

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



October 1, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

It was great to see so many of you at last week's meetings. We covered important ground, including shifts in supports available to alternatively certified teachers, plans for further strengthening of school system cyber security plans, and the Board of Regents' plans for increasing education and credential levels of Louisianans. In each case, our discussion marked one stage of an ongoing dialogue, one that I will revisit in this newsletter and that I hope we will revisit in future meetings.

This morning's Baton Rouge Advocate contained an article that was exceptional for both the detail of the reporting and the efforts of the educators whose story it told. The [article](#) tells the story of two alternative schools, one in Tangipahoa Parish and one in East Baton Rouge Parish, that have reinvented themselves in the last year as part of a pilot initiative launched in partnership with the state Department of Education. The pilot corresponds with the development of [a new rating system](#) for alternative schools, also developed in recent years, set to be public this fall for the first time.

The thoughtfulness and depth of the changes reported are remarkable and moving. "At Tangipahoa Alternative School," the article reads, "the result has been small group meetings similar to counseling groups where kids are free to speak their mind about problems they're facing, they have one-on-one mentors to follow them through their time in alternative programs and afterward, and there's a distinctive focus on social and emotional learning to stop disruptive feelings before they become disruptive behaviors." The story details similarly reflective practices in East Baton Rouge, where principal Rochelle Washington Scott said, "One of the things we often say when parents come for intake is, at the end of the day, the punishment was that your child was expelled, but it's not our job to punish them every day." There are lines that should not be crossed, but students who cross them deserve a path back to the right side of the line. These schools and their staff are exemplars of that approach.

Neither overhaul happened without the involvement of school system leaders. In both cases, school systems made careful and courageous decisions about school leadership and teacher selection. The article also details efforts by both school systems to use federal funds in continuing work with the Discipline Project, a partner organization on the project. These alternative schools are school system-wide priorities, starting at the top.

Kudos to these school systems and their leaders. They are showing what is possible, for students whose possibilities are too often limited.

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

John

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Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events

- [Louisiana AEM Webinar: Building Assistive Technology Capacity](#): September 26 at 12:00 p.m.
- [October School System Planning Call](#): October 2 at 1:00 p.m.
- [Louisiana Extension Academy RFA Webinar](#): October 7 at 3:00 p.m.
- [Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call](#): October 8 at 1:00 p.m.
- [2019-2020 High Cost Services Overview Webinar](#): October 8 at 1:00 p.m.
- [LEAP Connect Sample Math Constructed-Response Tasks Webinar](#): October 16 at 3:30 p.m.

Important Deadlines

- Preferred AP Exam Order deadline: October 4
- [Teacher and Principal of the Year Nomination](#) deadline: October 10
- [USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Application](#) deadline: October 18

School System Support

New: Early Literacy Commission Meeting

[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. In January of 2020, the Early Literacy Commission will make its final recommendations to BESE and the Legislature.

The Early Literacy Commission met on September 9. During this meeting, the committee:

- read and discussed the current state of reading in Louisiana;
- researched the foundational skills that support reading for understanding in K—3;
- learned more about the science of reading and the importance of what teachers should know about this work; and
- discussed what competencies and supports teachers need to bridge the gap in reading.

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

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

Meeting materials and recordings are available on the [State Advisory Council](#) page.

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

Reminder: October School System Planning Call

The [October School System Planning Call](#) will take place **tomorrow, October 2 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:** October 2 at 1:00 p.m.
 - **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/>
 - **Meeting ID#:** 398 875 849

Please email districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Super App Launch

The Department will launch the 2020-2021 School System Planning process and Super App on **November 4**. The Department will host four Super App Launch events: November 4, 7, 8 in Baton Rouge and November 12 in Ruston from **8:00 a.m. to 1:05 p.m.** See the [School System Support Calendar](#) for details.

School systems are encouraged to bring members of their school system planning team, including superintendents, CAOs, and supervisors overseeing special education, human resources, teacher support, curriculum, high school and career/technical education, federal programs, and budget/finance. Each event will provide sessions and information on the Department's Academic Strategy, school system planning process, and CIR/UIR strategy. Registration information will be available soon.

Please contact districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: 10th Annual Louisiana Elementary Math Olympiad

The [10th Annual Louisiana Elementary Math Olympiad](#) is a free, paper-and-pencil test of mathematical skills open to 5th grade students. Students will compete for prizes, including gold medals, a 3D printing pen, and an iPad Mini. The winning students' teachers also will receive gift cards. The event will take place on **November 2 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** at Kenilworth Science and Technology School (7600 Boone Ave, Baton Rouge, LA 70808) and includes workshops that parents can attend while students are taking tests. **The deadline to [register](#) is October 31.**

Please visit the [Louisiana Elementary Math Olympiad webpage](#) for additional information and contact lfischer@kenilworthst.org with questions.

Assessment and Accountability

New: Updated LEAP 2025 Assessment Guides for Grades 3 and 4

Please share with test coordinators.

The [LEAP 2025 assessment guides](#) for grades 3 and 4 have been updated to include the 2019-2020 paper-based testing schedule, shown below.

Day 1: April 27	Day 2: April 28	Day 3: April 29	Day 4: April 30	Day 5: May 1
ELA session 1	ELA session 2	ELA session 3	science session 1	social studies session 1
math session 1	math session 2	math session 3	science session 2	social studies session 2

Please contact assessment@la.gov with questions.

New: LEAP Connect Online Tools Training (OTT) Expanded

Please share with supervisors and school test coordinators.

The LEAP Connect Online Tools Training (OTT) has been expanded from one OTT to six. The previous OTT has been separated by ELA and math, and then by grade bands 3 to 5, 6 to 8, and high school. The OTTs not only include tasks from the previous OTT but also include some new tasks from the assessment guides. New Directions for Administration and Reference Materials for each OTT are available in [eDirect](#) and the [Assessment Guidance](#) library. LEAP Connect science OTTs will be added in the winter and will include all the science samples found in the assessment guides.

Please contact assessment@la.gov with any questions.

New: Updated LEAP Connect Assessment Guides

Please share with supervisors and school test coordinators.

[All three of the LEAP Connect assessment guides](#) have been updated to include:

- information about the new science field tests and sample science tasks for grades 4 and 8, and high school; and
- a new appendix which lists the ELA and math vocabulary for American Sign Language (ASL) translation, object replacement, tactile graphics, word boards or word banks, and Assistive Technology and Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AT/AAC) devices.

Please contact assessment@la.gov with any questions.

New: LEAP Connect Sample Math Constructed-Response Tasks Webinar

Please share with supervisors and school test coordinators.

The Department will host a webinar on using the LEAP Connect sample math constructed-response tasks. Participants will learn how to administer, score, and use the [LEAP Connect Sample Math Constructed-Response Tasks](#) and [Directions for Administration](#).

- **Webinar Date and Time:** October 16 at 3:30 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/448611621>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 448 611 621

Please contact assessment@la.gov with questions.

For District Testing Coordinators and Accountability Contacts

Important: Interests and Opportunities Online Principals Survey

- The Online Principals Survey that will be used to award points for the new Interests and Opportunities index was distributed via **accountability contacts** on September 30. Principals will have until **November 1** to complete the survey, which is 2.5 percent of the 2020 SPS in schools with grade combinations from the K—8 range and 5 percent for high schools.
- For K—8 schools, the October Class Collection (CUR, PEP, SIS) will be used to identify the students enrolled in PE, visual art, performance art, and world language courses, which determines an additional 2.5 percent of the SPS.

General

- Data certification opening announcements are only sent to accountability contacts who are on file with the Department. Please “create a new contact” for all contacts in the [Louisiana School System Contact Form](#). **Only contacts added to this form will receive communications from the Department.**

Accountability Release

- Preliminary, pre-data certification **2018-2019 subgroup performance scores** have been posted to the secure FTP. Letter grades and labels for intervention will not be applied until all data requests have been reviewed and resolved.
- 2019 high school **Growth-to-Mastery Target Rosters** are now available on the secure FTP. Site codes for both grades 3—8 and high school rosters reflect enrollment at the time of testing.
- After the October 1 SIS collection closes, both grade 3—8 and high school rosters will be updated and released with student inclusion based on the October 1 enrollment in SIS.

K—3

- **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*; reference pages 13—17 for [SIS K-3 Assessment Collection Guidance](#) for details.
- **October 31:** Deadline for [Early Childhood Fall Checkpoint](#) for pre-K in the [Teaching Strategies Platform for GOLD](#).

ACT and WorkKeys

- Resources can be found on the [ACT State Testing](#) site or by contacting the WorkKeys helpdesk, 800-967-5539 (800-WorkKey).

NAEP 2019-2020

- 31 Louisiana schools are participating in the NAEP 2019-2020 Long-Term Trend Study. Each principal will designate a school coordinator (SC) to support the administration of the NAEP test. The ideal school coordinator will be available to complete tasks during the pre-assessment period, collect student information, and enter it online. The deadlines for completing the Provide School Information (PSI) and E-filing are as follows:
 - The SCs for the age 13 schools have completed the PSI and E-filing processes.
 - The SCs for the age 9 schools have a due date of November 8.
 - The SCs for the age 17 schools have a due date of January 17.

Assessment Administration Support and Training Office Hours

The next **Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call** will be October 8 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](#).

Please email assessment@la.gov with questions.

High School Pathways

New: Save-the-Date 2020 Jump Start Convention

Please share with CTE leaders, administrators, and counselors.

The 2020 Jump Start Convention is scheduled for **January 28** at the Baton Rouge River Center.

Attendees of the convention should include school system administrators, counselors, high school principals, career and technical education leaders, regional economic development, and workforce development organizations.

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with questions.

New: CLEP Preparation and Exam Funding

Please share with counselors, administrators, and instructional leaders.

[Modern States](#), a philanthropy dedicated to making college more accessible and affordable, offers an opportunity for interested students preparing for CLEP exams to participate in thirty-two free online courses taught by college professors from across the country. Upon successful completion of the course and practice exam, Modern States will provide a voucher to cover the \$89 CLEP exam fee.

School systems are encouraged to have students [register and enroll](#) today to start saving time and money on their college degree. The length of each course is six to eight weeks.

Please contact collegereadiness@la.gov with questions.

New: Critical AP Classroom Action

Please share with administrators and AP coordinators.

In order to gain access to the new Advanced Placement instructional resources, there are **three steps schools must complete**: activate the Advanced Placement registering and ordering system (APRO), create AP sections, and provide students with join codes to individual classroom sections.

At present, according to the College Board, Louisiana schools are on track with two of those three tasks:

- 89 percent have activated the APRO (registration and ordering) system and signed an AP participation form;
- 82 percent have created AP sections; and
- 48 percent of teachers have provided students with join codes to join individual classes, unlocking the new AP resources (Unit exams, Item Bank, Progress Dashboards, etc.).

To better support schools in completing these steps, the Department will host six recurring [Advanced Placement Activation Webinars](#) throughout the month of October that are designed to walk participants through the process of completing the AP Classroom activation process. Each webinar will last approximately twenty minutes with time for Q&A. Each webinar will be the same, so there is no need to attend each one unless participants have additional questions.

Please contact collegereadiness@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Louisiana Extension Academy Request for Applications

Please share with administrators.

On September 26, the Department released a request for applications for **2020-2021 Extension Academies**. The purpose of this innovation is to provide students, who are on track to graduate but not on track to participate in a low-cost postsecondary college or training program, with an additional year to attain a Regents-recognized associate degree, participate in a registered pre-apprenticeship, or attain an advanced Industry Based Credential (IBC).

An informational webinar will be held on **October 7 at 3:00 p.m.** to answer any questions about the RFA. Webinar details are listed below:

- **Webinar Date and Time:** October 7 at 3:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/644881662>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 644 881 662

The [RFA](#) priority deadline is **November 20 at 4:00 p.m.**

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

Educator Preparation

Update: Teacher and Principal of the Year Nomination Period Extended

Please share with principals.

The Department 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 district and state-level winners includes recommendations from teachers, principals, school system employees, parents, colleagues, and community members. Please share the [criteria overview](#) and [nomination portal](#) with school leaders and teachers and encourage them to submit nominations. Multiple nominations and self-nominations are accepted.

The nominations portal deadline has been extended. Please submit nominations via the [nominations portal](#) by October 10.

Nominations will be sent to local school systems for consideration as they select their top candidates to participate in the state-level process.

Please contact excellenteducators@la.gov with questions.

Special Education

Reminder: Alternate Assessment Eligibility Review Determination Letter

The Every Student Succeeds Act requires states to ensure that only students with the most significant cognitive 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. Determination letters **were issued to school systems on September 20**. Letters were emailed to special education directors and school system superintendents. Assessment scores for students found to be ineligible will be converted to the lowest scale score and assigned zero points in the school performance score, for the applicable content areas.

Please email specialeducation@la.gov with any questions.

Grants Management

New: 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. An overview of the High Cost Services Fund for the 2019-2020 school year will be provided in an upcoming webinar.

Webinar details are listed below:

- **Webinar Date and Time:** October 8 at 1:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/786192848>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 786 192 848

Please review the [2019-2020 HCS State Plan](#) and contact ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov with questions.

Safe and Healthy Schools

Reminder: USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)

Applications for the 2019-2020 FFVP are now available for returning sponsors via the [Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. **Applications must be submitted by October 18.**

Please contact trandra.scott@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grant

The USDA has awarded Louisiana \$602,468.00, provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2019 (Public Law 116-6), to be distributed to School Food Authorities (SFA's) participating in the NSLP to purchase equipment to serve healthier meals, improve food safety, and expand access to school meals. Priority will be given to schools where fifty 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, 2017, or 2018. Grant related information is [now available](#).

The **online application period ends on October 31**. Applications will be accessible at the [Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Please contact helen.folks@la.gov with questions.