

LOUISIANA PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER



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



July 27, 2023

In This Issue

- [Principal Corner](#)
- [Announcements](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [Educator Opportunities](#)
- [Principal Newsletter Signup](#)
- [Principal Appreciation](#)
- [Dates to Consider](#)

PRINCIPAL CORNER

2024 Principal of the Year



Mrs. Tia Mechelle Trahan is the proud principal of Lafayette Middle School (grades 6 through 8) in Lafayette Parish. Trahan is a National Board Certified Teacher and is a veteran of the United States Army National Guard, where she served on a specialized task force focusing on community outreach. Trahan received her undergraduate degree in elementary education from the University of Louisiana Lafayette and a Master of Educational Leadership degree from Louisiana State University Shreveport. An educator for over twenty years, Trahan's educational journey began as a teacher and reading facilitator. She was an assistant principal for two and half years, principal of Milton Elementary-Middle School for four years, and is now entering her seventh year as principal of Lafayette Middle School.

Trahan was one of 21 Louisiana educators awarded a Leaders Fellowship and was part of the first cohort of Louisiana Leaders

to complete the National Institute for School Leaders. She was named 2007 Teacher of the Year at Katherine Drexel Elementary School and 2023 Middle School Principal of the Year for Lafayette Parish. She currently serves as the middle school representative for the Lafayette Principals Association along with being a member of Lafayette Parish School System's Superintendent Panel, Wellness Team, and Reimagine Grant Advisory Committee. She also serves on the Louisiana NBCT Network Board. Trahan continually seeks to strengthen her knowledge as an instructional leader to bridge gaps. She also strives for excellence in aiding all educators and students to maximize their potential. Trahan, born and raised in Louisiana, is honored to be a Louisiana Educator.



Dr. Monya Thomas-Criddle, Jefferson Parish

Dr. Monya Criddle is the principal of Ralph J. Bunche Elementary (grades pre-K through 5). Criddle received her doctorate from Mississippi State University, a Master of Educational Administration from the University of New Orleans, and Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education from Dillard University. Prior to her current role as principal of Ralph J. Bunche, Dr. Criddle has served in numerous administrative roles and received a multi-million dollar grant to promote literacy. Under her leadership at Ralph J. Bunche, the school has shown consistent growth. She believes a huge contributor to her success is her ability to build meaningful relationships with colleagues, teachers, students, and families and effectively communicate a clear school vision.

Barry Carter, DeSoto Parish

Barry Carter is the principal of North Desoto Middle School (grades 6 through 8) in Stonewall. Carter received his Bachelor of Science in Health and Exercise Sciences from Louisiana Tech University and a Master of Science in Educational Leadership from Arkansas State University. Under his leadership, North Desoto Middle has implemented media communications that engage the community and has shown growth in many areas, earning Top Gains awards.. Carterhas also developed intentional and equitable opportunities for all students and supported district initiatives for special education students during the school day. Carter strives to ensure all students receive opportunities for academic and social success by providing students with teachers that are supported and inspired to achieve their passion in education.

Marvin Evans, Ascension Parish

Marvin Evans is the proud principal of Donaldsonville High School (grades 9 through12) in Donaldsonville. Evans received his Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education and his Masters in Educational Administration and Supervision, both from Southern University A&M College. He has served in multiple teacher leader and administrative roles. Under Evans' leadership, Donaldsonville High has established a school vision focused on graduation by building on a rigorous course curriculum that provides students with preparation for post-graduate pathways. The vision is evident in the increased graduation diploma index and graduation rate. Evans has used the NIET/TAP system to effectively recruit and retain human capital.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Department Names State-Level Honorees for Award Programs

Last week, the Department, in partnership with [Dream Teachers](#), celebrated excellence in education at the *17th Annual Cecil J. Picard Educator Awards Gala*, which was held at the World War II Museum in New Orleans. During the event, the Department announced the [2024 State Elementary, Middle, and High School Teacher and Principal of the Year honorees](#), the [2024 New Teacher of the Year](#), the [2024 Early Childhood Leader of the Year](#), and the [2024 Early Childhood Teacher of the Year](#). In addition, the [New Teacher of the Year Finalists](#), [Early Childhood Teacher and Leader Finalists](#), [Milken Educator Award recipients](#), [Louisiana's Public Interest Fellowship recipients](#) and the [Teacher and Principal of the Year Semifinalists and Finalists](#) were honored.

Congratulations to these outstanding educators!

Please contact excellenteducators@la.gov with questions.

Principal's Webinar Series

The LDOE hosts a monthly webinar series for current school leaders and principal supervisors on best practices in school leadership aligned to the state's priorities. Each month, the webinar features national and Louisiana experts sharing strategies and tools on a specific topic necessary for being effective in the school leader role. The webinar in August will focus on math initiatives and be led by the Department's Math Division.

Webinar Date and Time: August 28, 1 pm

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97054177103?pwd=Vm9DYmZpNXhKSGQrVnJwSjVMb25aZz09>

Webinar Phone Number: 346-248-7799

Meeting ID#: 970 5417 7103

Please contact louisianaleaders@la.gov with questions.

Monthly Principal Webinars: Math and Literacy

Over the course of the 2023-2024 school year, the Department will host a series of six webinars for K-8 principals that focus on key literacy and math initiatives. These 30 minute webinars will take place on August 7, September 5, October 9, January 8, February 5, and March 4. Join in on August 7 to hear about key literacy and math initiatives.

Webinar Date and Time: August 7, 1 pm

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/95898838520?pwd=dE1kVjlxRjFsc2ZDWDNEcVRZNDZvOT09>

Webinar Phone Number: 312-626-6799

Meeting ID#: 958 9883 8520

All decks and recordings will be posted to the [monthly calls page](#) and the recordings added to the [YouTube playlist](#). Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

RESOURCES

Social Studies Curriculum Development

The first unit in grade 5 of Bayou Bridges: A K-8 Louisiana Social Studies Curriculum is now available on the [Bayou Bridges web page](#). Materials for grades 4-5 will continue to post throughout the summer and fall for piloting in 2023-2024; additional units for grades K-8 will be released throughout the 2023-2024 school year. See the [Bayou Bridges Detailed Unit Release Schedule](#) for future release dates.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

Social Studies K-12 Resource Web Page Updates

The [K-12 Social Studies Resource web page](#) now reflects the implementation of the 2022 Louisiana Student Standards for Social Studies. All instructional materials and guidance related to the 2011 standards were removed or archived, with the exception of the high school U.S. History scope and sequence, companion document, and sample tasks.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

2023-2024 Mentor Waiver Application

At the April BESE meeting, the Board approved a waiver for the Mentor policy for the 2023-2024 school year. Mentor teacher waivers will be granted on a case-by-case basis through the application process established by the LDOE and at no fee to the applicant, school system, or teacher preparation provider. The waiver will be issued by the LDOE for educators highly recommended by the mentor's principal and who possess one or more of the following qualifications:

1. Two years of Highly Effective Compass ratings;
2. National Board Certification;
3. Statewide or national distinction for excellence in teaching;
4. Experience as a TAP mentor, master teacher, executive master teacher, or certified TAP evaluator;
5. Content leader experience, as evidenced by participation in Content Leader training or redelivery of professional development; or
6. Master's or doctorate in education and exemplary experience hosting student teachers.

The 2023-2024 Mentor Waiver [application](#) opened on **July 7**.

[Mentor Waiver Applications](#) should be created by the system leader responsible for resident placement and/or Mentor recruitment and support. We encourage system leaders leading this work to review the [Mentor Credential Waiver Application guide](#) before submitting an application.

Please contact believeandprepare@la.gov with any questions.

New Teacher Experience: Affinity Group Registration Now Open

The New Teacher Experience is a comprehensive support program for beginning educators designed to increase teacher effectiveness, enhance skills, and reduce attrition among beginning teachers. The Department is excited to announce [registration](#) is now open for 2023-2024 Affinity Groups. Affinity Groups provide support for beginning teachers across Louisiana through monthly virtual meetings. There is no cost to join, but seats are limited. [Registration](#) will close August 12 or until capacity is reached.

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

Raising Expectations, Access, and Outcomes for Students with Disabilities

The PROGRESS Center at the American Institutes for Research is hosting a free, three-day virtual event focusing on information, tools, and resources needed to ensure high expectations, access, and positive outcomes for students with disabilities. This [virtual event](#) will be held August 2 through August 4.

Please contact diverselearnersupport@la.gov for more information.

PRINCIPAL NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

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

PRINCIPAL APPRECIATION

If you have an extraordinary building-level leader you would like to recommend to be highlighted in future newsletters, please submit information about the outstanding leader using this [form](#). You can also use the form to share with us some topics you would like to see highlighted for 2023-2024 (e.g. recruitment and retention, accelerating learning, instructional leadership teams, etc.).

DATES TO CONSIDER FOR BUILDING-LEVEL LEADERS

Important Dates	
Raising Expectations, Access, and Outcomes for Students with Disabilities Virtual Event	August 2-4
Math and Literacy Principal Webinar	August 7, 1 p.m.
New Teacher Experience: Affinity Group Registration ends	August 12
Monthly Practicing Principal Webinar: Math Initiatives	August 28, 1 p.m.