

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



September 3, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

Last year, journalist Emily Hanford conducted some of the most important reporting on education in a generation. Hanford's [reporting](#) uncovered a troubling reality: America's primary grade teachers are not being taught how to teach reading. Often trained to use discredited approaches, teachers in Hanford's stories were rarely provided intensive pre-service and in-service support in helping young children master the foundational skills necessary to read. This summer, Hanford [again took on the practice of teaching reading in American schools](#), focusing on the notion of "cueing," or identifying clues in order for young readers to identify words. Such an approach may rob students of the opportunity to work at discerning words by associating letters with sounds, a foundational skill for developing fluency as a reader.

The foundational skills of reading – basic language acquisition, phonological awareness, phonics, and basic fluency – are not all that a young person needs to be literate. As Ed Talk speaker Natalie Wexler [also wrote this summer](#), even young children need to develop a base of stored knowledge in order to make sense of the words they read. But the absence of foundational skills may prohibit fluent reading for a lifetime. Hanford's reporting is a clarion call to make sure no child is left with such a void.

Responding to this call, [Senate Resolution 182](#) and [House Resolution 222](#) established the Louisiana Early Literacy Commission to make recommendations on developing and implementing an aligned system to provide effective evidence-based reading instruction for children from birth through third grade. The first meeting of the Early Literacy Commission will take place September 9 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Claiborne Building in Baton Rouge and will be broadcast [live](#). Additional meetings will be held October through December. Meeting details will be communicated in the school system newsletter, and recording of the meetings will be available on the [State Advisory Council](#) page.

I hope you will follow the Commission and its findings. Teaching the foundations of reading ranks among the most essential of our missions. Let us not waste a chance to review our work to date and to make improvements for the future.

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

John

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Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events

- [September School System Planning Call](#): September 4 at 1:00 p.m.
- [Special Education Leader Monthly Webinar](#): September 5 at 2:00 p.m.
- [Developing and Enhancing School EOPs](#): September 9 at 8:00 a.m.
- [Early Literacy Commission Full Panel Meeting](#): September 9 at 12:00 p.m.
- [School EOP Analysis Workshop](#): September 10 at 8:00 a.m.
- [Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call](#): September 10 at 1:00 p.m.

Important Deadlines

- [Quest for Success Teacher Training Registration](#) deadline: September 5
- 2018-2019 evaluation ratings for teachers in CIS deadline: September 6
- [Life Skills Training Survey](#) deadline: September 6
- [Louisiana Association of Principals Annual Conference Registration](#) deadline: September 7
- Mentor Teacher Stipend Data Collection Template Submission deadline: September 13
- [School Support Institute Registration](#) deadline: September 13

School System Support

New: Updated 2019-2020 Educator Resource Guide

The [2019-2020 Educator Resource Guide](#) has been updated to include:

- [2019-2020 LEAP 2025 Assessment Guides](#)
- [2019 Understanding Student Progress Webinar](#)

Additional edits to the guide will be posted on October 1.

Email ldoecommunicaitons@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: September School System Planning Call

The [September School System Planning Call](#) will take place on **September 4 at 1:00 p.m.** The following school system supervisors should participate:

- Curriculum and instruction supervisors
 - District test coordinators and accountability contacts
 - Early childhood supervisors
 - English learner supervisors
 - Federal program supervisors
 - High school and career and technical supervisors
 - Personnel directors
 - Talent (Mentors, Content Leaders, Teacher Leaders) supervisors
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- **Webinar Date and Time:** September 4 at 1:00 p.m.
 - **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/>
 - **Meeting ID#:** 398 875 849

Email districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: School Support Institute Registration is open

[School Support Institutes](#) are a three-day, invitation only, professional learning sequence for school leadership teams to ensure that teachers are prepared to deliver high quality lessons. At the School

Support Institutes, participants can choose to focus on leading effective common planning for teachers, practices for impactful observation and feedback, and building systems and structures that support high quality instruction. This training is grounded in content-specific instructional practices and aligned to Louisiana's Tier 1 curricula. Participants will leave with concrete steps to make meaningful changes that drive academic improvements for all students.

The School Support Institutes [webinar](#) has been posted in the [School Improvement Library](#).

Registration will close on September 13. Participants are encouraged to register as soon as possible to ensure space in chosen pathways.

Email delaina.larocque@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: SSD Launches New Accessible Educational Materials Program

The Department and the Special School District have partnered together to implement the Louisiana Accessible Educational Materials Program, or AEM. Louisiana AEM is a regional support program that provides school systems across the state with accessible materials, training, and outreach services.

School system leaders, assistive technology staff, special education directors, and other staff who work with students with low incidence disabilities are encouraged to attend one of the following webinars that will provide more information about AEM.

Louisiana AEM: Supporting and Servicing School Systems

- **Webinar Description:** This webinar will provide participants with information on AEM's services including accessible educational materials, assistive technology, deaf/hard of hearing and blind outreach, and support for diverse learners.
- **Webinar Date and Time:** September 24 at 12:00 p.m.

Louisiana AEM: Building Assistive Technology Capacity

- **Webinar Description:** In this webinar, participants will explore practical approaches to facilitate the use of assistive technology devices and services within their school system. Tangible examples and resources will be shared with all participants.
- **Webinar Date:** September 26 at 12:00 p.m.

Please complete this [form](#) to request a service from AEM, or email josh.miller@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Louisiana Association of Principals Annual Conference

Please share with principals.

The Louisiana Association of Principals (LAP) Annual Conference will be held **September 22-24** at the L'auberge Casino Hotel. LAP is pleased to have Todd Whitaker as the feature speaker this year.

Register by this Friday, September 6 to receive an early registration member discount. For hotel reservations, call the L'auberge at 866-261-7777 and use the group code, RLAP19, to receive the conference rate. Rooms must be reserved by September 7.

Please contact debra.schum@laprincipals.org with questions.

Reminder: Updated Personal Financial Literacy Instruction Clearinghouse

The updated [Personal Financial Literacy Instruction Clearinghouse](#) is available in the [Teacher Support Toolbox Library](#) under General Resources. The document reflects new legislation requiring instruction on the process and responsibilities, including repayment and default, or borrowing money to fund post education opportunities and more instructional resources for teachers.

Please email classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with any questions.

Reminder: Early Literacy Commission

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

All Early Literacy Commission open meetings will be held from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. and are listed below.

- [September 9](#) (Full Panel Meeting)
- October 14 (Full Panel Meeting)
- November 20 (Small Workgroup)
- December 16 (Full Panel Meeting)

A recording of the webinars will be available on the [State Advisory Council](#) page. The commission's report of recommendations will be completed in January.

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

Assessment and Accountability

For District Testing Coordinators

General:

- Data certification opening announcements are only sent to accountability contacts who are on file with the Department. All changes to secure shipping addresses, DTCs, or accountability contacts must be submitted to the Department using the [DTC and Accountability Contact Update](#) form found in the [Assessment Library](#).
- 2019-2020 LEAP 360 assessment administrations are now live in [eDIRECT](#). DTCs should ensure all users have the appropriate permissions for the new administrations.
- DTCs should ensure that Central Office is installed prior to testing during the 2019-2020 school year. Testing, including the State Placement Test and LEAP 360, cannot begin in the 2019-2020 school year until this is completed.
- DTCs should use the State Placement Test to administer placement tests for the upcoming school year for any student enrolling into grades 5 or 9 into a Louisiana public or charter school from out of state, non-public, or home school. For additional information, please reference the [State Placement Test Overview](#), located in the [Assessment Library](#).
- The [Parent Guide to the State Placement Test](#) is located in the [Assessment Library](#).

K-3

- Teachers should administer the [Kindergarten Entry Assessment and the K-3 Literacy Screeners](#) within the first 30 school days.
- **October 18:** Deadline for data managers to submit the KEA and K-3 data with the SIS K-3 Assessment Collection or in the Teaching Strategies Platform for *GOLD*
- Data managers should reference pages 13-17 for [SIS K-3 Assessment Collection Guidance](#).

LEAP 360

- The 2019-2020 Diagnostic and Interim Quick Start Guides are now available in the [Assessment](#) and [LEAP 360](#) libraries.
- Diagnostic accommodated materials and teacher study guides are available in [eDIRECT](#).

LEAP 2025

- Practice test accommodated materials and teacher study guides are available in [eDIRECT](#).
- 2019-2020 Assessment Guides are now available in the [Assessment Guidance Library](#).

ELPT/ELPS

- As of August 31, all devices running Windows, MacOS, and Linux operating systems must use the 2019-2020 Secure Browser in order to access Online Tools Training, Screener, and summative tests. The 2019-2020 Secure Browser for Windows, MacOS, and Linux operating systems can be downloaded from the [Secure Browsers page](#). For questions, please contact the [LA ELPT Help Desk](#).
- The ELPS is Louisiana's required standardized entrance screener. All guidance and trainings are available in the [Assessment Library](#).
- The Department has executed and posted a [new data sharing agreement for ELPT/ELPS](#) on the [Data Sharing Agreement](#) webpage. School systems should download the [addendum](#) from the site and sign, scan, and email the signed copy to ldedata@la.gov in order to ensure that they will be able to share student information with for administration of the ELPT purposes. Please email ldedata@la.gov with questions.

ACT and WorkKeys

- ACT is providing Louisiana schools with an opportunity to upload the names of students taking accommodated WorkKeys paper tests into PearsonAccess^{Next}. This upload will allow ACT to print barcode labels for students who are administered this form of ACT. Printing and affixing barcode labels to student answer documents will ensure more accurate reporting of student demographic data. While this step is not required, the Department strongly recommends it.
- Schools must manage participation and order WorkKeys accommodated test materials for the fall accommodated testing window October 1-15.
- School systems must verify the shipping address is correct and make necessary changes if needed.

Assessment Administration Support and Training Office Hours

The next **Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call** will be September 10 at 1:00 p.m.

- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/202189164>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 202 189 164

The [Office Hours Questions and Answers](#) document is posted in the [Assessment Library](#). Email assessment@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Data Certification

Data certification for DCAI will not close as planned due to difficulties with SIS. However, please note that school systems should not send requests for changes to 2017-2018 dropout flag as they can no longer be changed. School systems should also not send requests for increased credits. The Department will only update credits based on new information posted to the transcript in STS.

School systems should be working to review and request changes to the assessment, progress, and EL progress rosters now. All requests should be submitted to Louisiana Data Review no later than **this Friday, September 6**.

Any data that are not submitted for review as part of this process cannot be used as grounds for appeal of the official SPS that will be issued later this fall.

Please contact assessment@la.gov for assistance.

High School Pathways

Reminder: C.A.T.E. Update

Please share with career and technical education (CTE) supervisors, administrators, and counselors.

To assist school systems with verifying that Career and Technical Education (C.A.T.E.) data has been uploaded into data systems, the **Department is closing the C.A.T.E. software system at 5:00 p.m. on September 5 in order to update data.** The system will reopen for data entry on September 9. It will close for 2018-2019 data entry cycle on September 13.

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

Reminder: Fall Counselor Institutes

Please share with middle and high school counselors.

Counselors should save the date for the fall Counselor Institutes (formerly Counselor Collaborations) listed below. These events are designed to provide middle and high school counselors with information and resources to support them in their work throughout the year.

North Region	
Date and Time	Location
October 15 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Bossier Instructional Center
October 16 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Monroe City School Board
October 17 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Allen Parish School Board

South Region	
Date and Time	Location
October 22 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Acadia Parish Educational Center
October 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	Jefferson Parish Public School System Administration Building
October 24 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.	East Baton Rouge Parish Professional Development Center

For more information, please contact leslie.gilliland@la.gov.

Reminder: Supplemental Course Allocation (SCA)/Course Choice

Please share with SCA administrators and counselors.

MFP allocations for SCA/Course Choice can be found in [Table 4 of the 2019-2020 MFP documentation](#). SCA allocations can be used for academic, AP/honors/advanced, career-focused, remedial, or dual enrollment coursework.

Enrollments with Course Choice and Dual enrollment providers for fall and full-year coursework should be documented in the [SCA Portal](#) by September 27 at 5:00 p.m.

Please email sca@la.gov with questions.

Educator Preparation

New: Teacher and Principal of the Year Nominations Portal Opens

Annually, the Department honors some of the state's most successful educators through the Louisiana Teacher and Principal of the Year programs.

The [nomination process](#) for the 2021 Teacher and Principal of the Year process is now open and will close on September 27. Submissions should be made in the [nominations portal](#), and all nomination information will be shared with school systems for their consideration after the portal closes.

Please share the [nomination portal](#) with school leaders and teachers and encourage them to submit nominations.

For questions, contact excellenteducators@la.gov.

Reminder: Updated Teaching Authorization Application Forms

Overview

Act 634 of 2018 amending R.S.17:7 (10), R.S. 17:7 (6)(h), R.S. 17:15, and R.S. 17:3996(B)(45), requires the Department to issue a teaching authorization (TA) to substitute teachers in public schools, as well as to substitute teachers, teachers, and administrators in public charter schools and nonpublic schools in which teaching certification is not required.

Updated Application Process

School systems that applied for a TA for a candidate that has a criminal background must now submit a professional conduct form and an attestation form as part of the [application](#). Any TAs on hold due to a criminal background check (CBC) issue must also submit the two new forms. A new TA is **not** required each year as long as employment in the employing school system is continuous.

The [updated application](#) for teaching authorizations is now available on [Teach LA Live!](#).

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

Reminder: Praxis Exam Changes

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

In response to recommendations made by the Louisiana Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (LACTE), BESE approved revisions to the Social Studies PRAXIS exam (5086) score in June. The current required score is 160. Approved policy revised the required score to 153.

Educational Testing Service (ETS) is retiring or changing several exams in 2019-2020. At the August meeting, BESE considered and approved the following updates:

- Adoption of a new PRAXIS Core Academic Skills for Educators: Reading (5713), Writing (5723), and Mathematics (5733)
- Adoption of a new PRAXIS Teaching Reading Exam (5206)
- Adoption of a new PRAXIS School Superintendent Assessment (6991)

PRAXIS Core Academic Skills for Education

- Effective September 1, educators may take either the currently adopted exams or the newly proposed exams.
- The new exams (5713, 5723, and 5733) are required effective August 1, 2020.

PRAXIS Teaching Reading Exam and the PRAXIS School Superintendent Assessment,

- Effective September 1, educators may take either the currently adopted exams or the newly proposed exams.
- The new exams (5206 and 6991) are required effective August 1, 2020.

School Leaders Licensure Assessment

- Prior to September 1, candidates should take exam #6011.
- Effective September 1, candidates should take exam #6990.

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

Reminder: Certification Updates

Operational Role Status

In April, policy went into effect creating a new way for teachers to maintain certification while serving in roles that cannot be evaluated per the student growth component of Compass. Teachers in these roles may now apply to put their teaching certificates into an **operational role** status. Examples include: Educational Diagnosticians and Attendance Officers.

Operational role takes effect on the **first day** of employment in a role that cannot be evaluated via Compass. Previously earned effectiveness ratings **are retained** while in operational role status. [Applications](#) for operational role status **must be submitted by the employing school system**.

Local Personnel Evaluations for Educational Leaders

Effective April 20, 2019 local evaluations may be used to advance or renew **Educational Leadership certificates** for leaders serving in roles at the **school system level**.

Educational Leaders serving in roles at the **school level** must be evaluated per state statute, with a combination of observations and student learning targets.

School systems using local personnel evaluations must submit an attestation form included in the [Educational Leader packet](#) when applying for educational leader certification renewal or advancement.

Verification of Out-of-State Experience

In June, BESE approved policy to align out-of-state experience for teachers and leaders with state law. In order to receive credit for out-of-state experience teaching or leader experience, evidence of successful experience must be provided to the Department.

By September 1, certification application packets will include an out-of-state experience attestation form. **The form must be completed by the out-of-state employing school system or the out-of-state credentialing agency.** Any educator using out-of-state experience for initial certification or to advance certification must have this form completed as part of the application packet.

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

Special Education

New: Alternate Assessment Eligibility Review Preliminary Outcomes

The Every Student Succeeds Act requires states to ensure that only students with the most significant disabilities take the LEAP Connect alternate assessment. The Department conducted its review of student files to verify eligibility for alternate assessment participation for the 2018-2019 school year.

Preliminary outcome letters were issued to school systems today and were sent directly to Special Education Supervisors. Any actions listed in the outcomes letter must be completed on or

before this Thursday, September 5. If additional documentation requested is not provided on or before September 5, students with missing information will be considered ineligible and tests may be voided for accountability.

Please email specialeducation@la.gov with any questions.

Reminder: Join the Special Education Leader Monthly Webinar

The Department will hold its monthly webinar for school system directors, supervisors, and coordinators of special education this **Thursday, September 5 at 2:00 p.m.** Topics will include upcoming deadlines, updates, guidance, and training opportunities. Pre-registration is not required.

- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/836904974>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923 (for dial-in only)
- **Meeting ID#:** 836 904 974

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

Finance

Reminder: Accountability for Weighted Student Funds in the MFP

Please share with business managers.

R.S. 17:7(2)(f)(i) provides for the accountability of weighted student funds included in the MFP. Funds generated in the MFP formula by applying the weighted factors for low income (also known as economically disadvantaged) and English learners, career and technical education course units, students with disabilities, and gifted and talented students are considered weighted student funds. School systems or schools are required to expend the weighted student funds on personnel, professional services, instructional materials, equipment, and supplies that serve the unique needs of students who generate such funds.

Please reference the [FY2019-20 Weighted Student Funding AFR Reporting Details and Calculation](#) for additional information.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please email ldoemfphelpdesk@la.gov.

Reminder: USDA Required School Lunch Match

Please share with business managers and financial officials.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires a match of state funds for the school lunch program. The match must be evidenced through the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) funds in each school system's Annual Financial Report (AFR).

A memorandum that contains each school system's required match amount for FY2019-2020 is [available](#) and is based on a subset of the February 1 MFP Economically Disadvantaged membership for each school system.

Please email ldoemfphelpdesk@la.gov with questions.

Safe and Healthy Schools

New: Flu Facts and the Dangers of HPV

On behalf of the Louisiana Office of Public Health Immunization program, the Department is requesting that schools share the [Flu Facts](#) and [HPV Facts](#) sheets with families. Both documents contain information regarding the dangers of the flu and HPV, how students, parents, and school staff can practice prevention, and the importance of vaccination.

Please contact michael.comeaux@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Rave Panic Button for School Safety

School safety and security continue to be a priority for the state of Louisiana, and as a result, Governor Edwards and the Louisiana State Police (LSP) have funded [Rave Panic Button](#) for all K-12 schools in the state. The Rave Panic Button smartphone app is designed to speed up emergency response by simultaneously placing a 9-1-1 call while delivering immediate notification of the nature and location of the emergency to other school employees and first responders.

In the coming weeks, school systems will be provided with specific instructions for setting up Rave Panic Button for each school, as well as recommendations for how to best roll it out to staff. Please join LSP and representatives from Rave Mobile Safety for a [Panic Button Overview Webinar](#) to discuss this new system **tomorrow, September 5 at 10:00 a.m.** Registration is required.

More information about Rave Panic Button can be found on their [website](#) or by contacting ldedata@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Grants to States for School Emergency Management Program

Louisiana State University's National Center for Biomedical Research and Training/Academy of Counter-Terrorist Education (LSU-NCBRT/ACE) will be conducting two workshops to assist school systems in the development and implementation of high-quality emergency operations plans (EOPs). Register below.

Developing and Enhancing School EOPs Workshop

- **Date and Time:** September 9 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Location:** LSU School of Education, 225 Peabody Hall, Baton Rouge

School EOP Analysis Workshop

- **Date and Time:** September 10 from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Location:** LSU School of Education 225 Peabody Hall, Baton Rouge

Please contact rlandry@ncbrt.lsu.edu with questions.

Reminder: Life Skills Training - Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention (LST Rx)

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) has secured funds to purchase the new 8th Module of Life Skills Training Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention (LST Rx) that gives adolescents the skills and knowledge necessary to help them avoid the misuse/abuse of opioids and prescription drugs. [This module](#) is ideal for school systems, community-based organizations, and agencies serving students in grades 6-9, as it can be implemented as a standalone component specifically as a prevention initiative addressing the middle school population or in conjunction with the LST Middle School program. There is

a middle school pre-/post-test that has been recently updated to include a question related to prescription drugs. Please note: It is a requirement that the pre-/post-test be administered.

Each teacher interested in receiving this [training module](#) should complete this [survey](#) by September 6 and indicate if they would like the digital or print version of the curriculum. LDH will purchase 1,000 modules which will be disseminated on a first come, first served basis.

Please contact michael.comeaux@la.gov with questions.