

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



December 1, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Thank you to the leaders and educators who continued to serve families over the break. Whether providing meals to those less fortunate or responding to community concerns about the state's recent COVID-19 phase shift, your efforts were seen and appreciated.

In response to rising COVID-19 cases, Governor Edwards moved our state to a modified Phase 2 last week. The Executive Proclamation allowed BESE to adopt rules to give LEAs the option to remain within their Phase 3 plans. BESE President Sandy Holloway [exercised her authority](#) to approve emergency rules that would allow, but not require, LEAs to continue to follow Phase 3 minimum requirements for reopening school facilities through the duration of the current order. In consultation with our medical experts, we believe our schools are safe places for kids and adults.

Our mitigation efforts are working. Medical experts have commended your work and called our schools among the safest environments for students and educators. We cannot control the spread of the virus in our communities, but we can continue to do everything we can to mitigate the spread in our schools. Kids are safe with us.

Regardless of the operational phase that best serves your community moving forward, it's vital we maintain expectations. School is essential for children. Without sound instruction, learning loss could lead to devastating impacts on kids. Follow your plan. Be ready for any operational shifts that may be on the horizon. Keep an open line of communication with families.

It can be challenging to maintain academic focus between Thanksgiving and winter breaks. That's especially true this year, as I know we are all anxious to turn the calendar on 2020. Three weeks remain in 2020 for most school systems. Let's make the most of that time.

Dr. Cade Brumley
State Superintendent of Education

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Important Dates for School Systems

Office Hours	
Office Hours Title	Zoom Link
Education Technology Office Hours	December 3 at 9 a.m.
Career and College Readiness Office Hours	December 3 at 3 p.m.
Super App Office Hours	December 4 at 10 a.m.
Assessment and Accountability Office Hours	December 8 at 3:45 p.m.
Data Coordinator Office Hours	December 10 at 1 p.m.
Educator Development Office Hours	December 15 at 12 p.m.
K-2 CLASS Pilot Office Hours	December 15 at 12 p.m.

Monthly Calls*	
Monthly Call Title	Zoom Link
Charter Authorizers Monthly Call	December 2 at 11 a.m.
BESE Authorized Charter School Monthly Call	December 2 at 3 p.m.
Data Coordinator Monthly Call	December 3 at 1 p.m.
System Leaders Monthly Call	December 4 at 9 a.m.
Academic Content and Educator Development Monthly Call	December 9 at 12:30 p.m.
Nonpublic Monthly Call	December 9 at 2 p.m.
Student Well-Being Monthly Call	December 9 at 3:30 p.m.
SPED Leader Monthly Call	December 10 at 2 p.m.
Legislative and Policy Support Monthly Call	December 14 at 10 a.m.
Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call	December 15 at 3:45 p.m.
Education Technology Monthly Call	December 17 at 9 a.m.
Federal Programs and Grants Management Monthly Call	December 17 at 10 a.m.
Career and College Readiness Monthly Call	December 17 at 3 p.m.
Reopening Roundtable for System Leaders	December 18 at 9 a.m.
<p><i>*Monthly call presentations are available in the School Improvement Library. View the School System Support Calendar to access a complete schedule of events.</i></p>	
Upcoming Events	
Event Title	Zoom Link
SCA Portal Refresher Webinar	December 2 at 2:30 p.m.
2021-2022 AE Site Authorization Application Informational Webinar	December 9 at 9 a.m.
Credit Recovery Policy Review Webinar	December 9 at 9 a.m.
Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council Meeting	December 9 at 1 p.m.
Early Literacy Commission Meeting	December 10 at 12 p.m.
2021-2022 AE Site Authorization Application Informational Webinar	December 10 at 3 p.m.
Charter Authorizer Monthly Call (2021 Charter School Application)	December 16 at 12 p.m.

Important Deadlines	
Document Link	Deadline
School Plan Family Engagement Survey	December 1

School System Support

Strong Start 2020 Survey

Louisiana school systems have created strong academic plans aligned to Strong Start 2020. To ensure continued implementation of current plans, and successful adaptation and planning for the 2021-2022 academic year, the LDOE created the Strong Start 2020 Implementation Survey series.

This week, LDOE released the [Winter Strong Start Survey](#). LDOE is seeking a complete response from each and every school system to successfully plan the guidance and supports most needed for the next academic year. All surveys should be completed by **December 15**.

To prepare for the completion of this survey, access the available [survey template](#).

Please contact LDOEcommunications@la.gov with questions.

Deadline: School Plan Family Presentation Survey

Per state law, CIR and UIR schools must present families with their state-approved school improvement plan within 60 days of the start of the school year at a school meeting. The School Plan Family Presentation [template](#) was released in the spring and is located in the [School Improvement Library](#).

Schools are required to communicate the following to families in these meetings:

- School and student performance data that caused the Department to identify the school as being in need of improvement
- Detailed overview of the improvement plan
- Timelines for implementation of the plan and attainment of performance goals
- Implications of the plan for students, families, and educators

Families shall be notified at least one week prior to the date of the meeting. Meeting dates must be reported to the LDOE no later than **today, December 1**, via the [School Plan Family Engagement Survey](#).

Please contact em.cooper@la.gov with questions.

Super App Planning Support Calls

This year, school systems may elect to sign-up for a [Super App Planning Support call](#) to receive one-on-one assistance with a specific Super App planning need. Prior to scheduling one of these meetings, school systems should work with their School Systems Relations Coach and identify areas of in-depth assistance which may be required. Examples of topics for these meetings include — but are not limited to — early childhood support, high-quality curriculum/professional development options, talent pipeline planning, and strategically braiding funds.

Please contact LDOE.grantshelpdesk@la.gov with questions.

Career and College Readiness

Update to Certiport Exams from Home

Please share with CTE school system administrators, counselors, and teachers.

Certiport has made an update to their remote exam delivery solution, [Exams from Home](#), which became effective November 24. This update adds a checkbox to the verify & unlock screen in Compass where the proctor confirms they have validated the candidate identity and environment.

The [Exams from Home page for Exam Administrators](#) has been updated with additional details and recommendations about how to verify candidates' identity and environment, as well as how to monitor progress throughout the exam.

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with questions.

Spring Semester 2021 PPE Supplies

Please share with public, private, and charter school system leaders.

The LDOE, in collaboration with the Special School District, has face coverings and hand sanitizer available for all public, private, and charter school systems that need to replenish their supply for the spring semester. Each school system may request an appropriate number of masks equivalent to their student and faculty census.

School systems will be responsible for coordinating the pick-up of PPE supplies between 7 a.m. through 3 p.m. at the Special School District Warehouse located at 2888 Brightside Dr. Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

Requests for face coverings should be made directly to:

Joel A. Snider

Director of Operations, SSD

Office: 225-757-3235

Cell: 225-200-3849

Fax: 225-757-3436

Email: jsnider@lsdvi.org

Please contact LDOECOVID19support@la.gov with questions.

Credit Recovery Policy Review

Please share with counselors, principals, school system staff, and teachers that implement and/or manage credit recovery programs.

A webinar is scheduled to review the policy changes related to credit recovery and best practices for implementing credit recovery programs.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 9 at 9 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/96314109309>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID:** 963 1410 9309

Please contact stephanie.marcum@la.gov with questions.

Equity, Inclusion, and Opportunities

2021 Charter School Application

The Department has been working alongside local district authorizers to review and revise the charter application for the 2021 application cycle year. Highlights of the revisions include:

- Alignment with National Association of Charter School Authorizers Standards and Principles, per Bulletin 126 Section 303, 306;
- Reflective of the current educational landscape, such as social-emotional learning supports and virtual learning plans; and
- Inclusive of diverse student needs.

For a more in-depth review, the Department invites district personnel to join a Charter Authorizer Monthly Call on **December 16**. Information needed to join this call is included below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 16 at 12 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/9198036620>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 919 803 6620

Please contact charters@la.gov with questions.

2021-2022 Alternative Education Site Authorization Application Opens

Please share with administrators and alternative education site leaders.

The Department has released the [2021-2022 authorization application for alternative education schools and programs](#). The application should be completed by all school systems that are seeking new alternative schools and program approval that have not completed the new authorization process for an existing school for the 2021-2022 academic year. The deadline to submit the application is **February 12**. The Department will open the 2021-2022 View/Verify or Change Application portal from January 5 through February 2.

The Department will host two (duplicate) webinars to review the authorization application and process and answer any questions from school systems. Information needed to join these webinars is included below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 9 at 9 a.m.
 - **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97492807236>
 - **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
 - **Meeting ID#:** 974 9280 7236
 - **Webinar Passcode:** 3d16760
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- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 10 at 3 p.m.
 - **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/96454412909>
 - **Webinar Phone Number:** 470-250-9358
 - **Meeting ID#:** 964 5441 2909
 - **Webinar Passcode:** 955921

Please contact rachel.bunch@la.gov with questions.

Legislative and Policy Support

Healthy Communities

Crisis Communication Planning and Implementation for School Leaders

LSU's National Center for Biomedical Research and Training is hosting a virtual workshop on crisis communications for school leaders. This four-hour workshop provides an overview of the role of communications in planning for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies in K-12 schools. Participants will discuss critical tasks for managing communications during all phases of an incident, outline a process for creating crisis communications plans, and identify communications and warning best practices.

Click on the links below to register:

- [Register](#) to attend the workshop scheduled for December 9 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
- [Register](#) to attend the workshop scheduled for December 11 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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

Policy

2020 Second Extraordinary Legislative Session Update

The Louisiana Legislature adjourned the 2020 Second Extraordinary Legislative Session on October 23. Please review the overview of the [2020 Second Extraordinary Legislative Session](#).

Please contact leslie.hill@la.gov with questions

Operations

Food and Nutrition

Seed Packet Distribution to Schools Begins January 2021

The **Seeds to Success** program will distribute seed packets to schools across the state beginning in January. To request additional packets and gardening materials at no charge, create an account on the [Seeds to Success website](#). The account will allow the user to select and save growing guides and lesson plans specifically designed for use with the mailed seeds.

Seeds to Success is a program that brings the garden into Louisiana classrooms with engaging educational materials related to agriculture and nutrition. The website and program support school gardens with practical growing information and lessons to integrate into both classroom and virtual learning. Seeds to Success is a branch of the LSU AgCenter Louisiana Farm to School Program in collaboration with the Louisiana Department of Education.

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

School System Relations

Virtual Instruction Training for Teachers and Leaders Update

The Louisiana Department of Education is partnering with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching to help teachers and school leaders become more equipped to deliver virtual instruction. Throughout the 2020-2021 year, live (synchronous) training sessions on virtual instruction are available to all Louisiana educators. Now, to provide more opportunities to participate in this powerful learning, a flexible, asynchronous option will be offered as well.

Starting December 8, Louisiana educators will have free access to three, 60-minute self-study modules that showcase different aspects of effective virtual teaching. Through the asynchronous sessions, which are similar to the live training, educators will learn about tips, templates, and strategies to use immediately in their virtual classrooms.

These modules will be available in the Department's [School Improvement Library](#) on **December 8**.

As in the live sessions, there are different options for teachers and principals to receive more tailored support based on their role. Modules for principals and administrators will focus on coaching practices and strategies, while teacher sessions will provide more content teachers can use in their virtual instruction. As a bonus, these asynchronous learning modules provide opportunities for professional learning. They can be used as a resource in common planning, provide additional support for teachers or leaders, and act as a pre-work assignment in conjunction with professional development meetings.

Please contact systemsrelations@la.gov with questions.

Teaching and Learning

Academic Content

Green Ribbon School Awards: Entries Being Accepted through December 31 **Please share with administrators, sustainability staff, and environmental science teachers.**

The Louisiana Department of Education is now accepting applications for those seeking nomination for the [2021 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools](#) (EDGRS) awards. These awards recognize schools, systems, colleges, and universities that demonstrate a significant commitment to reduce environmental impacts, improve the health and wellbeing of students, faculty, and staff, and provide effective environmental education programs. Applications, due by **December 31**, should be submitted to environmentaleducation@la.gov as attachments in Microsoft Word or PDF format. Applications should be written in a narrative form documenting the school, system, or college's progress in the [three pillars defined by EDGRS](#).

Please contact environmentaleducation@la.gov with questions.

Assessment and Accountability

For District Testing Coordinators and Accountability Contacts

LEAP 2025 Fall High School Administration

- **Important:** It is extremely important that no accountability codes be applied this fall for any reason other than code 81 for EL. An accountability code applied to a student record in December will prevent the student with an opportunity to participate in the January makeup window. Please make sure all test coordinators know that codes should not be applied for **any** students (initial or retester) who do not test during the fall administration.
- Testing schedules are now due to assessment@la.gov for all windows.
- The DRC INSIGHT portal is open to complete test setup and assignment of TA numbers.
- Test manuals are available online.
- A new demographic field has been added to collect information regarding students' participation in virtual learning. If the field is not completed, the student will be considered in-person with no virtual learning. For questions about the new demographic field, contact jennifer.baird@la.gov or assessment@la.gov.
- Schools that are testing should plan to allow for state monitors. Schools can follow protocols for safety but should not prevent them from observing testing.

ACT

- Please check the [ACT State Testing](#) site for an updated [Schedule of Events](#).
- November 2-January 22, 2021: Verify enrollment, submit the Enroll or Unenroll student files, if needed. January 22 is the deadline to receive barcode labels.

NAEP 2021

- Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, NAEP 2021 test administrations have been canceled for the 2020-2021 academic year. Please view the NAEP 2021 Closure document.
- For questions or additional information, please contact Rebecca Frederick at 225-963-8197 or email rebecca.frederick@la.gov.

Birth-Grade 3 Assessment Guidance

- The Birth-Grade 3 Assessments has a [suite of resources](#) available to help school systems (and early learning centers) with assessment administration for the 2020-2021 school year.

Assessment Administration Support and Training Office Hours

The next Assessment and Accountability Office Hours will be on **December 8 at 3:45 p.m.** A password will now be required for office hours. Webinar details are listed below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 8 at 3:45 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/202189164>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 202 189 164
- **Passcode:** 2020202!

Reminders

- [**Career and College Readiness Reminders**](#)
- [**Teaching and Learning Reminders**](#)
 - [**Educator Development Reminders**](#)

Career and College Readiness Reminders

MYACT Student Accounts

To register for the ACT, students will create a MyACT student account by going to www.myact.org. In addition to registering for the ACT, MyACT accounts can also be used to prepare for the test, view and send test scores, explore colleges and careers, and plan for college. Students can also purchase prep material through their account or access our free test prep material. Access the [quick start guide](#) for additional support, and contact ACTcollegeready@act.org or act-cares@act.org for assistance with account issues, including duplicate accounts.

Please contact act-cares@act.org with questions.

SCA Portal Refresher Webinar

Please share with school system administrators, school leaders, and school counselors.

SCA/Course Choice provides students and schools with access to a broad variety of course offerings from online, face-to-face, industry training, and dual enrollment course providers. These course offerings will enable schools to provide courses not currently available to their students, including:

- career and technical preparation supporting the Jump Start program;
- academic work required to achieve TOPS;
- advanced coursework not available at the school due to limited resources; and
- dual enrollment courses from colleges and universities; and intensive remediation for students struggling to stay on pace for graduation.

There will be an SCA Portal Refresher Webinar for any persons who are new to the SCA Portal or need a refresher in navigating the system.

Information needed to join the webinar is included below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 2 at 2:30 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97126219127>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 346-248-7799
- **Meeting ID#:** 971 2621 9127

Please contact sca@la.gov with questions.

Teaching and Learning Reminders

Educator Development Reminders

2021 Teacher Leader Summit T-Shirt Design Contest

The Department is seeking inspiration for the 2021 Teacher Leader Summit t-shirt design! Educators and students with an artistic flair are encouraged to submit their design for consideration by **February 5** to ldoecommunications@la.gov. The winning school will receive \$1 per shirt sold.

The winning design will be announced in the March edition of the Teacher Leader newsletter. Reference the [contest rules](#) for details or contact ldoeevents@la.gov with questions.

New Principals Workshop

The Louisiana Association of Principals (LAP), in conjunction with the Louisiana Department of Education, is offering a half-day new principals workshop. This workshop is designed for principals with 0 to 3 years of experience. The New Principals Workshop will be held on December 8 in Lafayette at the DoubleTree Hotel. The cost is free for LAP members and \$100 for non-LAP members. Seating is limited to the first 100. Visit the [New Principals Workshop 2020 webpage](#) to register and learn more.

Please contact jeanine.ford@laprincipals.org with questions.