

CHARTER SCHOOLS

December 9, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Yesterday the Louisiana Department of Health [updated its guidance on quarantine protocols](#) to align with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This updated guidance pertains to people who have come in close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual. We shared this information with system leaders Monday and have been working with medical professionals to update the guidance on our [Strong Start](#) page.

We support the decision of LDH to align guidance with the updated recommendations made by the CDC. It's important that our schools are open and functioning properly. I urge our school and system leaders to continue to work alongside local health officials to mitigate the spread of the virus. Thanks to our educators, we have been able to avoid widespread closures thus far. Our schools have not been found to be "super spreaders" of the virus, but we must remain vigilant until this pandemic is over — especially now during the holiday season. We know the mitigation efforts that work, such as group size, face coverings, physical distancing, and hand washing. We can't get complacent in our efforts to fight this virus. I know we won't.

I also want to share my continued appreciation to the entire team at the Louisiana Department of Health, as well as our partners at other health organizations, for supporting the LDOE and our 1,700 schools through this global pandemic. I believe our work and our collaboration could be a model for the rest of the country.

Thank you for continuing to lead through this pandemic,

Dr. Cade Brumley
State Superintendent of Education

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Important Dates for School Systems

Office Hours	
Office Hours Title	Zoom Link
Data Coordinator Office Hours	December 10 at 1 p.m.
Career and College Readiness Office Hours	December 10 at 3 p.m.
K-2 CLASS Pilot Office Hours	December 14 at 10 a.m.
Educator Development Office Hours	December 15 at 12 p.m.
Super App Office Hours	December 18 at 10 a.m.
Assessment and Accountability Office Hours	January 5 at 3:45 p.m.
Education Technology Office Hours	January 7 at 9 a.m.
Monthly Calls*	
Monthly Call Title	Zoom Link
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.
Data Coordinator Monthly Call	January 7 at 1 p.m.
System Leaders Monthly Call	January 8 at 9 a.m.
Charter Authorizers Monthly Call	January 13 at 11 a.m.
BESE Authorized Charter School Monthly Call	January 13 at 3 p.m.

**Monthly call presentations are available in the [School Improvement Library](#). View the [School System Support Calendar](#) to access a complete schedule of events.*

Upcoming Events	
Event Title	Zoom Link
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.
Teacher and Principal of the Year Informational Webinars for Coordinators	December 14 at 11:30 a.m.
Teacher and Principal of the Year Informational Webinars for Candidates	December 14 at 4 p.m.
Charter Authorizer Monthly Call (2021 Charter School Application)	December 16 at 12 p.m.

Career and College Readiness

2020-2021 Graduate Diploma and Seal Orders

Please share with principals, school counselors, and data coordinators.

The [Diploma and Seal Order Form](#) is now open for school systems to submit orders for 2020-2021 graduates. All diploma requests should be submitted through the electronic form by **February 5**. Only one form should be completed for each school system. The Department will cover the costs for the initial order and distribution.

Please contact megan.thompson2@la.gov with questions.

Equity, Inclusion, and Opportunities

Special Education

December SPED Leader Webinar

The Department will hold its monthly webinar for school system directors, supervisors, and coordinators of special education **this Thursday, December 10 at 2 p.m.** Topics will include upcoming deadlines, guidance, and training opportunities including Strong Start Compensatory Services funding. Pre-registration is not required.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 10 at 2 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/92135951551>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923 (for dial-in only)
- **Meeting ID#:** 921 3595 1551

Please contact specialeducation@la.gov with questions.

Operations

Federal Programs and Grants Management Monthly Call Update

The Federal Programs and Grants Management Monthly Call will continue to take place through the remainder of the year. Additional call dates have been added to the school system support calendar. Please note: The **Zoom link for this monthly call has changed**. Please use the information included below to join the next call on **December 17** and all future Federal Programs and Grants Management Monthly Calls.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 17 at 10 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/95258128918>
- **Passcode:** \$Y=64D
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 952 5812 8918

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

Statewide Monitoring

Consolidated Monitoring Schedule for 2020-2021SY (2nd Quarter)

The Department conducts annual monitoring of school systems to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements. To assist school systems in thoughtful planning and preparation for a scheduled monitoring event, the Department is releasing the [consolidated monitoring schedule for the 2020-2021 school year](#)*. This schedule is tentative, and the agency reserves the right to make adjustments as necessary.

Quarterly updates will follow this newsletter announcement. Additionally, the assigned program monitoring team leader will send a more detailed monitoring notification reminder, along with any necessary planning documents or instructions, directly to superintendents and federal program directors of each school system appearing on the monitoring schedule. The [second quarter monitoring schedule](#) is now available.

Please contact tasha.anthony@la.gov with questions about the monitoring schedule or program monitoring related to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). For questions related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), please contact cindy.hilton@la.gov.

**School systems that have been severely impacted by a hurricane and are currently listed on the schedule are encouraged to contact tasha.anthony@la.gov.*

School System Relations

Teacher and Principal of the Year Informational Webinars

State-level Teacher and Principal of the Year (TPOY) applications are due on **February 4**. All applications and materials have been added to the Department's [Awards Library](#).

To assist with the Teacher and Principal of the Year process, informational webinars will be held on **December 14**. Candidates creating a state-level application and TPOY coordinators should plan to join a call. Webinar details are listed below. Additional information is also [available](#).

During the webinars, general information about the process and guidance for using the online portals will be shared. Additionally, tips and pointers for creating strong state-level applications will be provided. There will also be time for questions.

Coordinator's Webinar

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 14 at 11:30 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/99332858401>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 993 3285 8401

Candidate's Webinar

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 14 at 4 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/94215596243>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 942 1559 6243

Please contact excellenteducators@la.gov with questions.

Teaching and Learning

Academic Content

ELA Guidebooks: Distance Learning Guidebook Companions Release Update

Please share with ELA supervisors, administrators, and ELA teachers for grades 3-8.

At the start of the school year, the Department released [Distance Learning Guidebook Companions](#) for grade 3 through grade 12. The **second and final round** of Distance Learning Guidebook Companions for grades 3-8 are available for download through the [Louisiana Curriculum Hub](#) and [LearnZillion](#). These companions will be made available for download on [Louisiana Believes](#) through updated zip files after December 18. These resources are a **print-only/low-tech solution** for students with limited or no connectivity who are learning remotely.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

ELA Guidebooks: High School Guidebooks (2020) Updates

Please share with ELA supervisors and ELA teachers for grades 9-12.

Teaching Lab and SchoolKit, in partnership with the Department, have created high school **Content Leader** training modules aligned to the new [ELA Guidebooks 9-12 \(2020\)](#). This training consists of seven modules that unpack the design of the program, explore the reading and writing approaches, and model unit and lesson study protocols to support teaching in planning to meet the needs of all students. The first three modules in this series were offered virtually to teachers in July. The entire training series is now final; school system leaders can contact [Teaching Lab or SchoolKit](#) for more information.

A [Lesson Monitoring Tool](#) is now available for [ELA Guidebooks 9-12 \(2020\)](#). This tool allows teachers to track student progress toward the knowledge and skill look fors in each lesson.

The new **Lesson Monitoring Tool**:

- allows teachers to collect data from student responses during the lesson to determine whether or not students have met the lesson look fors,
- provides a snapshot vision of how students are performing to determine high-level trends, and
- supports teachers as they make instructional decisions grounded in observation and experience.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

Louisiana STEM Pathway Teacher Contact List

The Department's STEM team is creating a statewide internal contact list of [Louisiana STEM Pathway](#) teachers. The contact list will be used to invite teachers to pathway-specific opportunities such as networking and professional development events. Teachers of STEM Pathway courses who are interested should complete this [form](#).

Please contact STEM@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 following flexibilities require notification to the LDOE:
 - Use of January 27 and 28 makeup dates (need to send LASIDs)
 - Use of weekend testing
- The following flexibilities require documentation using the [Permission to Test in Alternate Environments Form](#)
 - Individual testing of students who do not have the accommodation on an IEP or IAP
 - Testing off-site
- 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.

LEAP 2025 Spring High School Testing

- The LEAP 2025 spring high school testing window has been extended by one week. The spring window is now April 15-May 21.

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

- Due February 28: Winter Checkpoint Early Childhood TS GOLD. Visit the [Early Childhood \(pre-K\) Assessment Guidance for Various Learning Environments](#) for additional information.

Assessment Administration Support and Training Office Hours

The next Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call will be on **December 15 at 3:45 p.m.** A password will now be required for office hours. Webinar details are listed below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 15 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

- [**School System Support Reminders**](#)
- [**Career and College Readiness Reminders**](#)
- [**Equity, Inclusion, and Opportunities Reminders**](#)
- [**Legislative and Policy Support Reminders**](#)
 - [**Healthy Communities Reminders**](#)
 - [**Policy Reminders**](#)
- [**Operations Reminders**](#)
 - [**Food and Nutrition Reminders**](#)
- [**School System Relations Reminders**](#)
- [**Teaching and Learning Reminders**](#)
 - [**Academic Content Reminders**](#)

School System Support Reminders

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.

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 Reminders

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 Reminders

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 Reminders

Healthy Communities Reminders

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 Reminders

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 Reminders

Food and Nutrition Reminders

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 Reminders

Virtual Instruction Training for Teachers and Leaders Update

The Louisiana Department of Education has partnered with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching to equip teachers and school leaders to deliver high-quality virtual instruction. Throughout the 2020-2021 year, live (synchronous) training sessions are available to all Louisiana educators. Now, to provide more opportunities to participate in this powerful learning, a flexible, asynchronous option is also available.

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, educators will learn about tips, templates, and strategies to use immediately in their virtual classrooms. These modules can be accessed by visiting the [School Improvement Library](#), under the header **NIET Virtual Instruction--Asynchronous Modules**.

As in the live sessions, there are different options for teachers and principals to receive 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 Reminders

Academic Content Reminders

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.