

LOUISIANA PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

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

July 28, 2022

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Principal Corner

Principal of the Year Winners

2023 OVERALL
PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR



Dr. David Schexnaydre, Jr.
St. Charles Parish
Twitter: @DrDSchex

Dr. David Schexnaydre is the principal of Harry Hurst Middle School (Grades 6-8) in Destrehan, La. An award-winning teacher, administrator, and educational researcher, Schexnaydre is a Louisiana-born-and-bred educator who obtained his Bachelor of Science from Louisiana State University (2005), and his Master's of Education (2010) and Doctor of Philosophy (2016) from the University of New Orleans. His career as an educator began as a teacher and coach, and he was named the R.K. Smith Middle School Teacher of the Year in 2009 and the Louisiana Middle School Association Outstanding Teacher of the Year in 2011. Named principal at Hurst in 2018, Schexnaydre has worked tirelessly to build collaborative relationships with all stakeholders and drive positive change with curriculum, instruction, growth mindset, and mindfulness. His vision and leadership in these areas has transformed the school according to metrics in student achievement, student wellness, employee engagement,

and community involvement. Outside of his accomplishments as principal, his doctoral dissertation won the Louisiana Educational Research Association's 2016 Outstanding Graduate Paper, and he was selected by the American Educational Research Association to present his research at their annual conference. In 2017, Schexnaydre was chosen by America Achieves and the Louisiana Department of Education for the Louisiana Educator Voice Fellowship, and in 2019, Southeastern Louisiana University hired him as an adjunct professor in their Master of Education Program, teaching the School-Community Relations course to aspiring leaders. Dr. Schexnaydre is a life-long learner, and an advocate and champion for Louisiana's educators and students.

2023 PRINCIPAL DIVISION WINNERS



HEATHER BROOKS
Elementary School – Claiborne Parish



MICHAEL HILTON III
Middle School – Ascension Parish



TAMELA PHILLIPS
High School – DeSoto Parish

Heather Brooks, Claiborne Parish

Heather Brooks proudly leads as principal of Haynesville Elementary School. She has a go-getting spirit and love for her students like no other. She values the life-long impact that a school can have on an individual. She strives to form partnerships so that HES holds a positive position in the community. Before being chosen to lead HES, she served as a district instructional coach. As a coach, she was vital to the success and knowledge of curriculum changes and success rates of teachers. She worked closely supporting teachers in providing high-quality instruction and an impactful learning environment. This experience strengthened Brooks to step into the leadership role at HES. In her two years as principal, she has led staff and students through challenging times and excelled. During her administration through 2020-2021, she was able to guide teachers in providing effective instruction to classroom and virtual students. Throughout the pandemic's ever-changing guidelines, she persevered. Brooks led her school to an increase in the 2021 simulated school performance score. This growth is significant, especially through challenging times. With a school-wide focus being placed on early literacy, she has seen a significant increase in literacy benchmark data. Brooks is passionate about unlocking potential in every student and staff member. She reminds students, daily, of their importance and worth. Brooks graduated magna cum laude from Louisiana State University Shreveport with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. She received her Master's Degree from Southern Arkansas University specializing in Educational Administration and Leadership.

Michael Hilton, Ascension Parish

Mr. Michael Hilton III is the inspirational and impassioned principal of Lowery Middle School in Donaldsonville, LA. Hilton believes that educators must inspire their students and be passionate about education. In the fall of 2003, Hilton started out as a substitute teacher in East Baton Rouge, student taught at McKinley Senior High School the following semester, and he has since been consistently cultivating a desire for learning in his students. Seven years ago, Hilton joined Ascension Parish to educate and serve the students in the Donaldsonville community. Named principal of Lowery Middle in June of 2020, Hilton had the unlucky privilege of cutting his school leader's teeth at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, passion for educating children is a greater motivation for Hilton than the fear of leading a school amid a pandemic. Hilton's mission to create a safe and supportive environment for student empowerment has guided his teachers and students throughout this pandemic. As a result, Lowery Middle's 2021 cohort's growth in Mathematics outperformed the district by 2% and the state by 4%, and Lowery Middle increased its 2021 cohort's proficiency in ELA by 7% - tying the state and out-pacing the district by 2%. Hilton cultivates relationships with parents and empowers them with practices like academic parent teacher team meetings. Hilton is proving that inspiration and passion are more powerful than a pandemic, poverty, and fear. Hilton received his Bachelor of Science in Education and his Masters of Science in Educational Leadership from Louisiana State University.

Tamela Phillips, DeSoto Parish

Mrs. Tamela Phillips currently serves as principal of North DeSoto High School in Stonewall, Louisiana. She is an educator of 26 years, serving 16 in the classroom and 10 in administration. Tamela graduated salutatorian and magna cum laude with her bachelors in Business Education from Northwestern State University in 1996. She continued her education at NSU earning her masters in Educational Leadership in 2009. Tamela is an enthusiastic educator and vocational teacher at heart; she is committed to students understanding the different paths available and preparing them for the path they choose. She is a passionate leader that believes in the importance of academics and extracurricular activities. Tamela came to North DeSoto High School in 2019 and quickly unified a staff and student body. Under her leadership, during some of the most trying years in education, NDHS has shown growth in SPS, assessment and progress index and was recognized as a 2021 NIET Founder's Award Finalist. Her students appreciate her high expectations in the classroom, in clubs and on the field and her passion for building a culture of pride and tradition in their school. Her staff believes in her ability to lead during the easiest and most difficult of times and appreciates her willingness to listen and work together. Over the last 3 years Tamela has accepted the challenge from DeSoto Parish to grow as an instructional leader and looks forward to the coming years of growth in her and her students and staff at NDHS. GO GRIFFINS!!

Announcements

Course Requirements for Interests and Opportunities

To better measure the interests nurtured and opportunities provided by our schools, the Department has identified minimum requirements for non-Carnegie credit courses to receive credit in the Interests & Opportunities index which is included the school accountability system. This sets clear minimum expectations and ensures substantial exposure to these enriching experiences. For accountability scores, this course information will come from the different collections outlined in the Interests and Opportunities guidance published in June 2022. Starting in the 2022-2023 school year, all non-Carnegie credit courses will be required to meet the parameters set below.

- Meet the requirements for awarding a Carnegie Unit; or
- Meet the following requirements for non-Carnegie Unit bearing courses:
 - Be part of the normal school schedule and included on the master schedule so instructional minutes are documented and preserved.
 - Courses should meet for at least 60 minutes each week over the course of an entire school year.
 - Courses include graded course work and are content-rich in design.
 - Courses are well-articulated and demonstrate a natural progression of learning over the years studied (i.e., students should not learn the same material from year to year).

Schools and school systems should follow these requirements when reporting arts, world languages and STEM courses for the Interests and Opportunities Index. Additional information can be found in the [Interests and Opportunities Menu Based Approach Guidance](#).

Please contact accountability@la.gov with questions

Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Teacher Survey

There have been over 5,700 teachers who have described their experiences and perceptions and offered suggestions on issues related to teacher recruitment, recovery, and retention by completing the [Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recovery Survey](#). The deadline has been extended to **August 5**, so even more teachers can submit feedback.

Please contact louisianaleaders@la.gov with questions.

School and School System Accountability Survey

The LDOE has released a survey to collect input and feedback from stakeholders about the current school accountability system. Available from July 1 through August 1, 2022, the Jotform survey can be accessed on the home page of [Louisiana Believes](#) or by using this link: <https://form.jotform.com/221796521454055>.

Please encourage all to share their thoughts before the deadline; contact accountability@la.gov with questions.

Teacher Leader Summit Materials Available

The tenth annual Teacher Leader Summit brought together educators from across the state for an energy-filled, inspiring event that closed out one school year and inspires attendees in their planning for the next.

Check out all of the great [materials](#) from the 2022 Teacher Leader Summit that are now available in the new [2022 Teacher Leader Summit Materials library](#). Look for your photo on the LDOE [Facebook page](#).

Please contact ldoeevents@la.gov with questions.

LEAP 2025

Individual student LEAP score reports for grades 3-8 have been released.

- Parents should be provided with individual student reports and the parent guide to reports. Parent guides have been translated in several languages and are found here: [Parent Guides to Assessments](#)
- There is no rescore opportunity for tests administered to students in grades 3-8.

Additional information regarding the timeline for school, system, and state summary reports, as well as public release will be provided in next week's newsletter.

Workforce Reporting Update

The Workforce Dashboard for System and Site Leaders is up and running. If site leaders missed the June and July webinars, please join the make-up session in August:

- **Meeting Date and Time:** August 9 at 10 a.m.
- **Meeting Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/93853145583?pwd=UFE4SkNMR1hZTFdXZVduZkxERjITdz09>
- **Meeting ID#:** 938 5314 5583
- **Meeting Passcode:** 539272

Please contact emily.smiley@la.gov with questions.

Resources

ELA Guidebooks

The 8th grade ELA Guidebooks unit, The Tell-Tale Heart, will no longer include the independent read novel *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers. This text will be removed from all ELA Guidebooks and Imagine Learning (formerly LearnZillion) materials by August 2022. The text is no longer available for purchase through American Reading Company, and it will no longer be included in future student handout purchases from XanEdu.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

Foundational Literacy Modules for Grades 4-8 Educators Registration Open

The Department has partnered with Public Consulting Group (PCG) to offer five free asynchronous science of reading modules for grades 4-8 educators. The professional development modules are focused on content that is teacher-friendly and provides the knowledge and skills necessary for intermediate and middle school classrooms instruction by applying age-appropriate science of reading strategies. Modules will be available throughout the 2022 - 2023 school year. [Registration](#) is open and module release will be announced through the newsletter.

Please contact diverselearnersupport@la.gov with questions.

Content Literacy Support for Middle and High School Release

The Literacy Division has released a set of activities and resources to support middle and high school teachers in providing targeted literacy support in all content areas. These documents can be found in the [Literacy Library](#) under Instruction, Intervention, and Extension. The Content Literacy Support documents provide guidance for teachers in all content areas around annotating text, independent reading, partner reading, using rubrics, using student exemplars, and whole class read alouds. Additional documents are being developed and will be released soon. A [recording of the session](#) presented at Teacher Leader Summit on these resources and building literacy in secondary classrooms walks teachers through how to effectively implement these practices.

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

Louisiana Literacy Intervention and Foundational Tools (LIFT) Kit Release

The Literacy Division has released a set of activities and resources to support teachers in providing targeted literacy support to struggling readers. These tools can be found in the [Literacy Library](#) under Instruction, Intervention, and Extension. The first six guidance documents are available to provide teachers in all content areas with support in annotating text, independent reading, partner reading, using rubrics, using student exemplars, and whole class read alouds. Additional documents to support content literacy are being developed and will be added to the Library by the end of summer. A recording of the LIFT: Literacy Interventions Foundational Toolkit Session presented at Teacher Leader Summit walks teachers and interventionists through the tool, how it should be used, and what resources are available to support teachers in providing targeted instruction and intervention.

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

Educator Opportunities

Teacher Leader Lagniappe Podcast

[Teacher Leader Lagniappe](#) offers a little something extra for Louisiana educators. As educators, we are leaders - leaders of our families, classrooms, schools, teams, and systems. Host Em Cooper shares inspiring stories from leaders in Louisiana and across the country. You'll hear from innovators, change agents, and experts that will empower you to grow in your profession. Educators can subscribe to the [podcast](#) and listen to the latest episode.

Season 2 Episode 2: Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Culture with Barry Erwin features a discussion with Barry Erwin about his role with Council for a Better Louisiana. Find out about the challenges our education workforce faces as well as how we can work to improve our recruitment, retention, and teacher culture in Louisiana. We will also highlight Tangipahoa Parish on how they are engaging their community and coming together towards a common educational goal.

Share Your Stories: Submit [pictures](#) of the great things happening in your school and system for our What's Making Me Smile segment.

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

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

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

Dates to Consider for Building-Level Leaders

Important Dates	
LEAP score reports for grades 3-8 Released	Week of July 25
Workforce Reporting Webinar	August 9 at 10 a.m.
Foundational Literacy Modules for 4-8 Educators Registration	Throughout the Year