

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



September 25, 2018

Dear Colleagues,

Readiness for life after high school is a function of a child's entire life prior to graduation. Everything children experience, in school and out, contributes to their ability to navigate the world as young adults. And while [career paths](#) for high school juniors and seniors will assist in that process, career readiness efforts must start earlier.

For years, Louisiana has implemented a rudimentary set of career survey and work place readiness curricula, including the often-used Journey to Careers model. But, as with the workplace itself, changing times call for changes in our approach.

A new career readiness survey course, called [Quest for Success](#), was recently developed by [twenty-two educators](#) as part of their participation in the [Louisiana Educator Voice Fellowship](#). The course, with content available online for classroom instruction, will be free for school systems to access and allows middle and high school students to develop essential workplace skills, explore various careers and industry sectors, and learn about themselves and their interests in order to successfully navigate high school, post-secondary education, and career pathways. Quest for Success is now being piloted in thirty-eight Louisiana school systems. Throughout the 2018-2019 school year, the course will be studied and revised based on teacher and student input, and a formal evaluation will be conducted at the year's end. If the pilot proves successful, additional teachers will be trained, and Quest for Success will be expanded statewide in the 2019-2020 school year.

Quest for Success is a good example of several important principles. First, the quality of curricula matters. We have to be diligent about the materials students experience. Second, we have visionary educators in our midst, individuals who, when given the chance, can innovate on behalf of the rest of the state. Finally, career readiness is a lifelong mission, and the young people of our state – students from all backgrounds and regions – deserve a regular and comprehensive look at all opportunities that await them after high school, close to home and far away. We must endow our children with an understanding of the possibilities if they are to dream far and wide.

Thanks to all of you participating in the pilot. I encourage others to pay close heed.

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

John

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Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events

- [Special Education Advisory Panel](#): September 26 at 9:30 a.m.
- [2018-2019 Individual Graduation Plan Webinar](#): September 26 at 3:30 p.m.
- [ACT WorkKeys Groups and Batch Load Training](#): September 27 at 10:30 a.m.
- [K-2 Pilot Tools Office Hours](#): September 27 at 11:30 a.m.
- [Assessment and Accountability Office Hours](#): October 2 at 1:00 p.m.
- [Early Childhood Care and Education Commission](#): October 3 at 12:00 p.m.
- [October School System Planning Call](#): October 3 at 1:00 p.m.
- [Special Education Leader Monthly Webinar](#): October 4 at 2:00 p.m.
- [Special Education Reporting \(SER\) Webinar](#): October 8 at 1:00 p.m.

Important Deadlines

- [Sponsor Site \(SPS\) Certification](#) deadline: September 28
- [Principal and Teacher of the Year Nominations](#) deadline: September 28
- [Request for Information on Legal Services](#) deadline: September 28
- [Annual Financial Report \(AFR\) Collection](#) deadline: October 1

School System Support

New: October School System Planning Call

The **October School System Planning Call** will take place on **October 3 at 1:00 p.m.** The following school system supervisors should participate:

- Early childhood supervisors
- Curriculum and instruction supervisors
- District test coordinators and accountability contacts
- High school and career and technical supervisors
- Personnel directors
- Talent (Mentors, Content Leaders, Teacher Leaders) supervisors
- **Webinar Date and Time:** October 3 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/>
- **Meeting ID#:** 398875849
- Please enter your full name, and school system name when logging in.

Email districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

New: Request for Nominations for the 2019 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program

The nomination process for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program is now open. Each state can nominate up to 25 students for one of the following [categories](#):

- **General:** outstanding academic performance on the ACT or SAT
- **Career and Technical Education (CTE):** outstanding performance in CTE (*new this year*)

The Department invites school systems to submit nominations for up to three outstanding students. The nominations must include a male and female student for the general category, and at least one nomination should be for a student who has been successful in career and technical education. Students must be high school seniors scheduled to graduate or receive a diploma between January-June of 2019. Additional program requirements are available on the U.S. Department of Education's [website](#).

Nominations should be submitted through a single nomination letter for all nominees (not to exceed three pages total), signed by the local superintendent or charter school leader, and emailed to leslie.hill@la.gov no later than **November 2 at 4:30 p.m.** with "Presidential Scholars" in the subject line. In the letter, please include the following information for each nominee:

- the student's name, home mailing address, gender, and email address; and
- high school name, mailing address, and (College Entrance Examination Board) CEEB code.

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

Reminder: OpenSciEd Training

Please share with middle school science teachers.

The Department is helping educators transition to the [Louisiana Student Standards for Science](#) (LSSS) in the 2018-2019 school year by offering middle school science teachers the opportunity to receive training on and pilot high-quality units by OpenSciEd, a project that is building out a full middle school curriculum. Middle school educators can register for the pilot and the four-day professional development using the links below. Registration is currently open.

Date	Vendor	Cost	Registration Information
October 6-7 and 13-14	Louisiana Tech	\$500	Registration Link
October 12-13 and 26-27	LSU Cain Center	\$200	Registration Link
November 3-4 and 10-11	Louisiana Tech	\$500	Registration Link

Email classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: K-2 Pilot Tools Office Hours

Please share with all SRCL grant and K-2 pilot tools coordinators.

The Department will begin hosting office hours, starting this Thursday, September 27, for school systems engaged in the K-2 pilot tools initiative. Participants should join the call at 712-451-0695, code 568324#. A complete schedule of upcoming calls is [available](#).

Office hours are arranged by pilot tool as follows:

- CLASS (K): 11:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
- Writing Sample (1st): 12:00 p.m.–12:30 p.m.
- Curriculum Implementation (1st and 2nd): 12:30 p.m.–1:00 p.m.
- ELA/Mathematics Checkup (2nd): 1:00 p.m.–1:30 p.m.

Contact ivy.starns@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: September Supervisor Collaborations Review

The September Supervisor Collaboration events provided supervisors across Louisiana with high-quality tools, resources, and professional development to help them effectively lead in 2018-2019 and plan for 2019-2020. September Supervisor Collaboration presentations and materials are available in the [School System Support Library](#).

General

- **Using the Curriculum Implementation Observation Tools:** Participants explored the recently released ELA and Mathematics Observation Tools to be used by the Department during the Early Phase of Redesign/SRCL grant implementation.
- **K-2 Pilot Tools:** Participants examined the four pilot tools and how they will be utilized to evaluate children's classroom experience and mastery of standards and explored how data and feedback from the pilots will help inform K-2 policy anticipated to be in effect statewide in 2019-2020.

Social Studies

- [Social Studies Companion Documents](#): This session provided an overview of the Social Studies Companion Documents, as well as guidance on how educators should use these documents to increase the effectiveness of Social Studies instruction. The Social Studies Companion Documents prioritize the content to be taught for each standard and are aligned with the LEAP 2025 assessment.

Science

- **LEAP 2025 Science:** Participants learned how the new LEAP 2025 science assessments and resources support the instructional shifts inherent in the Louisiana Student Standards for Science.

Students with Disabilities

- **Implementation of TS GOLD for OSEP Assessment:** To support the transition from AEPS to TS GOLD for the assessment of students with disabilities age 3-5, this session focused on site administration of the TS GOLD OSEP site. Recommendations were provided to help teachers and service providers manage their assessment caseloads and to collaborate effectively to ensure timely and accurate assessment.
- **Making Assistive Technology Heroes:** Accessing Mathematics Standards with AT: The session demonstrated how to incorporate assistive technology tools and equipment into Tier I Mathematics curriculum to support the learning needs of students with significant disabilities.
- **Students with Significant Disabilities Eligibility and Instructional Supports:** Participants learned about proper eligibility of students taking the alternative assessment. This session provided clarity on state guidelines, the required documentation in SER, and the instructional supports provided to ensure high quality instruction for these students.

Email districtsupport@la.gov with questions about any of these sessions.

Family Engagement

Reminder: Internet Safety Flyer Now Available in Multiple Languages

Please share with family engagement coordinators.

[Act 369](#) of the 2018 Regular Session requires school systems to provide parents with information relative to Internet safety. The Department has developed a [flyer](#) for families highlighting this important information including the dangers of Internet pornography and cyberbullying. The flyer is available in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [Arabic](#), and [Vietnamese](#) and can be found in the [Family Support Toolbox Library](#).

Reminder: Updated ELPT and LEAP Connect Parent Guides

Please share with family engagement coordinators and school test coordinators.

The Parent Guides for the [ELPT](#) and [LEAP Connect](#) assessments have been updated to reflect test information for the 2018-2019 school year. Please share these guides with families to help them better understand these assessments and better support their child's preparation.

Both parent guides are available in the [Family Support Toolbox library](#) along with the Parent Guides to the LEAP 2025 tests. Translated versions are also now available.

Email assessment@la.gov with questions.

Assessment and Accountability

New: Principal Training Deck for School Performance Score Release

Please share with principals.

During the September Collaborations, the Department previewed a training deck to be used with principals to help them prepare for the release of the 2017-2018 school performance scores. That [presentation](#) is now final and available in the [Principal Support Toolbox library](#) in the "School Finder Toolkit" section.

School system leaders should begin holding meetings with principals, using this training deck, to prepare them for the upcoming fall release.

Please email ldoecommunications@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](#).
- At the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year eDIRECT was populated with eSCHOLAR information from the 2017-2018 school year. By October 4th all eSCHOLAR data must be updated for the 2018-2019 school year in order for the students to remain populated in eDIRECT.

K-3

- School systems should be submitting the kindergarten-readiness screener and a K-3 literacy screener data into SIS. The data will be submitted in the SIS October 1 MFP Collection. [2018-2019 Guidance](#) is available to support this process.

LEAP 360

- Paper versions of the high school Interim Form 1 and 2 assessments and Interim Form 1 answer keys have been posted in [eDIRECT](#) under General Information → Documents → Diagnostic/Interim 18-19 → Paper Tests. Interim I for ELA and mathematics in grades 3-8 and high school will go live on October 23.

ELPT and ELPS

- The 2018-2019 AIR Secure Browser is now available for download in the [EL Portal](#) under [Secure Browsers](#). Technology coordinators must have the new browser downloaded by January 1, 2019 on all devices being used for ELPT/ELPS.

ACT and WorkKeys

- The [2018-2019 ACT MOU](#) and related documents are now posted in the [Assessment Library](#). The MOU and [ACT Estimated Number of Testers](#) form is due on September 30. Please mail the forms to the address on page 2 of the MOU.
- [The ACT and WorkKeys Updates for 2018-2019](#) contains the changes for ACT and WorkKeys testing for the current school year.

- All WorkKeys test records taken on both Department and non-Department reams are subject to review to ensure that the 30 day wait period is being followed per [Bulletin 118](#), §7209. WorkKeys [Formerly LAC 28:CXI.2209]
 - Students shall be subject to a 30-day wait period before retesting on WorkKeys assessments, during which time LEAs shall provide remediation.
 - School system must provide student results for all WorkKeys tests taken by every student every year, as outlined by the Department, to ensure all results are considered (applies only to school systems/schools not signing the [ACT \(other realms\) Addendum](#)).
 - The 30 day wait period refers to 30 calendar days. Testing on day 30 does not meet the policy requirement. Testing within the official state testing window will be monitored and strictly enforced. Results from any test taken in violation of policy will not be used in accountability.
- An upcoming WorkKeys webinar is listed below.
 - September 27, 10:30 a.m. – Register for [ACT WorkKeys Groups and Batch Load Training](#) offered weekly. The link provided here lists all current available dates and times.

Assessment Administration Support and Training

The Assessment and Accountability Office Hours will be held on October 2 at 1:00 p.m.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** October 2 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 669-900-6833
- **Meeting ID#:** 393463942

The [Office Hours Questions and Answers](#) document is posted in the [Assessment Library](#).

Reminder: Data Reminders for Accountability Contacts

Data Certification:

- On August 9, the Louisiana Data Certification online system opened to allow schools and school systems an opportunity to review data used in school and school system performance scores.
- The online system also provides the following files that should be downloaded before the system closes for all activities on September 28th:
 - Assessment Roster
 - ACT Roster
 - DCAI Roster
 - K8 and HS Progress Point Rosters
 - VAM Exclusion Roster
 - Output file that captures all requests, correspondence and Department decisions

Files Available on Secure FTP

- Three new files are now available for school systems:
 - LEAP 2025 High School Growth Target Rosters: new growth targets for 2018-2019
 - LEAP 2025 K8 Subgroup Summary: achievement level percentages by subgroup
 - LEAP 2025 HS Subgroup Summary: achievement level percentages by subgroup

Email assessment@la.gov with questions.

High School Pathways

New: 2018 Louisiana Counseling Association Annual Conference

Please share with school counselors and system supervisors.

The Louisiana Counseling Association will hold its annual conference at the Baton Rouge Crowne Plaza hotel October 7-9 with pre-conference sessions from the [Louisiana School Counselor Association \(LSCA\)](#) and the [Louisiana Career Development Association \(LCDA\)](#) on October 6. This year's theme is Stronger Together: 50th Anniversary of Counseling and Advocacy. Counselors can expect the latest information in the field and earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs).

Please visit the [LCA Conference](#) for more information.

New: High School Planning Guidebook

Please share with administrators, school counselors, and teachers.

Each year, the Office of Student Opportunities publishes the High School Planning Guidebook to help administrators, counselors, and teachers use key policies, programs, and resources to help both students and schools achieve their goals. Specifically, the guidebook focuses on the following processes:

- planning for struggling students;
- foundational academic skills in the first two years of high school;
- developing basic and advanced college and workplace skills;
- providing Jump Start opportunities that can help all students, in all parts of the state, create the foundation for a successful adulthood;
- counseling and supporting all students throughout their high school career; and
- earning recognition for school excellence through an accountability system that rewards schools for helping students successfully pursue their college and career aspirations.

The print version of the 2018-2019 High School Planning Guidebook will be distributed at the Fall Counselor Collaborations. The online version will be available on the Department's [Principal Support Toolbox](#) on October 1.

Please email highschoolacademics@la.gov with questions about this publication.

New: Robotics Education and Competition (REC) Equipment Grants

The Robotics Education and Competition (REC) Foundation provides resources needed to inspire the next generation of scientists and engineers in Louisiana. In order to inspire Louisiana students to pursue STEM degrees and careers, they are offering [robotic equipment grants](#) to Louisiana schools in support of the Louisiana STEM (LaSTEM) Advisory Council.

Grant applications are due October 26. Details about the grant can be found in the [overview](#), or by contacting luis_medina@roboticseducation.org or calling 1-832-683-1674.

Reminder: 2018 ACT College and Career Readiness Workshop

Please share with administrators, counselors, and teachers.

The 2018 ACT College and Career Readiness [Workshop](#) will be offered in multiple locations in Louisiana this fall.

- September 26: Lafayette – University of Louisiana at Lafayette
- September 27: New Orleans - University of New Orleans
- October 3: Shreveport - Centenary College of Louisiana

During this free, half-day workshop participants will:

- get answers to the questions you have about data and the tools used,
- get advice on educational measurement, and
- be introduced to free personalized instructional resources.

Please visit the ACT's [registration](#) page for the latest on all workshops.

Educator Preparation

New: Compass Timeline and Training

The [Compass Timeline](#) for 2018-2019 is now available on [Louisiana Believes](#). Please note the following upcoming deadlines:

- **November 2** - All rosters should be updated in CIS for 2018-2019.
- **December 21** - Leader evaluations cannot be calculated until SPS scores are released. For this reason, leader evaluations can be updated in CIS after SPS scores are released in late fall until December 21.

Compass Training:

Per [state policy](#), all compass evaluators must attend a new evaluator certification training or a returning evaluator recertification training. If you were unable to attend the final Compass Evaluation webinars, they may be completed as a self-guided training using the presentation decks linked below.

- [New Evaluator Training Presentation](#)
- [Recertification Training Presentation](#)

In order to receive credit for the training, please make sure to complete the survey link provided on the final slide of either training to be marked as attended.

Please contact compass@la.gov for more information.

New: Nominate an Excellent Educator- Searching for Louisiana's Next State Teacher and Principal of the Year

Please share with principals and teachers.

The Louisiana Department of Education recognizes great teachers and school leaders are critical to student success. Annually, the Department honors some of the state's most successful educators through the Louisiana Teacher and Principal of the Year programs.

Part of the [selection process](#) for naming the school system and state-level winners includes recommendations from teachers, principals, school system employees, parents, colleagues, and community members.

If you know an excellent teacher or school leader, please submit a nomination. Multiple nominations and self-nominations are accepted.

Nominations must be submitted via the [nominations portal](#) by this Friday, September 28.

The portal may also be accessed by visiting the by visiting the [Department's website](#). Nominations will be sent to the local school systems for consideration as they select their top candidates to participate in the state-level process.

Contact excellenteducators@la.gov with questions.

New: Mentor Teacher Implementation Survey Launch

Please share with Mentor Teachers.

The Department is excited to launch a Mentor Teacher Implementation survey on Friday, September 28.

This survey will be sent to all teachers who have participated in state Mentor Teacher Training, as well as their mentees and their principals. These surveys will provide information about the impact of the Mentor Teacher training, and solicit feedback on the structures and supports that mentor teachers may need to effectively serve in the mentor teacher role.

Survey links will be sent directly to Mentor Teacher training participants and their school leaders.

Please contact believeandprepare@la.gov for more information.

Special Education

New: ESSA Alternate Assessment Data Packages to be Released

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), any school system with more than 1.0 percent of students participating in the ELA, mathematics, or science alternate assessment must take certain actions. The Department will provide all school systems with an alternate assessment package on October 5 via FTP with the file name: LEA Code_LEA Name_Prelim Alternate Assessment 2018. School systems should review their data, and if they exceed the 1.0 percent participation threshold, should take the actions outlined in the package. Please contact your school system's FTP coordinator to retrieve your alternate assessment package.

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

New: Join the Special Education Leader Monthly Webinar

The Department will hold its **monthly webinar for school system directors, supervisors, and coordinators of special education on October 4 at 2:00 p.m.** Topics will include upcoming deadlines, updates, guidance, and training opportunities. Pre-registration is not required.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** October 4 at 2:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/670515231>
- **Meeting ID#:** 670515231
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 408-638-0968, 670515231#
(For dial-in only)

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

Data

New: Audit Assurances FY2017-2018

The Audit Assurances packet is now available on the INSIGHT Portal under Announcements. This packet contains information used to facilitate improvement in the data collection and reporting procedures during LEAs annual financial audit. Please note, this year there are some changes to the Agreed Upon Procedures (AUPs), including the elimination of several schedules. These changes are highlighted in the Audit Assurances packet. LEAs should download the packet and provide to the appropriate audit staff.

In order to better assist LEAs in this process, the Department has added documentation/reports for various audit assurance schedules which will be available on the data management FTP site September 25 through the month of December. The filename is "LEACode_LEAName_2017_Assurance Schedules.zip". Contact information for each schedule is included in the packet.

Please email systemsupport@la.gov with questions.

New: Special Education Reporting (SER) Webinar

The Department is hosting a webinar to review the SER Crosscheck Reports for the Special Education Reporting System (SER). This webinar is for data managers who submit data to SER and SIS. The crosscheck reports compare the student data from SER against the student data in the Student Information System (SIS) and provides error messages for any data that is unaligned. Data managers will be given guidance to assist them in reviewing the reports and correcting any errors in SER or SIS.

- **Meeting Date and Time:** October 8 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us>
- **Phone:** 408-638-0968
- **Meeting ID#:** 163681224

Please email systemsupport@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: MFP and IDEA Data Collections

The Student Information System (SIS) MFP collection and the Special Education Reporting (SER) IDEA collection are open for submitting student data. The reporting deadline is **October 19**. Please refer to the [2018-2019 Benchmark Calendar](#) for other important information regarding data submissions.

Please email systemsupport@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Sponsor Site (SPS) Certification

School systems should certify their sponsor and site information in the Sponsor Site (SPS) system by **this Friday, September 28**. Sponsor site data is important for the School Finder release this fall and for verifying data entered into all other systems. A spreadsheet has been dropped to the DM FTP in the Data Validation folder for verifying data currently entered in Sponsor Site.

Please email systemsupport@la.gov with questions.

Finance

New: Federal Procurement Update

Please share with business managers and financial officials.

On June 20, the U. S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued [memorandum M-18-18](#). This memorandum raises the threshold for micro-purchases under federal financial assistance awards to \$10,000 and raises the threshold for simplified acquisitions to \$250,000 for all recipients.

Information on the new procurement standards contained in the OMB memorandum may be found in the [LDOE Quick Reference Guide](#).

Any questions regarding procurement updates may be sent to ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov.

New: Career Development Funds (CDF) FY2018-2019

Please share with all business managers and financial officials.

Starting with the September 2018 payments, CDF payments will be provided in a single payment earlier in the school year rather than monthly. For more details, refer to the [memo](#).

Contact the MFP Staff at ldoemfphelpdesk@la.gov with questions.

Policy

New: Request for Information on Legal Services

The Department has received a legislative request to obtain the following information from each school system for the most recent fiscal year (FY2017-2018):

- Provide a listing of all legal services expenditures, including the amount paid, to whom payment was made, and for what purpose.
- Respond to the question, is the school system's legal counsel a full-time or part-time employee of the school system?
- If the answer to that question is yes, provide the legal counsel's annual salary and benefits.

Please submit this information by this Friday, October 26 to leslie.hill@la.gov.

Grants Management

Reminder: High Cost Services and State Plan

The Department has established a High Cost Services (HCS) grant to support Louisiana school systems and schools in providing high cost special education services for students with disabilities. Details about the applications process and a copy of last week's webinar presentation on the grant are provided below.

- [18-19 HSC State Plan](#)
- [High Cost Services Webinar 2018-2019](#)

Please contact ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov for further information.

Federal Programs

Reminder: USDA 2018 National School Lunch Program Equipment Grants

Please share with child nutrition supervisors.

The consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 has awarded Louisiana \$558,152 to be distributed to School Food Authorities (SFA's) participating in the National School Lunch Program to purchase equipment to serve healthier meals, improve food safety, and expand access to school meals. Priority will be given to schools in which 50 percent or more of the enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced price meals and have not received equipment grant funding in 2009, 2010, 2014, 2015, 2016, or 2017.

Grant related information is located in the [Equipment Assistance Grants for School Food Authorities](#) memo. Online applications will be accessible at the [Child Nutrition Programs](#) website. A School Food Service Memo will be forthcoming to inform SFA's of the open application period.

For further information about the grant, please contact helen.folks@la.gov.

Safe and Healthy Schools

Reminder: Louisiana Farm to School Conference

The 2018 Louisiana Farm to School Conference will be held on October 10 at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center. The conference brings together farmers, food distributors, school administrators, school nutrition program staff, teachers, and parents in the interest of Louisiana agriculture, school gardens, and healthy school meals. All stakeholders are invited to attend and take advantage of the educational and networking opportunities. Please see the [event flyer](#) for additional information, including registration.

Please contact melissa.campbell@la.gov with questions.