

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



July 21, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you to the over 800 school and system leaders who participated in our special webinar last week on the minimum safety requirements to open schools, which were adopted by BESE. I was joined once again by Dr. Frank Welch of the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), who answered questions about the health and safety aspects of reopening during the pandemic. If you missed it or would like to review what was covered, you can view the [full webinar](#) or the [presentation slides](#) on our website. I also encourage you to make a habit of reviewing our [school reopening FAQ document](#), which is regularly updated.

Medical experts from Children's Hospital New Orleans, LDH and Ochsner attended last week's [BESE emergency meeting](#) to inform board members about the health and safety standards they collaboratively developed with us. While no plan is perfect, these experts felt the [guidelines and standards](#) we created mirror the best in the nation.

Last week, the Department also released [Implementing Strong Start 2020: A Toolkit for Teaching and Learning for Schools](#). This was developed to provide systems and schools with resources, examples and support as they implement their 2020-2021 reopening plan. These are not requirements or endorsements, but can be used to help systems and schools make decisions that work best in their local context. This toolkit supports school leaders and teachers and includes high-level actions to implement priorities, along with samples and models for implementation. You can view additional resources for this toolkit in our [Implementing Strong Start Library](#).

Systems across the state are releasing reopening plans for the new school year. The plans I've seen exhibit great care for student and employee safety, meet or exceed our minimum standards and include contingencies for this ever-changing health crisis. Most importantly, our systems are showing their dedication to educating children whether buildings are open or closed. Louisiana schools are no stranger to responding in a crisis, but this will be a school year unlike any other. I believe in you. I believe in us. And I know that we will find a way together.

Dr. Cade Brumley
State Superintendent of Education

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Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events

- [Implementing Strong Start 2020: Toolkit Overview Webinar](#): July 23 at 11 a.m.
- [Strong Start 2020 Reopening Operations and Resources Office Hours](#): July 23 at 3 p.m.
- [Assessment and Accountability Office Hours](#): July 28 at 3:45 p.m.
- [Virtual Town Hall Series for Schools \(Tips for Teachers, Nurses and Coaches\)](#): August 4 at 1 p.m.
- [Virtual Town Hall Series for Schools \(Tips for School Support Staff\)](#): August 18 at 1 p.m.
- [EdTech Monthly Webinar](#): August 20 at 11 a.m.

Important Deadlines

- [Strong Start 2020 Implementation Survey](#) deadline: July 28
- [FY 2019-2020 Career Development Fund \(CDF\) End of Year Report](#) deadline: July 31
- [October Content Leader and Mentor Teacher Training Provider Application](#) deadline: July 31

School System Support

New: Strong Start 2020 Reopening Operations and Resources Office Hours

Please share with school system supervisors, administrators and counselors.

Strong Start School Reopening Office Hours will occur each Thursday at 3 p.m. beginning July 23 and will run through September 3. The same zoom link will be utilized each week. Details are included below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** July 23 at 3 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/91419461028>
- **Webinar Phone Number** 301-715-8592
- **Meeting ID#:** 914 1946 1028
- **Meeting Password:** 408891

Please contact LDOECOVID19support@la.gov.

Reminder: Strong Start 2020 Implementation Survey

The summer [Strong Start 2020 Implementation Survey](#) is now available for school systems and lead agencies to complete. School system leadership or early childhood lead agencies should work with their team to develop and review a set of answers to the survey questions in the [fillable PDF version](#) of the survey. Only one response per school system or lead agency can be submitted. A designated point of contact should submit the survey via [Jot Form](#). School systems and lead agencies must complete the survey by **July 28**.

Please contact Network Coaches or em.cooper@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Implementing Strong Start 2020: A Toolkit for Teaching and Learning for Schools

Since implementation of most of the [Strong Start priorities](#) happens at the school level, the [Implementing Strong Start 2020: A Toolkit for Teaching and Learning for Schools](#) is now available and will support school leaders and teachers. It is structured around teaching and learning priorities and includes:

- **School Actions:** The high-level actions that principals and teachers take to implement the priority
- **Resources:** One document that includes samples, models and plans for implementing each priority

The [presentation](#) and [recording](#) of the webinar are posted in the [Strong Start Library](#). This webinar will be held again **this Thursday, July 23** to provide an overview of the Toolkit for school leaders. Details are included below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** July 23 at 11 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/95501219472>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 301-715-8592
- **Meeting ID#:** 955 0121 9472

Please contact em.cooper@la.gov with questions.

Academics

New: Strong Start 2020 Instructional Material and PD Vendor Guide Updates

Please share with Chief Academic Officers, curriculum coordinators, professional development coordinators and purchasing directors.

The Strong Start 2020 plan includes [Instructional Materials Guidance](#) and [Professional Development Guidance](#), and the Department continues to work with publishers and vendors to update each guide as they build and refine their supports.

New or updated information will be highlighted in yellow within the document.

This week, the following entries have been added:

Instructional Materials Guidance	Professional Development Guidance
OpenSciEd, High Quality Pilot, Grades 6–8	

This week, the following entries have been significantly **updated**:

Instructional Materials Guidance	Professional Development Guidance
Curriculum Associates, Ready Louisiana Math, Grades K–8	
Carnegie Learning, Middle and High School Math Solutions, Grades 6–12	

LDOE LEAP 360 Diagnostic Guidance Added: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Agile Mind● Bridges in Math● Illustrative Math● Springboard● Jump Math● Zearn● Eureka Math	
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Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Louisiana Curriculum Hub: ELA Guidebook Unit Access

The [Louisiana Curriculum Hub](#), Louisiana's open-source, digital platform is live.

- Grades 9–12, ELA Guidebooks (2020), units are available in digital format via the online platform.
- Grades 3–8, ELA Guidebooks (2018), units are available in downloadable format via the bulk downloader tool.

The bulk downloader tool allows users to download full, customizable units of content from the ELA Guidebooks, grades 3–8, to a personal Google Drive. By clicking “Authorize,” users give permission to the bulk downloader to download a new copy of ELA Guidebooks unit material into a folder in a personal Google Drive.

Once downloaded, the units are organized into folders and all the files are editable, rather than view only. This allows users to make any needed changes to the ELA Guidebook materials without having to download each individual lesson and document. This also allows users to upload the unit content into Google Classroom more easily to better support distance learning, as users will have an organized unit on a personal Drive from which they can create assignments and quizzes in Google Classroom.

Directions for using the bulk downloader tool are [available](#).

For additional information about distance learning, please see the [Louisiana ELA Guidebooks Distance Learning Strong Start: Instructional Materials Guidance](#)

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum

Through the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund, all public and private schools and students will be provided free access to Edgenuity's online Purpose Prep content library which includes:

- Character & Leadership Development
- College & Career Readiness
- Mental Health & Wellness
- Personal Development
- Social & Emotional Success
- Unlock Your Purpose

School systems and schools can sign-up to participate in this program by completing an addendum with the State and working directly with Edgenuity's sales representative [Roe Wilkinson](#) to implement and manage their student's access to the content library. The agreement and addendum can be found on the Department's [Data Sharing Agreement](#) webpage.

Please contact edtech@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: EdTech Monthly Webinar

The Department will hold its monthly EdTech Webinar for Ed Tech Directors and CTO's on **August 20 at 11 a.m.** Topics will include upcoming deadlines, updates, guidance and training opportunities. Pre-registration is not required.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 20 at 11 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/575223228>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 575 223 228

Please contact edtech@la.gov with questions.

Assessment and Accountability

For District Testing Coordinators and Accountability Contacts

New: Pre-K–3 Assessment Guidance

- The Department recently released a [suite of guidance documents](#) to help school systems (and early learning centers) plan assessment administration for the 2020-2021 school year.
 - [2020-2021 Pre-K to Third Grade Assessment Guidance](#) has been released. The two approved Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) options are DRDP-K and *TeachingStrategies GOLD®* KEA. The four approved K–3 Literacy Screener options are Acadience Reading (formerly DIBELS Next), DIBELS 8th Edition, STEEP and STEP.
 - [Early Childhood \(pre-K\) Assessment Guidance for Various Learning Environments](#) outlines requirements and resources for assessing publicly-funded children (ages 3–5) using *TeachingStrategies GOLD®* in various learning environments including traditional, virtual and hybrid.
 - [K–3 Assessment Guidance for Various Learning Environments](#) outlines requirements and resources for administering the KEA and K–3 Literacy Screener in various learning environments including traditional, virtual and hybrid.
 - [2020-2021 TeachingStrategies GOLD® Guidance](#) has been released for Early Childhood, OSEP and KEA.

LEAP 2025 High School Summer Testing

- District Technology and Test Coordinators should ensure the content for the summer administration is downloaded to the COS prior to testing. Directions on updating testing content can be found in the [Tech User Guide](#).
- The high school summer testing window is now open for LEAP 2025 retesting through **this Friday, July 24**.
- Accountability codes are not needed for students who are retesting.

BESE Testing Exemption

- Revision to Bulletin 111 policy was approved by BESE that removes the assessment graduation requirement for certain subject assessments for students who meet the following requirements:
 - The student earned the high school assessment-eligible course in the spring of 2020.
 - The student has never taken the LEAP 2025 high school assessment for the course.

ACT

- All school systems that tested students in June 2020 and/or who plan to test students during the October 2020 makeup for 2019-2020 juniors must sign the ACT MOU Addendum that is posted in the [Assessment Library](#).
- ACT State Administration
 - October 6 and October 20 paper-based administration only for students who were juniors in 2019-2020 and were unable to test in March or June. The Department will cover the cost for one administration per student.

Assessment Administration Support and Training Office Hours

The next Assessment and Accountability Office Hours will be on **July 28 at 3:45 p.m.** A password will now be required for Office Hours. Webinar details are listed below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** July 28 at 3:45 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/202189164>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 202 189 164
- **Password:** 2020202!

High School Pathways

New: Jump Start Fact Sheet Update

Please share with CTE supervisors/coordinators, school system leaders and professional school counselors.

The Department released the first set of newly redesigned [Industry-Based Certification Fact Sheets](#). The redesigned fact sheets appear in the file box labeled **updated fact sheets**.

The fact sheets have been improved or have the following additions:

- Industry-based certification (IBC) STS code and an example of each IBC
- Certification resources to prepare for the exam
- System requirements for computer-based testing
- Direct links to accommodations and language access information (when available)
- Information on costs (when available)

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with questions.

Special Education

New: SER Calendar Update

The Department has updated the business day calendar in the special education reporting (SER) system. All school systems should run the updated calendar as soon as possible to access the most current evaluation due dates.

Please contact specialeducation@la.gov with questions.

Finance

New: FY 2020-2021 Initial MFP - Career Development Fund (CDF) Payments

Initial MFP - CDF payments for FY 2020-2021 will be released by the Department on July 27. Funds should appear in school systems' and schools' bank accounts within one to three business days depending on the banking institution with which a school system or school conducts business. Additional details regarding these payments are available for reference in the [MFP Library](#).

Please contact idoemfphelpdesk@la.gov with questions.

New: FY 2019-2020 Fiscal Risk Assessment

Please share with business managers.

By law, each city, parish or other local public school board shall be notified on a regular basis of its financial status per the annual Fiscal Risk Assessment. The FY2019-20 Fiscal Risk Assessment has been updated and populated for each school system or school to include the latest available data.

Preliminary data will be available on each school and school system's "edfin" FTP site by **tomorrow, July 22**. Responses received by July 29 will be used to update each school and school system's data (if necessary) prior to submitting the report to BESE. Please submit responses to schoolfinancehelpdesk@la.gov.

Additional information about the Fiscal Risk Assessment process is provided below.

- [FY2019-20 Fiscal Risk Assessment Memo](#)
- [Description of Factors](#)
- [School System or School Response Form](#)
- [Purpose of Fiscal Risk Assessment](#)

Please contact schoolfinancehelpdesk@la.gov with questions.

Policy

Reminder: Frontline Workers

[Act 12 of the 2020 First Extraordinary Session](#) provides for a one-time rebate for eligible workers earning \$50,000 per year or less, who spent at least 200 hours working during the COVID-19 crisis from March 22, 2020 through May 14, 2020.

The Louisiana Department of Revenue will accept applications from July 15 through October 31 from workers employed in essential critical infrastructure jobs on or after March 11, 2020, including:

- Government, private and non-governmental organizations' workers essential for food assistance programs, including school lunch programs
- Bus drivers and workers who provide or support intercity, commuter and charter bus service in support of other essential services or functions, including school bus drivers
- Workers providing dependent care services, including childcare, eldercare, and other service providers necessary to maintain a comprehensive, supportive environment for individuals and caregivers needing these services

The Louisiana Department of Revenue will accept applications online or on a downloadable printed form. Due to limited funding for the rebate program, eligible workers are encouraged to apply as soon as possible using the online application portal at [FrontlineWorkers.la.gov](https://www.louisiana.gov/essentialworkers).

For more information, read [Revenue Information Bulletin 20-020](#).

Please contact leslie.hill@la.gov with questions.

Safe and Healthy Schools

Reminder: Virtual Town Hall Series for Schools

Please share with school system leaders, administrators, school nurses and teachers.

COVID-19 guidance experts from Children's Hospital New Orleans (CHNOLA), in partnership with the Department, will host an upcoming virtual town hall series. During this virtual series, guidance experts will:

- provide updates on the current state of COVID-19 pandemic across Louisiana, specifically in regard to children under ages 18;
- speak to frequently asked questions that will be collected in-between town halls through the Children's Hospital New Orleans' website in the Return to School FAQ Entry Form;
- provide education/guidance training on targeted topics relevant to schools; and
- facilitate open Q&A.

Scheduled topics for the remaining town hall meetings and details needed to join are listed below.

Tips for Teachers, Nurses and Coaches

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 4 at 1 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://zoom.us/j/99297529593>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 301-715-8592
- **Webinar ID#:** 992 9752 9593
- **Webinar Password:** 842020

Tips for School Support Staff

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 18 at 1 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://zoom.us/j/95976608543>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Webinar ID#:** 959 7660 8543
- **Webinar Password:** 8182020

Please contact school-wellness@LCMHealth.org with questions.

Reminder: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Availability for School Reopening

As school systems plan for operations during the 2020-2021 school year, the Department is working in concert with the Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (GOHSEP) to address immediate personal protective equipment (PPE) needs.

GOHSEP will provide:

- at least one cloth (reusable/washable) mask for each student and faculty member;
- at least 2,000 disposal masks (for visitors and/or students/faculty that may forget their mask); and
- at least 3 thermometers per each school.

These provision standards are recommended as some individuals/parents will provide their own masks and others may not. However, this should address the PPE needs for public school systems for school reopening.

School systems should make PPE requests directly to the Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (OHSEP) directors in respective school systems by following the steps outlined below:

1. School systems should compile data that depicts number of students, number of faculty members and number of schools.
2. Each school system will make requests to the respective parish OHSEP based on data specified in number one (above bullet).
3. Requests for this should go to the [local parish OHSEP contact](#).
4. Delivery will be made to the school systems' warehouse for school distribution as systems already have a mechanism to disseminate supplies.

If there are additional PPE needs, please contact OHSEP directors to discuss the circumstances to ensure everyone can work together to address additional needs as circumstances require.

Please contact LDOECOVID19support@la.gov with questions.