

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



October 8, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

Of all that the state and local school systems have done together, some of the work I'm proudest of has been a consequence of our efforts to compete for and implement grants awarded by the federal government. Expanding early childhood care and education, for example, for nearly a decade was a function of competitive federal grants. The Teacher Incentive Fund has spurred innovative change in how our state prepares and supports educators. The Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Grant has similarly supported high-quality curriculum and professional learning for teachers across the state.

The challenges our schools and students face remain manifold, and there is a need for further collaboration and innovation. In no area is the need for action more acute than in the realm of mental and emotional health. While our understanding of the brain has improved, indicators of suffering have increased. Among these indicators are rates of depression, addiction, and suicide. Because children and adolescents are so profoundly affected by these trends, schools find themselves in the middle of a troubling trend taking hold across our country.

I'm thus proud to report that Louisiana has won two competitive grants meant to foster innovation in response to this challenge. The federal Trauma Recovery Grant, which totals \$7.5 million over five years, will help Louisiana increase access to mental health services in order to boost academic performance and decrease absence and discipline rates. The state Department of Education will partner with the Department of Child and Family Services and community agencies to pay for direct mental health services for students who have experienced trauma, with a particular focus on low-income, foster, homeless, and migrant students. Other priorities include providing mental health training to school and school system staff, and expanding the Department's Counselor Assistance Center, which currently provides academic and post-secondary planning support to school counselors and high school students.

The Mental Health Service Professional Demonstration Grant, which totals \$2.5 million over five years, will fund a partnership between the Department and LSU School of Social Work to create the "Louisiana School Social Work Expansion Project," an effort to expand and strengthen the school-based mental health workforce, particularly at sites with a high number of economically disadvantaged students and with high rates of teacher turnover. The project aims to provide enhanced mental health services to students in high-needs schools, prepare the school-based mental health workforce to provide students multi-tiered systems of support, and improve school culture and climate.

Each of these efforts will call for state agencies, school systems, and health services providers to work together, developing new systems for addressing difficult issues. More information will follow regarding how to get involved. I hope you will join us in this effort.

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

John

In This Issue

- [School System Support](#)

- [Assessment & Accountability](#)
- [High School Pathways](#)
- [Special Education](#)
- [Safe and Healthy Schools](#)

Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events

- [Early Literacy Commission Full Panel Meeting](#): October 14 at 12:00 p.m.
- [Assessment and Accountability Office Hours](#): October 15 at 1:00 p.m.
- [LEAP Connect Sample Math Constructed-Response Tasks Webinar](#): October 16 at 3:30 p.m.
- [2019 Louisiana Farm to School Conference](#): October 23 at 8:00 a.m.

Important Deadlines

- [Teacher and Principal of the Year Nomination](#) deadline: October 10
- [USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Application](#) deadline: October 18
- [Super App Launch Registration](#) deadline: October 21
- [Notice of Intent: Alternate Assessment Participation Waiver Request](#) deadline: October 22

School System Support

New: Super App Launch

The Super App Launch [registration](#) opened on October 4 and will **close on October 21**. Details can be found in the [Super App Launch Overview](#). School system planning teams should attend together on the same date.

Please contact districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

New: Updated School System Planning Calendar

The [2019-2020 School System Support Calendar](#) has been updated to include the following changes that are highlighted in yellow within the calendar.

- Early Literacy Commission Meetings
- Fall Counselor Institute Dates
- Student Behavior and Discipline Meetings
- Jump Start Convention
- BESE Meetings

Please email districtsupport@la.gov with questions.

New: Resources and Events at the Louisiana Old State Capitol

Please share with high school teachers.

Louisiana's Old State Capitol, part of the Office of Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin, has partnered with the National Park Service to host an exhibition called [Victory from Within: The American POW Experience](#) through December 20.

Below, please find information on other related upcoming programs and initiatives:

- **November 3 from 1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.:** Free showings of "*The Ghost of the Castle*" and related activities
 - Recommended Audience: All ages
- **November 13 at 5:30 p.m.:** Part One: An American Prisoner of War Experience
 - Recommended Audience: High school students and above; not for sensitive audiences
- **November 14 at 5:30 p.m.:** Part Two: Victory from Within
 - Recommended Audience: High school students and above; not for sensitive audiences

Visit [Louisiana's Old State Capitol's](#) webpage for more information on all exhibits and upcoming events, including how to book a tour. Additional materials will be added to the site over the coming weeks.

Please contact ckennedy@sos.la.gov for additional information.

Reminder: 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.

Assessment and Accountability

New: Instructional Materials Review Weekly Report

The [Instructional Materials Review \(IMR\) Weekly Report](#) has a new, streamlined look. Materials currently under review are listed in order by subject area and then publisher and title. The gray bar indicates the phase of review and is found just after the projected release date of the review.

Please email louisianacurriculumreview@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.
- To streamline the process for superintendents' review and approval of surveys submitted by principals, the department created an Excel file that contains links to the completed surveys. The **2019 Principal Survey Completion Report** has been posted to the secure FTP and will be updated weekly.

General

- District test coordinator and accountability announcements are only sent to 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.**

LEAP 2025

- **October 31:** Deadline for district test coordinators to complete important pre-test preparations in DRC INSIGHT:
 - select the delivery mode for LEAP 2025 grades 3 and 4 testing (online or paper);
 - verify or adjust the number of test booklets needed; and
 - verify enrollment numbers for all grades.

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).
- **Reminder:** The ACT MOU was due September 30. There are two MOUs posted in the [Assessment Library](#), one for public and charter schools and one for non-public schools receiving state funding. Be sure to use the appropriate forms.
- **Now—October 15:** WorkKeys accommodated testing window. All tests administered with accommodations, both online and paper, must be given during this window with the exception of extended time and/or calculators only.
- One, two, or three WorkKeys tests may be given on paper. Tests not taken on paper will not be voided by ACT.

- **October 17:** FedEx pre-scheduled pickup at the district office for all WorkKeys accommodated paper materials.

NAEP 2019-2020

- Thirty-one 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:
 - Completed: Schools with age 13 students have completed the PSI and E-filing processes
 - **November 8:** Schools with age 9 students
 - **January 17:** Schools with age 17 students

Assessment Administration Support and Training Office Hours

The next **Assessment and Accountability Office Hours** will be October 15 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.

Reminder: 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.

Reminder: 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.

Reminder: 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.

Reminder: 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.

High School Pathways

Reminder: 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.

Reminder: 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.

Reminder: 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.

Special Education

New: Louisiana's Statewide Deaf Education Coordinator

Louisiana's Special School District (SSD) is now offering support to school systems statewide to enhance quality education for deaf and hard of hearing students. Supports include, but are not limited to, professional development for educators, technical assistance, American Sign Language support, and resources.

Through collaboration with schools, families, community agencies, the SSD is excited to provide support to deaf and hard of hearing students across Louisiana.

To request support or resources, please contact Dr. Ashley Argrave, Statewide Deaf Education Coordinator, at ashley.argrave@la.gov.

New: Partnerships for Success Guide Released

The Department has released the [Partnerships for Success Guide](#). The guide assists school systems in establishing partnerships with organizations that can provide professional development to educators in areas of specialized supports and with organizations that can assist in providing the direct services often required to support students with disabilities. This guide will be integrated into the 2021 Super App planning process. School systems are encouraged to use the guide in the school system planning process to identify organizations that can support educators of students with disabilities.

Please contact specialeducation@la.gov for more information.

New: Notice of Intent: Alternate Assessment Participation Waiver Request

As required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Department intends to seek a waiver extension for the 2019-2020 school year of the federal requirement that would limit the number of students in the state who participate in alternate assessments aligned with alternate academic achievement standards. The purpose of this notice is to provide the public with an opportunity to comment on this intended waiver request. The [Notice of Intent](#) will be available now through **October 22**.

Please contact specialeducation@la.gov with questions.

Safe and Healthy Schools

New: 2019 Louisiana Farm to School Conference

Registration is open for the annual [Louisiana Farm to School Conference](#). The conference will take place on **October 23** at the Pennington Biomedical Conference Center. A pre-conference event, *Meet the Buyer, Greet the Grower* will be held on the evening of October 22 to provide an opportunity for networking. The conference [agenda](#) includes topics such as school gardening, child nutrition, produce safety, educational resources, and barriers of farm to school.

Please contact melissa.campbell@la.gov for more information.