming months.

Hats off to you and to the Class of 2020,

Beth Scioneaux  
Acting State Superintendent

## In This Issue

- [School System Support](#)
- [Assessment & Accountability](#)
- [High School Pathways](#)
- [Special Education](#)
- [Data](#)
- [Finance](#)

## Important Dates for School Systems

### Upcoming Events

- [Super App Competitive Funding Webinar](#) (*date change*): April 23 at 11:00 a.m.
- [Assessment and Accountability Office Hours](#): April 28 at 4:15 p.m.
- [Emergency Planning Guidance Webinar](#): April 30 at 1:00 p.m.
- [Student Transcript System \(STS\) Training for Nonpublic Schools](#): May 4 at 11:00 a.m.
- [Student Transcript System \(STS\) Training for Public Schools](#): May 4 at 1:00 p.m.

### Important Deadlines

- [IDEA Draft Grant Application Public Comment](#) deadline: April 24
- [Remote AP Access Form](#) deadline: April 24
- [Jump Start Construction Connect Scholars Program Application](#) deadline: May 1
- [Special Education Advisory Panel \(SEAP\) Vacancy Application](#) deadline: May 8

### Postponed/Canceled Events

- Student of the Year events (Postponed)
- Spring 2020 Counselor Institutes (April; rescheduled as virtual institutes)
- 2020 Teacher Leader Summit (May, in-person convening canceled; virtual session offerings will be shared in coming weeks)
- 2020 Jump Start Super Summer Institutes

Please note: The [2019-2020 School System Support Calendar](#) has been updated to include these changes.

## School System Support

### **New: COVID-19 Guidance**

On April 15, Gov. John Bel Edwards [signed a proclamation](#) to extend the closure of public school facilities to students for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year, to curb the spread of COVID-19. School systems are currently engaging students in distance education.

Please reference the Department's [COVID-19 Information and Resources](#) webpage for regularly updated guidance. Review the [K-12 Frequently Asked Questions](#) document that is specific to the concerns of school systems for the most up-to-date information. Child care providers should refer to the [Early Childhood Frequently Asked Questions](#) for specific guidance. For education-specific information, contact the Department at [LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov](mailto:LDOECOVID19Support@la.gov).

## **New: Emergency Planning Guidance Webinar**

A CARES Act Webinar will be held on April 30 at 1:00 p.m. to review priorities for starting 2020-2021 strong and information regarding competitive funds. Superintendents, key school system leaders, and federal programs directors should attend. Webinar details are listed below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** April 30 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93687201819>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 936 8720 1819
- **Meeting Password:** 008237

Please contact [ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov](mailto:ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov) with questions.

## **New: School System Planning (Date Change)**

The Super App Competitive Funding Webinar has been rescheduled to be held on April 23 at 11:00 a.m. to review important information regarding Super App competitive funds. Federal Programs Directors and Super App Planning Team members directly involved in budgeting funds should attend. Webinar details are listed below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** April 23 at 11:00 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/212342956>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 212 342 956
- **Meeting Password:** 022648

Please contact [ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov](mailto:ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov) with questions.

## **New: 2020 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Semifinalists Announced**

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) recently announced the 2020 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Semifinalists. Nine students, from both public and nonpublic schools, from Louisiana are among them. They represent the following schools:

- Episcopal School of Acadiana
- Destrehan High School
- Baton Rouge Magnet High School
- Jesuit High School
- Ruston High School
- Baton Rouge Magnet High School
- Captain Shreve High School
- Baton Rouge Magnet High School

The achievements of these outstanding students deserve acknowledgment. ED and the Department encourage school systems to assist with providing further honors, media coverage, and contacts for the semifinalists. Recognition of these students will bring wider awareness and understanding of the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program to a greater number of the Nation's citizens, encourage countless others like them to challenge themselves and achieve, highlight the education success stories, and most importantly, emphasize the country's most precious resource—its talented young people.

Visit the [ED's website](#) for the complete list of semifinalists. The 2020 U.S Presidential Scholars will be announced in May. To learn more about the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program and its history, visit [ED's U.S. Presidential Scholars Program page](#).

## **Reminder: Guidance on ESF-17 Cyber Management During COVID-19**

As individuals continue the transition to online Zoom meetings, the State's ESF-17 team strongly recommends everyone to [take the following steps](#) to ensure Zoom meetings are properly secured:

- **Require passwords for all Zoom meetings.**
- **Never post Zoom links over public platforms\social media.**
- **Set screen sharing to "Host Only."**
- **Update all Zoom applications.**
  - (iOS/MacOS/Windows10)
- **Use the "Waiting Room" for Zoom meetings open to public participation.**
  - A virtual staging area that stops your guests from joining until you're ready for them.
  - Meeting hosts can customize Waiting Room settings for additional control and [personalization](#).

Victims of a teleconference hijacking or "Zoombombing," are strongly encouraged to report the event to the State's Cyber Crimes Unit (CCU) at Louisiana State Police Fusion Center by phone at 800-434-8007 or via email at [lafusion.center@la.gov](mailto:lafusion.center@la.gov) as soon as possible.

## **Assessment and Accountability**

### **For District Testing Coordinators and Accountability Contacts**

#### **Update: Waivers for Testing**

- To date, the only students who have a waiver from the assessment graduation requirements are graduating seniors who were enrolled at the time of school closing and were in the February 1 enrollment report.
- The current waiver does not apply to students who were not enrolled in school or students who are not yet eligible to graduate.
- In May, the Department will request a change in policy to waive the assessment requirement for a high school assessment-eligible course earned in 2019-2020 for students who would have been initial testers in spring 2020. Students who failed a subject test in a prior administration will not be eligible for the waiver of the assessment requirement.

#### **ACT**

- **Update**
  - ACT announced new flexibilities for summer testing and new test-at-home options that will become available in the fall and winter. Information about at-home testing with remote proctoring will be shared as it becomes available.
- **ACT National Test Date**
  - Although students are only able to register for June 13 and July 18 for national test administrations in summer, testing sites can request a one-week delay in administration (June 20 and July 25)

- **ACT State Administration**
  - June 2 standard paper
  - June 2–4 online
  - June 2–8 accommodated window
  - October 6 and October 20 paper-based administration only for students who were juniors in 2019-2020 and were unable to test

#### **Update Cohort Graduation Data Certification**

- Pending the duration of the stay-at-home order, the opening of cohort graduation data certification is scheduled to open on May 6 and will remain open until June 5. Accountability contacts will be notified prior to the official opening date.

#### **Update GOLD ECE Guidance**

- On March 20, the Department received federal approval to waive assessment requirements for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. Teaching Strategies *GOLD* documentation for the May checkpoint will not be required.

#### **Update GOLD OSEP Guidance**

- TS GOLD OSEP Administrators should follow the same process for completing intended exit assessments for any children who would have been exited as a result of a withdrawal from ECSE services or within six weeks of the child's 6<sup>th</sup> birthday. Administrators are encouraged to use any data collected during winter checkpoint and input into the OSEP license to use as a final rating for this school year. Even if an administrator is exiting the child now, an exit assessment should include the end of the school year date and all ratings should be finalized before completing the exit assessment.

#### **Assessment Administration Support and Training Office Hours**

The next **Assessment and Accountability Office Hours** will be on **April 28 at 4:15 p.m.** Webinar details are listed below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** April 28 at 4:15 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/202189164>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 202 189 164

#### **Reminder: Assessment Development Educator Review Committees**

The Department is now recruiting for Item Content and Bias Review committees. Committee members will review items developed for future field testing. All LEAP 2025 Social Studies, LEAP 2025 ELA, and LEAP Connect Item Content and Bias Review committees will convene virtually in June and July. Access the [Assessment Development Educator Review Committees document](#) in the [Assessment Guidance Library](#) for updated information and for links to complete interest surveys. Participants are eligible to receive a daily stipend.

Please contact [michelle.mcadams@la.gov](mailto:michelle.mcadams@la.gov) with questions.

## High School Pathways

### **New: Advanced Placement Exam Information**

Please share with AP coordinators.

Advanced Placement exams will be administered online by the College Board from May 11–22 and June 1–5 (makeup exams) for those opting to take the exams. Students will receive a link to the exam via the email used to register for the exam. **School systems should ensure that students using district-provided emails are capable of receiving emails from the [collegeboard.org](https://collegeboard.org).**

More information about AP testing can be found on the [College Board AP COVID Response page](#).

If school systems or students have technology needs, please [fill out this form by April 24](#).

The College Board is offering subject-specific webinars regarding AP Exams for AP teachers beginning next week. Registration is required and the [full listing of webinars is now available](#).

Please contact [meredith.mcGovern@la.gov](mailto:meredith.mcGovern@la.gov) with questions.

### **New: Jump Start Construction Scholars Program**

Please share with high school counselors.

The deadline for submitting applications for the state's first and only scholarship dedicated exclusively to Jump Start graduates has been extended to **May 1**. The [Jump Start Construction Connect Scholars Program](#) is a \$1000 scholarship for students who have earned the Jump Start Diploma, earned a National Center for Construction Education and Research credential, and plan to enroll in an LCTCS campus on a construction pathway or in an Associated Builders and Contractors training program.

Please contact [stephanie.marcum@la.gov](mailto:stephanie.marcum@la.gov) with questions.

### **New: Updated Dual Enrollment Minimum Requirements Policy**

Please share with high school counselors and secondary supervisors.

The Board of Regents has released an updated policy for Dual Enrollment Minimum Requirements for the 2020-2021 school year. A [webinar](#) was held on April 9, and the recording of the webinar has been posted on [the Board of Regents YouTube Channel](#).

Please contact [meredith.mcGovern@la.gov](mailto:meredith.mcGovern@la.gov) with questions.

### **Reminder: Career and Technical Education Continuous Learning**

School systems are encouraged to maintain efforts to provide student learning opportunities for the remainder of the regularly scheduled academic year, inclusive of career and technical education (CTE). In that light, CTE-focused resources for continuous learning and remote testing options are available in the [Louisiana Continuous Education Toolkit](#).

Please contact [jumpstart@la.gov](mailto:jumpstart@la.gov) with questions

## **Reminder: 2020 Jump Start Summer Institute Digital Training Model**

In lieu of face-to-face training opportunities, trainings are being transitioned to a digital training model. The dynamic [2020 Jump Start Super Summer Institute Digital Training Opportunities](#) guide provides a list of professional development and training opportunities. This list is not comprehensive and will continue to be updated as additional training options are confirmed.

[A list of FAQs](#) regarding Jump Start Super Summer Institute is available in the [All Things Jump Start](#) web portal.

Please contact [jumpstart@la.gov](mailto:jumpstart@la.gov) with questions.

## **Reminder: Diploma Orders**

**Please share with school system administrators and school counselors.**

Diploma printing is currently on track and diploma seal shipments are scheduled to arrive on time. Receipt of the diploma shipment requires a signature. If the original order address requires a change, contact [meagan.thompson2@la.gov](mailto:meagan.thompson2@la.gov).

The Department also published [guidance](#) for schools that opt to hold virtual graduation ceremonies.

Please contact [megan.thompson2@la.gov](mailto:megan.thompson2@la.gov) with questions.

## **Special Education**

### **Reminder: Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) Vacancy**

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) advises the Department on the provision of free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for children with disabilities and provides guidance on special education programs and services. The panel is seeking [applications](#) for members to serve 3-year terms beginning July 1 in the following roles:

- Parent of a child with a disability
- Teacher
- Administrator of a program for children with disabilities
- Representative of a private school
- Representative of an institution of higher education that prepares special education and related services personnel
- Representative of the State juvenile or adult corrections agency

Prospective members should email applications to [specialeducation@la.gov](mailto:specialeducation@la.gov) by **May 8**.

## Data

### **New: Student Transcript System (STS) Training**

Please share with data managers.

The Department will hold trainings for nonpublic and public school data managers who submit transcript data to the Student Transcript System (STS). The webinars will include a review of the process for submitting transcript and IBC data to STS for the end of year data collection.

#### **Student Transcript System (STS) Training for Nonpublic Schools**

- **Webinar Date and Time:** May 4 at 11:00 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/275509071>
- **Meeting ID#:** 275 509 071

#### **Student Transcript System (STS) Training for Public Schools**

- **Webinar Date and Time:** May 4 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/562587945>
- **Meeting ID#:** 562 587 945

Please contact [barrett.adams@la.gov](mailto:barrett.adams@la.gov) with questions.

## Finance

### **Reminder: Maintenance of Effort (MOE) Fiscal Requirements**

Please share with business managers and financial officials.

Meeting yearly Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements are a part of the business process to confirm compliance and determine eligibility of federal grant funds for ESSA and IDEA grants. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) requires an annual review that determines if each school system:

1. has not decreased spending of general fund dollars, and
2. is budgeting expenditures to meet the MOE standards.

There are three MOE measurements submitted in the eGMS system:

- 2019 IDEA MOE Confirmation (Compliance) deadline for submission is April 30.
- 2021 ESSA MOE Verification updates are in progress and will be available in the near future.
- 2021 IDEA MOE Verification (Eligibility) updates are in progress and will be available in the near future.

**Please note:** The Department has enhanced the MOE system to include a technical assistance feature that shows if the school system has not met the MOE requirement for IDEA. School systems are encouraged to start early and work through the new technical assistance feature found at the consistency check.

The [MOE Quick Reference Guide](#) is available to assist with the new feature and submitting all three MOE applications.

Please contact [nakia.jason@la.gov](mailto:nakia.jason@la.gov) regarding noticed delays with the MOE that are COVID-19 related or with questions regarding the MOE review process. For technical inquiries or support, please contact [jason.berard@la.gov](mailto:jason.berard@la.gov).