

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



August 11, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

A handful of Louisiana systems welcomed students back last week. This week, more systems are reopening their doors to children. As we learned during a call with system leaders this past Friday, schools reopened last week without any major disruptions. Medical professionals from the Louisiana Department of Health and Ochsner joined us on the call. They were complimentary of the steps educators are taking to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. There will be challenges as you begin the school year. If COVID-19 is present in your community, it will likely be present in your schools. You developed a fluid reopening plan to guide you through these challenges. Follow your plan, continue to communicate with stakeholders and keep student and employee safety at the center of your decisions.

Most systems are reopening under a hybrid model that combines in-person and distance learning. This week we are releasing a tool that highlights best practices in virtual instruction. Nothing will fully replace the instruction and engagement students receive from a quality teacher in the classroom. With more time to plan and with the support of the Department, I'm confident virtual instruction will take a large step forward for our students and families this fall. These resources will be available on our [Strong Start](#) page Wednesday.

We've also updated our [Strong Start resources for students with disabilities](#). The newest set of resources includes guidance for families, educators and direct service providers. School may look different this year, but our commitment to families and students remains steadfast. These resources will guide educators and families as they work to serve our students who need their support the most.

Thank you for continuing to lead during these uncertain times. Our students, families and educators need us now more than ever. Together, I know we can rise to this challenge.

Dr. Cade Brumley
State Superintendent of Education

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Important Dates for School Systems

Office Hours	
Office Hours Title	Zoom Link
Strong Start 2020 Reopening Operations and Resources Office Hours	August 13 at 3 p.m.
Assessment and Accountability Office Hours	August 25 at 3:45 p.m.
Monthly Calls	
Monthly Call Title	Zoom Link
Data Coordinator Monthly Call	August 13 at 1 p.m.
Special Education Leader Monthly Call	August 13 at 2 p.m.
Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call	August 18 at 3:45 p.m.
Ed Tech Monthly Call	August 20 at 11 a.m.
Upcoming Events	
Event Title	Zoom Link
Career and Technical Education Webinar	August 13 at 11 a.m.
Early Literacy Commission Meeting	August 13 at 12 p.m.
Mentor and Resident Data Collection Process Webinar	August 13 at 1:30 p.m.
Reopening Roundtable: A Virtual Series for System Leaders	August 14 at 9 a.m.
Mentor and Resident Data Collection Process Webinar	August 14 at 1:30 p.m.
Supporting Mentors and Content Leaders Toward Certification Webinar	August 18 at 10 a.m.
Virtual Town Hall Series for Schools (Tips for School Support Staff)	August 18 at 1 p.m.
ESSA Alternate Assessment Webinar	August 18 at 2 p.m.
Quarterly Personnel Director Webinar	August 20 at 10 a.m.
Act 206: Dyslexia Definition Webinar	August 20 at 12 p.m.
Important Deadlines	
Document Link	Deadline
2020-2021 Teacher Leader Advisor Application	August 14

School System Support

Reopening Roundtable: A Virtual Series for Superintendents

Superintendents and charter leaders are invited to participate in a Reopening Roundtable virtual series hosted by Dr. Brumley. This call will be held at **9 a.m. each Friday** during the month of August and will continue monthly beginning in September. Every week a panel of system leaders will share their experiences reopening and operating schools during the health crisis. It's important that the Department is a support agency during these uncertain times, and this series will help facilitate discussions of best practices. Information needed to join this series is included below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 14 at 9 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97826043901>
- **Webinar Password:** 5v7Dwq
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 978 2604 3901
- **Dial-in Password:** 556910

Please enter your full name and school system name when logging in.

Strong Start 2020: Virtual Teaching and Learning Guidance

The [Louisiana Virtual Instruction Guide](#) will be released this week. It is designed for educators and outlines the expectations for teaching and learning in a virtual setting.

The guide outlines the expectations of four characteristics of high-quality virtual instruction for students in grades pre-K through 12:

- High-quality, standards-aligned curriculum
- Interactive, engaging instruction
- Monitoring student progress
- Student support

A [Louisiana Virtual Instruction Guide for Parents](#) will also be released this week.

Please contact districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

Academics

Academic Content

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 significantly **updated**:

Instructional Materials Guidance	Professional Development Guidance
Activate Learning, IQWST Science, Grades 6-8	
Amplify, Amplify Science Louisiana, Grades K-5	
Great Minds, PhD Science, Grades 3-5	
inquiryHub, Biology, High Quality Pilot	
OpenSciEd, High Quality Pilot, Grades 6-8	

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

Early Literacy Commission

[Senate Resolution 182](#) and [House Resolution 222](#) established the Early Literacy Commission to study and make recommendations on developing and implementing an aligned system to provide effective evidence-based reading instruction for children from birth through third grade.

The next Early Literacy Commission open meeting will be held from **12 to 3 p.m. this Thursday, August 13** and [will be livestreamed](#). During this meeting, the Commission will hear updates on the recommendations outlined in the Early Literacy Commission report. Meeting materials and recordings are available on the [State Advisory Council](#) page.

Please contact laurie.carlton@la.gov with questions.

Assessment and Accountability

For District Testing Coordinators and Accountability Contacts

Updates to District Test Coordinator and/or Accountability Contacts

- In order to access many testing vendor platforms, it is important that school systems record changes to the district test coordinator and/or accountability contact in the [Louisiana School System Contact Form](#). To expedite changes needed for assessments, please contact assessment@la.gov.

Screening for English Learners

- School systems must continue to determine if students entering kindergarten through grade 12 for the first time are English Learners (ELs) who require supplementary support services to continue developing language proficiency in English. Guidance is provided to facilitate the identification of ELs and to determine if EL services are needed when it is not possible to administer the ELPS in the [Guidance for the Provisional Identification of English Learners](#) document.

Pre-K-3 Assessment Guidance

- Because there are no exemptions for the requirement to the KEA and the K-3 Literacy screening outlined in BESE policy and law, the Department recently updated 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.

ACT

- **ACT Webinar Opportunities**
 - August 18: Attend a Q&A session about ACT accommodations and supports and test administration for the October testing. [Register to attend](#).
- 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 applicable student.
 - **Important: Materials will be shipped separately for each administration.**
 - Currently, ACT does not offer remote administrations for any scheduled testing dates.
 - The [Schedule of Events](#) for the October ACT administration is posted on the [ACT State Testing](#) site.
 - The [Schedule of Events](#) for the 2020-2021 WorkKeys administration is posted on the [ACT State Testing](#) site.

- [PearsonAccess^{next}](#) (PANext) is open through August 28 to manage participation and verify secure district shipping addresses for both the ACT October administration and the 2020-2021 WorkKeys assessments.

Assessment Administration Support and Training Office Hours

The next Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call will be on **August 18 at 3:45 p.m.** A password will now be required for Office Hours. Webinar details are listed below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 18 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!

Career and College Readiness

Quest for Success Teacher Training

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

The dynamic [2020 Jump Start Super Summer Institute Digital Training Opportunities](#) guide has been updated to include additional Quest for Success training opportunities. The next virtual training opportunity will occur August 24-27 from 4 to 8 p.m. each day.

[Registration is through Eventbrite](#) and registration costs for training sessions are paid directly to the provider. Carl Perkins and Career Development Funds are eligible funding sources for registration.

Additional Quest for Success training opportunities will be available throughout the school year and will be communicated in an upcoming newsletter entry. These additional training opportunities will include a variety of flexible training opportunities for new Quest for Success instructors such as once a week, weekly and weekend opportunities.

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with questions.

2020-2021 Course Choice/SCA Portal

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

Course Choice provides students and schools with access to a broad variety of course offerings from online, face-to-face, industry training and dual enrollment course providers. The [SCA Portal](#) is now open for 2020-2021 reporting.

The 2020-2021 [Preliminary Course Choice Provider Directory](#) is now available. Schools register students directly with the course provider college and/or university. Please refer to the [Course Choice Registration Procedures](#) for details on this process. Once students are registered, schools should document enrollments in the Course Choice Reporting System.

Please contact sca@la.gov with questions.

Policy and Governmental Affairs

Certification

Quarterly Personnel Director Webinar

Personnel directors and staff are invited to attend the final Quarterly Personnel Director Webinar on **August 20 at 10 a.m.** Key topics will include certification extensions due to COVID-19, BESE's consideration of the Mentor waiver request, Mentor/resident data collection process and certification updates.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 20 at 10 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93475503910>
- **Webinar Password:** 46E%cL
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 934 7550 3910
- **Dial-in Password:** 658750

Moving forward, information pertinent to certification and educator workforce concerns will be discussed on the Policy and Governmental Affairs monthly calls beginning in September.

Please contact sara.delano@la.gov with questions.

Reminders

- ***School System Support Reminders***
- ***Academics Reminders***
 - ***Academic Content Reminders***
 - ***Educator Development Reminders***
- ***Career and College Readiness Reminders***
- ***Equity, Inclusion and Opportunity Reminders***
 - ***Special Education Reminders***
- ***State Finance and Policy Reminders***

School System Support Reminders

Every Child Counts – 2020 Census

Every home has received an invitation to participate in the [2020 Census](#). Louisiana's self-response rate is just under 57 percent, which is below the national average. There are a number of parishes where the rate is in the 30s and 20s. Please consider using your system's communications channels to encourage employees, families and other stakeholders to complete the 2020 Census.

The 2020 Census count impacts the federal funds that communities receive each year for programs and services that are critical for schools, students and younger children, such as:

- Special education, Head Start, after-school programs, and classroom technology
- Food assistance, including free and reduced-price school lunches
- Maternal and child health programs
- Planning, preparedness and recovery efforts for national emergencies, including [COVID-19](#)

Self-responses, which can be completed [online](#), by phone or by mail until September 30, ensures federal funding to support Louisiana students.

The Department encourages school systems to explore the [2020 Census Toolbox](#) to find general resources and activities specially designed to be engaging and appropriate for each grade level, from counting for kindergarteners to examining career statistics for high schoolers.

Please contact ldoecommunications@la.gov with questions.

Updated Guidance for Criminal Background Checks for Service Providers in K-12

All K-12 essential visitors and contractors, including mental health consultants and special education service providers, must have a child care criminal background check (CCCBC) in order to provide services at an early learning center and a registered in-home or family home provider. The background checks approved by the school systems for K-12 purposes are not acceptable for child care security purposes.

Please contact LDElicensing@la.gov with questions.

2020-2021 Reopening and Operations Resource Updates

The Department and the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) have been working together to provide updated resources and guidance for schools relative to reopening and operations for the 2020-2021 school year. The most recent updates include:

- [Self-Monitoring Checklist](#)
- [COVID-19 Positive Test Result Process Sample Letters](#)
- [LDH Return to School/Work Self-Certifications](#)
- [LDH Guidance for Common School Scenarios](#)
- Critical Infrastructure Workers
- [LDH COVID School One-Page Flow Chart](#)
- [Office of the Fire Marshal Emergency Drill Memo](#)
- [Updated School Reopening FAQ Document](#): includes updated information surrounding the use of facial shields and band, music, vocal and theater class guidance.

In addition, the Department is holding office hours **every Thursday at 3 p.m.** for school system leaders and support staff to hear the latest updates on policy implementation, supportive guidance and tool development. Webinar details are listed below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** Thursdays 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 with questions.

Academics Reminders

Academic Content Reminders

New Definition of Dyslexia

Please share with system and school level SPED/IEP/504 coordinators, school psychologists and education diagnosticians.

The Dyslexia Resource Center is hosting a free webinar regarding recently passed [Act 206](#), which provides a common language definition to define dyslexia using the most current information available. Kayla Reggio, Director of the Dyslexia Resource Center, and Special Guest Representative Joe Marino, who authored the bill, will cover the new definition in law in detail and how this law impacts dyslexic students. The webinar will be held on **August 20 at 12 p.m.** Participants can [register](#) now.

Please contact kreggio@dyslexia1n5.com with questions.

Continuous Learning Updates for Social Studies

Please share with social studies supervisors, administrators and social studies teachers

For unit 2 distance learning packets, the teacher materials and student materials sections will be separated. The teacher materials have been [password protected](#) to help ensure only teachers have access to the answer keys. For more information on distance learning packets, see below.

In an effort to provide standards-aligned content experiences and enable continuous learning in the event of school facility closures at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, [distance learning packets](#) are being developed for each course in grades 3-8 and US History for units 1 and 2. The packets do not cover the entire content of the unit but instead focus on a key topic. Teachers can use the packets as a cornerstone to build materials for additional content coverage. The materials are designed to be low tech, but can be adapted for schools using an online learning platform. The Department will evaluate the need for more distance learning support throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Unit 2 packets will be released on a rolling basis from now until September and will be posted on the [K-12 Social Studies Resources](#) page when completed.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

Educator Development Reminders

Supporting Mentors and Content Leaders Toward Certification

On **August 18 at 10 a.m.**, school system leaders Rebecca Freeland of Richland Parish and Chandler Smith of Central School System will discuss how to support Mentors and Content Leaders to drive student achievement as they work toward certification.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 18 at 10 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/3455048179>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 345 504 8179
- **Meeting passcode:** RTC51420

Please contact andrew.palermo@la.gov with questions.

Mentor and Resident Data Collection Process

In the 2020-2021 school year, Mentors of yearlong undergraduate residents will continue to receive a stipend for their work. Their employing school system will receive \$1,000 for the Mentor of these residents. Funding for residents completing a yearlong undergraduate residency will continue to be provided through MFP funds. The data collection process for this funding will kick off this month. Two webinars detailing the data collection process will be held. Webinar information is included below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 13 at 1:30 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/7328306617>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 732 830 6617

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 14 at 1:30 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/7328306617>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 732 830 6617

Please contact toriano.hayward@la.gov with questions.

Career and College Readiness Reminders

Certified Nurse Aide (CNA) Resumption of Training

Please share with school system secondary supervisors, career and technical education supervisors/coordinators and CNA instructors.

Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) regularly updates the [health standards section of their website](#) with information regarding effects of COVID-19 on Nurse Aide Training programs. Several key updates are available for Nurse Aide Training programs relative to the resumption of training.

- Prior to beginning a new class, written verification from the nursing home that students will be allowed to complete clinical training during the COVID crisis should be acquired and submitted to HSS-CNA-DSW-Request@la.gov.
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has mandated that nursing homes conduct weekly COVID testing of all residents and employees. Students are considered employees and will, therefore, require weekly testing.
- Please notify the LDH Program Desk of nursing facilities that are unable/unwilling to accommodate students. While it is certainly the right of the facility to restrict students, the LDH would like to ensure the reason is not due to misinformation regarding current recommendations related to the pandemic.

Please notify the program manager of any decisions to place the program on hold or close at ash-leigh.garcia@la.gov.

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with questions.

Career and Technical Education Webinar

Please share with CTE leaders.

The Department will host a Career and Technical Education Webinar **this Thursday, August 13 at 11 a.m.** The webinar will include updates on the following:

- Jump Start 2.0 implementation
- Quest for Success
- Industry-Based Certification Fact Sheets
- Supplemental Course Academy/Course Choice

Webinar details are listed below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 13 at 11 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93182712471>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 931 8271 2471
- **Password:** 536014

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with questions.

Equity, Inclusion and Opportunity Reminders

Special Education Reminders

ESSA Alternate Assessment Files on FTP

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), any school system with more than 1.0 percent of students participating in the ELA, math or science alternate assessment must take certain actions. **The Department provided all school systems with an alternate assessment package via FTP with the file name: LEA Code_LEA Name_AA_2020.** School systems should review their alternate assessment participation data and take the actions outlined in the package. School systems should contact their FTP coordinator to retrieve their alternate assessment package.

Please contact specialeducation@la.gov with questions.

ESSA Alternate Assessment Webinar

The Department will host a webinar for school system directors, supervisors and coordinators of special education on **August 18 at 2 p.m.** to help school systems exceeding 1.0 percent participation complete the alternate assessment review process. Pre-registration is not required.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 18 at 2 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92293524383>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923 (for dial-in only)
- **Meeting ID#:** 9922 9352 4383

Please contact specialeducation@la.gov with questions.

2019-2020 Seclusion and Restraint Draft Data Available

The Department is required to collect and annually report the use of seclusion and restraint data for students with disabilities. The 2019-2020 seclusion and restraint data verification report is now available to provide school systems the opportunity to verify their data before the final report is published. School systems must make updates in SER, if needed, and submit new or revised seclusion and restraint policies to specialeducation@la.gov by **this Friday, August 14** to be reflected in the final report.

Please contact FTP coordinators to retrieve the report with the file name *LEACode_LEAName_2019-2020_Seclusion and Restraint Data Verification Report*.

Please contact specialeducation@la.gov with questions.

August SPED Leader Webinar

The Department will hold its monthly webinar for school system directors, supervisors and coordinators of special education **this Thursday, August 13 at 2 p.m.** Topics will include upcoming deadlines, guidance and training opportunities. Pre-registration is not required.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** August 13 at 2 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92135951551>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923 (for dial-in only)
- **Meeting ID#:** 921 3595 1551

Please contact specialeducation@la.gov with questions.

State Finance and Policy Reminders

Online Fiscal Monitoring of Federal Grant Programs for Fiscal Year 2020

Please share with business managers.

Fiscal monitoring of federal grant programs allocated for FY 2019-2020 will be conducted via the eGrants Management System (eGMS). The Office of State Education Finance and Policy audit staff will contact business managers of selected school systems from **August through October** to discuss the scope of the fiscal monitoring audit.

Each business manager and federal programs coordinator should act as liaison between the auditing staff and any other school system personnel involved in the monitoring process. It will be necessary that business managers and the appropriate federal program staff be available to the auditors throughout the monitoring process. Please remember that failure to provide needed documentation will result in questioned costs and the possible need to refund grant awarded dollars to the Department.

Due to COVID-19 limitations, all monitoring will be conducted as desk reviews that will require school system staff to upload supportive documentation to the eGMS system. The audit staff will provide guidance for managing the fiscal monitoring application in eGMS during the official engagement.

Please contact nakia.jason@la.gov with questions.