

LOUISIANA PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER



A Resource to Inform and Celebrate
Louisiana's Building-Level Leaders



May 27, 2021

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Principal Corner

Celebrating the 2022 Principal of the Year Semifinalists

The Louisiana Department of Education recognizes that school leaders are critical to student success. Annually, the Department, in partnership with [Dream Teachers](#) and the [Louisiana Association of Principals](#), recognizes and celebrates some of the state's most exceptional educators through the Teacher and Principal of the Year programs. These programs provide an opportunity to acknowledge those teachers and leaders who are making exceptional gains with students. Their commitment to student success exemplifies Louisiana's education profession.

All Principal of the Year Semifinalists will be honored at the 15th Annual Excellent Educators Awards Gala that will be held virtually on the evening of July 16. This exciting event is co-sponsored by [Dream Teachers](#).



We asked our distinguished semifinalists, "How do you inspire your staff or students?"

Kevin Dugas: I use weekly notes (R.O.A.R. Reminders) that I send out to my faculty and staff to offer words of encouragement or praise. Televisions at the entrance of our school update, display and express my gratitude for all of the amazing things that our students and teachers accomplish. I seek out donations to provide all employees with either a Christmas banquet to enjoy or a meaningful gift for everyone to show how much they mean to our school and me.

David Thrash: At Bossier HS, this year's motto has been "B" the Change. My goal is to engage our teachers, students and staff to continue to change in building relationships. I need to lead, not just push the school. Part of my change is a personal goal to be the parade of praise for teachers, staff, and students alike. Their best days are their success - but their success is also mine.

Marco French: To inspire students, I show motivational clips and our students have the opportunity to create a similar video. They also get to create Tic Tok videos with the principal or get free time in the Tiger's Den (game room). My staff loves the "Queensborough Experience" - when I have massage therapists or yoga trainers come in for the staff to experience a session of relaxation. I spoil them because they definitely spoil me!

Ronnie W. Harvey, Jr.: I inspire my staff and students by letting them know that I accept full responsibility and accountability for all of them. In doing so, I am consistently transparent along with modeling what the expectations are while showing appreciation, maintaining respect, and gauging their social/emotional needs.

Claudette Perkins: All the seemingly small deeds on campus deserve recognition and celebration when adults are doing whatever it takes to produce results. Faculty perfect attendance - we celebrate! High benchmark test scores - we celebrate! Something as simple as a teacher jean coupon or shrimp and grits for breakfast are used for celebrations. Teachers love it!

Chevonda Leonard: I always tell teachers how much I appreciate what they do for our students. We operate on the philosophy that we are members of "The Tiger Family", and at times, we disagree. But, we all agree that we must do what's in the best interest of our students – and that means telling students I hope they believe in themselves as much as I believe in them.

Selena Gomes: I inspire my students and staff daily by being their biggest cheerleader - reminding them daily that we have the BEST students, the BEST teachers, and the BEST school in Louisiana. I greet my students and teachers as they enter the building with a smile and a good morning. I provide fun festive holiday shirts to staff and random treats to students - just because we are GREAT.

Ginger Richard: Before starting a new school year students, teachers, parents, and community members come together for a day dedicated to campus beautification and clean up. This process gets everyone excited and vested in the upcoming start!

Gregory Cook: Nothing says I appreciate your work to a teacher like a week without recess or, in our case now, concourse duty. Take that time and enjoy a cup of coffee...we got you covered. Pulling hard-working students out of class and calling their parents right there on the spot to tell them how proud you are of their child. One of the highlights of my day!

Mary Kilgore: Every morning, I visit ALL classrooms! With a HUGE SMILE, I tell them, "Good Morning! Have a great day!" This gives me a chance to assess the students and teachers to determine the "climate" for the day.

John Hill: We ask teachers to think of a solid student that might not get the most recognition and write a statement that explains how that student inspires them to be a better teacher. We also buy treats to distribute and put one of my "pun-ny" statements on them. Oh, and blue jeans days, TEACHERS LOVE BLUE JEAN DAYS!

Anna Lincoln: I make connections with students, interacting with them from carpool drop off and throughout the day. I make sure each student knows that I care for them on a personal level and that I believe in their ability to meet all of our expectations for them - academic, social, and behavioral.

Lacey Morel Bueche: I inspire others through my actions. I cannot expect others to meet expectations that I do not meet myself. I want my teachers to know that I will stand beside them.

JC Dickey: At Red River High School we have a shout-out board where teachers, staff, and even students can leave a note for any staff or faculty member who has been doing an awesome job. For our students, we have a school-wide CER writing strategy that every teacher uses twice a grading period. We take the best writing samples and post them on our board to celebrate our outstanding student work.

Cynthia Lewing: I believe that letting teachers know how much you value them and are on this journey with them is an integral key to inspiring them. A few of things I do are Sunday emails with motivational quotes, surprise breakfast or afternoon snacks, and Spotlight Teacher of the Month.

Becky Louque: I provide students, faculty, and staff a multitude of opportunities to grow socially, emotionally, and academically. I encourage and inspire with my energy, enthusiasm, dedication, and compassion for all.

Kellie Rabalais: My staff knows that I am their biggest cheerleader! I always try to set a good example and never ask them anything I wouldn't do.

Jeremy Muse: We give our staff weekly treats with extra cheesy sayings like "You deserve an extra 100 Grand." We also always include positive feedback on walkthroughs and celebrate student growth – what we do matters!

Shantell Toups: During Teacher Appreciation Week, teachers picked a numbered rubber duck from the lounge that they would keep. For the month of May, I pick random numbers and announce the 'winner' over the intercom, beginning with a duck call. The winning teacher picks a prize from my cart. It has stirred up a lot of fun and anticipation.

Amy Barrow: I inspire my staff and students by doing more than asking, listening more than speaking, and encouraging everyone to ask for what they need. We celebrate "Fun" Fridays with teacher raffles, spirit contests, or a teacher breakfast. On "Thoughtful" Thursdays, we recognize thoughtful students for their little acts of kindness! No matter what it is - we celebrate it together!

Darrell Dillard: I leave positive notes after walk-throughs, and each member of the leadership team does teacher shout-outs at faculty meetings. Students are given "patriot points" that can be redeemed for rewards or treats. We also have jean passes and theme days.

Patricia Gaspard: I always try to listen to their needs and see how I can help them. We look at the positive ways that we can change and move forward to make whatever situation better. We all work as a team!

Karen Robertson: Every morning, I greet my students and faculty with a smile and a positive attitude. I like to provide encouraging words with a small treat at the sign-in desk every few weeks to start the day on a positive note. My teachers, staff, and students know that I will listen to and support them always. Truly believing and living up to our motto: Reaching for your BEST at West, Learners Today-Leaders Tomorrow.

Cassy Brou: I begin and end each day by greeting all our students as they arrive on campus and as they leave for the day. This personal interaction goes a long way in building positive relationships and building a wonderful school culture.

[To learn more about the current and previous Teacher and Principal of the Year honorees, visit the Awards Library.](#)

For questions about the Teacher and Principal of the Year programs, email excellenteducators@la.gov.

Announcements and Resources

Principal and Teacher of the Year Announcement at the Summit

On May 25, the Department will name the 2022 Principal and Teacher of the Year Finalists LIVE at the plenary at the Teacher Leader Summit. Following the announcement, winner information will be posted on the [Awards page website](#).

These honorees are making exceptional gains with students and leading key work that is aligned with the Department's priorities. Their commitment to student success exemplifies Louisiana's teaching profession.

Please contact excellenteducators@la.gov with questions.

Proficiency Exams

Per Bulletin 741 policy, school systems may award Carnegie credit based on demonstrated proficiency in a course in which a student has never been enrolled by using an exam or portfolio. When awarding credit based on proficiency school systems must inform the Louisiana Department of Education of the following in the [online portal](#):

1. The name of the exam, if nationally recognized
2. A copy of the exam, if locally developed and the score required to demonstrate proficiency
3. A listing of the requirements for portfolio submission

The Louisiana Department of Education may require revisions of assessments to ensure they adequately measure proficiency. Proficiency in a course in which a student has never been enrolled with a state-administered end-of-course exam must be demonstrated by using the end-of-course exam.

For more information, please contact stephanie.marcum@la.gov

Principal Appreciation

Please take a minute to send a shout-out of appreciation to a colleague who is a building-level leader using this [survey link](#). We will include this note of appreciation in our next monthly newsletter.

Shout Outs:

Brenda Lavergne from Washington Elementary in St. Landry Parish: “She continues to work tirelessly to improve the learning opportunities for her instructional staff and students.” *Nominated by Chastity Wilson*

Kenita Nicoulin from Folsom Junior High in St. Tammany Parish: “Mrs. Nicoulin is so student-focused and detail-oriented that she ensures that all students, especially our incoming students, have a positive and supportive environment. Her PBIS, open communication, and scheduling strategies make everyone feel heard.” *Nominated by Amy Barrow*

Tiffany Perry from Port Barre Elementary in St. Landry Parish: “Mrs. Perry is a wonderful leader who values all aspects of her school and does whatever it takes to create an environment conducive for student learning and growth for faculty and staff. She is always there for me when I need someone to discuss an issue with.” *Nominated by Gary Blood*

“**Tiffany Perry** has been an amazing mentor to me, a first-year administrator. Mrs. Perry always makes time to provide support to me in whatever way she can.” *Nominated by Renee Suire*

Principal Newsletter Signup

Do you have a colleague who would benefit from receiving this newsletter? Please forward this copy along with [this link](#) and they will receive our next monthly newsletter.

Dates to Consider for Building-Level Leaders

Office Hours	
Office Hours Title	Zoom Link
K-2 CLASS® Pilot Office Hours	June 1 at 12 p.m.
Early Childhood Lead Agencies Office Hours	June 1 at 3 p.m.
Assessment and Accountability Office Hours	June 1 at 3:45 p.m.
Career and College Readiness Office Hours	June 3 at 3 p.m.
Education Technology Office Hours	June 10 at 9 a.m.
Upcoming Events	
Event Title	Zoom Link
In-Person Teacher Leader Summit	May 25-27
Staffing Q&A Session	June 16 at 1 p.m.
Scheduling Q&A Session	June 30 at 1 p.m.
Important Deadlines	
Parent and Family Engagement Survey	May 28
Advanced Placement Contacts Added to Contact Form	May 31
2021-2022 Super App Application	June 1
Strong Start Spring Survey	June 7
The Power of Two: Leveraging Co-teachers to Address Unfinished Learning	June 12