DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION
Louisiana Believes

May 15, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

In early education and K-12 education, we often find ourselves so focused on immediate goals that the long-term nature of our work becomes an afterthought. Education can transform lives and societies, but these transformations take time. The path from child to adult is necessarily a long one, and disrupting the cycle of poverty takes years of intensive effort while traveling that path.

There are as many educational paths out of poverty as there are individuals walking that path. For some, it will involve outstanding performance from elementary school through university. For many, it will involve workplace-based education and time in community colleges. For most, it will involve ups and downs, characterized by persistence in the face of challenges. But in nearly all cases, it will involve continuing one's education.

College looks different for different people. College may mean learning to nurse, learning to weld, learning to code, or learning to read philosophy. But in all cases, continued education matters. It is the best means the education system can offer high school graduates seeking to create a life full of opportunity.

Today, the Department announced that the class of 2017 saw more students enroll in college in the fall following graduation than any class in the state's history. The number of graduates attending college each year has now increased by more than 3,000 students since 2012, a 15 percent increase.

At the state level, establishing a college-going culture has involved support for the ACT, Jump Start, Advanced Placement, CLEP, TOPS and Jump Start aligned dual enrollment courses, and financial aid planning. But a college-going culture takes leadership at the district and school levels above all else. On behalf of thousands of young people disrupting the cycle of poverty, I thank you.

One more note of thanks: Assistant Superintendent Jenna Conway has led the state's early childhood efforts for the last six years, since the passage of Act 3. In that time, Jenna has worked with every parish to bring together the fragmented pieces of the early education system in Louisiana and has set an enduring bar for quality in the process. Next month, Jenna will be leaving the Department to return to Virginia, her home state, where she will work for Governor Ralph Northam on his early education ambitions. Assistant Superintendent Jessica Baghian will now manage early education improvement efforts, including the CLASS rating system. Lisa Brochard will continue to oversee the office of early childhood operations, including licensure and eligibility, reporting to chief operating officer Bridget Devlin. Jenna has been an indispensable source of vision and thoughtfulness in her time with our team, and I wish her and her family the best as they work for the children of Virginia.

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

John

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Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events
- [Assessment and Accountability Office Hours](#): May 22 at 1:00 p.m.

Important Deadlines
- [Teacher Roster Verification for VAM and TSG](#) due: May 18
- [2018 Emergency Impact Aid Application](#) deadline: May 22

School System Support

New: Student Attendance Award Templates

The Department and BESE are pleased to support school systems and schools by providing printable certificates for students with outstanding school attendance. The Department encourages all school systems to plan and develop activities to recognize the thousands of students who attend school regularly. School systems should define the levels of attendance for the awards and issue the following certificates accordingly:

- [2018 Meritorious Attendance Award](#)
- [2018 Perfect Attendance Award](#)
- [2018 Excellence in Attendance Award](#)

Email janice.zube@la.gov with questions.

Family Engagement

Reminder: Parent Guide to the LEAP 2025 Student Reports

The Parent Guide to the LEAP 2025 Student Reports for grades 3-12 is now available in the [Family Support Toolbox Library](#).

- This guide helps parents read and interpret the LEAP 2025 student reports, with accompanying online resources.
- **The guide should be sent home with the student reports.**
- Translated versions are available in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic in the Toolbox library.

Translated versions of the student report text and performance levels for all subjects and grade levels are also available in the library to support non-English speaking families in reading their child's report.

Please email assessment@la.gov with questions.

Assessment and Accountability

New: Release of LEAP Connect/LAA1/ELPT Results

Please share with principals.

The LEAP Connect/LAA1 and English Language Proficiency Test results will be released this Friday. For details on these releases see information below:

LEAP Connect and LAA 1
- LEAP Connect/LAA 1 results will be available Friday in eDIRECT. For directions on viewing score reports, reference pages 90-94 of the eDIRECT User Guide posted under General Information in eDIRECT.

ELPT
- ELPT results will be available Friday in the Online Reporting System. The Online Reporting System User Guide is posted in the ELPT Portal which contains directions on viewing score reports.

Parent guides to both the LEAP Connect and ELPT are available in the Assessment Library, and should be sent home with the student reports. Translated versions in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic are also available in the library. More information regarding statewide trends for LEAP Connect, LAA 1, and ELPT will be shared in the June School System Planning call.

Email assessment@la.gov with questions.

New: Release of LEAP 2025 High School Results

Please share with principals.

A LEAP 2025 high school CSV file of student results has been posted to eDIRECT. Tomorrow schools will begin to receive student score reports, with the exception of US History, in eDIRECT. For directions on viewing score reports, reference pages 90-94 of the eDIRECT User Guide posted under General Information in eDIRECT. The Parent Guide to the LEAP 2025 Student Reports is posted in the Assessment Library.

Email assessment@la.gov with questions.

New: DRC Online Cleanup

DRC will open the Online Cleanup System (OCS) from June 11 to June 15. This is the only opportunity that school systems and schools will have to apply accountability codes to impending zeroes before the new progress index is calculated. The system will include student records from LEAP 2025, EOC, LEAP Connect, and LAA 1. School systems should not wait until the August data certification period to address impending zeroes.

Email assessment@la.gov with questions.

New: Reminders for District Testing Coordinators

General
- All changes to district test coordinators (DTCs) or accountability contacts must be submitted to the Department using the DTC and Accountability Contact Update form found in 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 May 7. The remaining scheduled postings will be May 21, June 4, and June 18.

LEAP 2025
- **Now - May 18:** LEAP 2025 high school computer-based testing window
- **Now - May 19:** PBT materials pick-up 3
- The Summer TAM and TCM are posted in eDIRECT.
- 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.
- DTCs 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.

Assessment Administration Support and Training
The Assessment and Accountability Office Hours will be held on **May 22 at 1:00 p.m.**

To join the webinar:
- go to https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/assessment-accountability/; and
- enter the meeting room as a guest and provide your name; or
- dial 1-646-307-1380 and enter participant PIN # 89147656.

The Office Hours Questions and Answers document is posted in the Assessment Library.

High School Pathways

New: Financial Aid Planning Regional Events

Please share with professional school counselors and/or staff responsible for the implementation of financial aid planning policy in schools.

This year, all students graduating from public high schools are required to submit a state or federal financial aid form, a hardship waiver, or a signed letter from parents who wish not to seek financial aid. The response from Louisiana's students and families has been overwhelmingly positive. Already Louisiana is a national leader, and thousands more students will have their job training or college tuition paid for as a result. **But we still have several thousand students left to go before the July 1 priority deadline.**

1. If you would like to have financial aid form application stations at graduation, please email ldefinancialaid@la.gov.
2. If parents are signing a letter of non-participation, please make sure letters are signed and stored for graduation cohort verification.

Email ldefinancialaid@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: 2018-2019 Pupil Progression Plan

Please share with school system supervisors.

Pupil Progression Plans (PPP) are the policies and guidelines that outline the criteria for high school graduation, and that local school systems use to determine whether students will be promoted to the next grade, retained in the current grade, or advanced (or skipped) to higher grades.

Each school system is required to develop a PPP for review by the Department, however each agency may have slightly different procedures related to retention, advancement, promotion, and graduation.

As a result of the delayed release of the 2017-2018 PPP template and related promotion policy updates, school systems may elect to:

- **Option 1:** Retain the locally approved 2017-2018 PPP through the 2018-2019 school year; or
- **Option 2**: Submit an addendum outlining any plan updates for the 2018-2019 school year. Addendums shall be submitted no later than **August 31**.

The **2018-2019 Pupil Progression Election Form** is available on the Department's website. Notification of election must be submitted to ppp@la.gov no later than **June 30**.

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

Educator Preparation

Reminder: Searching for Louisiana's 2020 State Teacher and Principal of the Year

Annually, the Department recognizes excellent educators through the Louisiana Teacher and Principal of the Year programs. This process includes recommendations from teachers, principals, school system employees, parents, colleagues, and community members.

The nomination process for the 2020 State Teacher and Principal of the Year is now open. If you, or someone you know, meet the criteria below, then please submit a nomination.

- Demonstrates excellence in the field, guiding students of all backgrounds and abilities to achieve excellence
- Demonstrates leadership and innovation in and outside of the classroom walls that embodies lifelong learning
- Collaborates with colleagues, students, and families to create a school culture of respect and success

Nominations must be submitted via the nominations portal. Nominations will be sent to the local school systems for consideration as they select their top candidates.

For questions, contact excellenteducators@la.gov.

Special Education

New: 2016-2017 Draft LEA Determinations Packages

Each year, the Department is required to issue LEA Determinations, which assess the performance of school systems on the provision of special education and related services. The **draft 2016-2017 LEA Determination packages are now available for review** on the FTP site with the name "LEA Code_LEA Name_2016-2017 Draft LEA Determinations." **If school systems have questions about the results or wish to seek additional clarification, they must do so by May 25**. The Department will issue final results to school systems in early June.

To submit clarifications or for more information, please email specialeducation@la.gov.

Reminder: IDEA Alternate Assessment Monitoring Results Available

Under ESSA, alternate assessment participation is limited to no more than 1.0 percent of all students. States that exceeded the 1.0 percent cap, including Louisiana, submit a waiver to the US Department of Education and monitor school systems where more than 1.0 percent of students participated in the alternate assessment. The Department has concluded IDEA alternate assessment monitoring for the 2016-2017 school year.

All monitored school systems now have a notice of closure (no findings) or a notice of action (findings) available on the FTP.

For additional information, please email iris.jones@la.gov.

Data

New FTP File: January and April Quarterly Home Study Reports
Please share with superintendents, child welfare/attendance offices, home study personnel, and data management FTP coordinators.

The home study report, "LEACode_LEAName_JanandApril2018QuarterlyHomeStudy," is available on the Data Management FTP site (with user names ending in @datamgmt) and will remain on the FTP until July 31. These rosters can be used by LEAs to verify enrollments/exits. The zipped file contains the following:

- Cover letter
- Statewide enrollment numbers of BESE-approved home study students
- Detailed list of students from your school system enrolled in home study program from January through April
- Each student's home study approval notification letter for January through April
- Statewide enrollment numbers of registered nonpublic schools and student enrollment
- Detailed list of registered schools and student enrollment from your school system from January through April

If there are any questions regarding the report, please contact sue.millican@la.gov.

Reminder: Department Data Systems Customer Satisfaction Survey
Please share with data managers.

An online Department Data Systems Customer Satisfaction Survey is available for LEA data coordinators involved in the submission of data to the Department's data systems (SIS, SPC, STS, CUR, PEP, SER, TSDL, SPS, Direct Match, Unique ID Assignment, and eScholar Customer

Support). LEA personnel who contact the Department or eScholar staff for preparing, submitting, or correcting data are encouraged to participate in this brief survey. **Please complete submissions by June 8**.

If there are any questions, please email systemsupport@la.gov.

Reminder: 2017-2018 Teacher Roster Verification for VAM and TSG
Please share with principals and teachers.

The Curriculum Verification and Results (CVR) Reporting Portal is now open for teachers to verify class roster information that will be used in VAM and TSG. **Teachers must complete roster verifications by this Friday, May 18**.

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

Grants Management

Reminder: FY2017-2018 High Cost Services Round 1 and Round 2 Funds Expire on June 30

School systems that have not submitted their FY2017-2018 High Cost Services Round 1 or Round 2 budget (Amendment 1) should submit them in eGMS as soon as possible.

The majority of the HCS Round 1 funding is from FY2017-2018 state funds (MFP). All of the HCS Round 2 funding is from FY2017-2018 state funds (MFP). These funds will expire on June 30. Any obligations on these funds must be made by that date.

Please contact ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov with questions.

Federal Programs

New: ESSA and IDEA Amendments
The U.S. Department of Education recently notified the Department that slight cuts made by Congress to federal funding in Title I, Title II, IDEA 611, and IDEA 619 last fall have been restored. This means that school systems will receive small supplements to their existing FY2017-2018 allocations in eGMS later this spring.

School systems are not required to do a budget amendment unless there is a need to obligate all or a portion of the supplements before June 30. Unexpended funds will automatically roll over into next year's application once the 6/30 Periodic Expense Report (PER) is submitted and approved by the Department.

The final date to submit FY2017-2018 amendments is June 1. Additionally, any school system has an existing amendment returned for changes, please resubmit by June 1.

For further information, contact ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov.

New: Funding Available for Displaced Students Attending Public and Non-Public Schools

The U.S. Department of Education has announced that applications are available for two of the hurricane and disaster relief programs authorized by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018: the Temporary Emergency Impact Aid for Displaced Students (Emergency Impact Aid) Program and the Assistance for Homeless Children and Youth Program.

The **Emergency Impact Aid program** will provide assistance to LEAs and nonpublic schools that have enrolled students displaced during the 2017-2018 school year by Hurricane Harvey, Irma, or Maria or the 2017 California wildfires and the Assistance for **Homeless Children and Youth program** will provide assistance to LEAs to support the needs of homeless students displaced by a covered disaster or emergency.

Please review the **Emergency Impact Aid Guidance Document** for details on how to apply for funds. All LEAs and non-public schools must submit applications to ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov by **May 22 by 4:00 p.m.** In the subject line of the email please utilize the following format for the title: **2018 Emergency Impact Aid Application for (LEA/Nonpublic name)**.

Please review the **Assistance for Homeless Children and Youth Program Guidance Document** for more information on available funding.

Please contact ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov with questions related to these programs.