

LOUISIANA PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER



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



August 24, 2023

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PRINCIPAL CORNER

Blasting off to new heights! This year, education in our state will reach new altitudes. What an impeccable journey it will be!



Welcome, incredible instructional leaders, to the 2023-2024 school year. The atmosphere in our state's schools is illuminating with passion-driven faculty and determined staff who are dedicated to advancing academic achievement while maximizing the potential of every child. This momentum has to be fostered at the onset of day one and maintained throughout the school year.

Over the course of the past three years our educational system has been faced with unforeseen circumstances ranging from flooding, to hurricanes, and the pandemic. Yet, we persevered! I'm confident that together we will take education even further this year, reaching new heights and untapped potential.

This will not happen by accident. We must be intentional in our approach.

Of course, every school has its unique needs and every leader has their distinct leadership styles. Therefore, approaches will vary. Here are some actions that I take to promote the advancement of teacher capacity and student achievement at my school.

Prescriptive Support for Teachers

- Prior to teachers' first day of school, the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) tier teacher support. This is based on individual teacher capacity, years of experience, and/or pedagogical content knowledge.
- Teacher support is prescriptive and tailored to the needs of individual teachers. Common needs are discussed in PLCs while more individualized areas of identified growth are addressed through

side-by-side coaching, modeling, and co-teaching. Support is provided by onsite instructional leaders, Master Teachers, Mentor Teachers, and school system-level coaches.

Student Support Strategies

- Before students arrive on the first day of school, teachers review their data in order to become familiar with class/individual needs. At this point in the school year, the data is the beginning of each student's "story." Once they arrive on campus and relationships are established, the storyline continues as teachers aim for the climax of each student's story.
- Trend data is used to schedule students in an acceleration or enrichment class. During the class, student needs are matched with teacher capacity to receive either interventions to address unfinished learning or enrichment to extend learning in both ELA and math.
- Scaffolding and extended learning opportunities are incorporated in teachers' lesson planning for high-quality instruction to enhance individual student learning.

Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) Guiding Cycle

- Identify schoolwide areas of unfinished learning based on trend data and beginning-of-year diagnostic assessments.
- Create a three-week cycle of learning that starts in ILT with discussion and next steps which include co-creating a plan to address unfinished learning. The plan should be focused on implementing two to three strategies.
- The ILT visits classrooms during snapshots and walkthroughs to monitor progress of implementation.
- Exemplars of student work and teacher data are analyzed in PLCs and ILT to gauge the effectiveness. This determines whether continuation or a new cycle is started.

Fellow principals! Fellow instructional leaders! Belief in yourself ignites infinite potential. Your incredible talent and commitment to excellence in education is commendable. It is an honor to be among such greatness. I am sure you would agree that it is a privilege to be in a state where educating a child is not a goal but a priority. This year will be remarkably different – embrace it with a thankful mindset!

Tia Trahan, 2024 Louisiana Principal of the Year, Lafayette Middle School, Lafayette Parish

LDOE CORNER

All Louisiana students will have improved math outcomes through high-quality instruction designed to accelerate learning in all settings.



Welcome back to school! The new school year is a time for recentering and refreshing our practices. Check out the [Louisiana Math Refresh](#) resources as you build your school routines for math instruction. The Refresh provides several resources designed to support students learning in math. One component of the refresh [proven](#) to impact students' learning is Zearn engagement. Your actions in setting structures and expectations for the critical factors for success in Zearn will build a robust implementation at your school and grow your students' math knowledge.

[Strong Zearn implementation](#) plans provide for four key factors:

Proactive teacher planning for individualized student support

Teachers analyze curriculum-based assessments and Zearn data to inform instructional next steps and plan additional supports outside of class time.

- [Zearn Digital Reports](#)
- [Using Zearn Math for Intervention](#)
- [Enrichment with Zearn Math](#)
- [Foundational Content](#)

Consistent student engagement in Zearn and responsive actions by the teacher/tutor

Students complete at least three grade-level digital lessons each week. In addition to working on Zearn lessons, students rotate through time with the teacher individually or in groups.

- [Two Distinct Learning Spaces](#)
- [Sample Schedules](#)

Tracking, goal setting, and rewards

Teachers create a plan for student tracking and goal setting and provide rewards for growth and completion of Zearn lessons.

- [Goal Tracker](#)
- [Student Tracker](#)
- Rewards: Think of no-cost options such as extended recess, free dress, and bringing a favorite snack.

Behavior Management Plan

Teachers organize their rooms and desk arrangements to monitor all students while providing small group instruction; for example, visible screens, incentives for lesson completion, and student desk orientation to reduce distractions.

- [Brainy Certificate](#)
- Room Map
- Incentive Chart

Several professional learning events are planned this year to support Math Refresh initiatives. To learn more about supporting your teachers with Zearn implementation, consider attending the [Zearn for Middle School Leaders](#) webinar series and the Principal Webinar for Math and Literacy scheduled [September 5 at 1 pm](#).

Also happening this fall is the [Math Refresh Regional Tour](#). Sessions are available for school and system leaders to attend with selected teacher leaders. Fall topics include Supporting Zearn Implementation, Leveraging Math Refresh Resource, and the new Foundational Lessons for Accelerating Math Education or FLAME resources. [Register](#) for a session near you today!

The Department's Math team is here to support all of the vital work you do to grow students' math outcomes. If you have any questions or would like us to work alongside you, please contact STEM@la.gov.

Jamie Hebert, Director of Math, Louisiana Department of Education

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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. Social Studies updates, led by the Department's Social Studies division, will be presented during September's webinar.

- **Principal Webinar Topic: Math Initiatives**
 - **Webinar Date and Time:** August 28 at 1 p.m.
 - **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97054177103>
 - **Webinar Phone Number:** 346-248-7799
 - **Meeting ID#:** 970 5417 7103
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- **Principal Webinar Topic: Social Studies Updates**
 - **Webinar Date and Time:** September 25 at 1 p.m.
 - **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97054177103>
 - **Webinar Phone Number:** 346-248-7799
 - **Meeting ID#:** 970 5417 7103

Please contact louisianaleaders@la.gov with questions.

2023-2024 Teacher Leader Advisors

The LDOE would like to send a warm congratulations to the [2023-2024 Teacher Leader Advisors](#). Teacher Leader Advisors are an exceptionally talented group of educators across Louisiana who play an influential role in raising expectations for students and in ensuring that fellow educators across the state have access to high quality instructional materials and resources, and curriculum-aligned professional learning. Teacher Leader Advisors participate in the LDOE's Instructional Materials Review process, create tools for the Teacher Support Toolbox, and develop and lead both virtual and in-person professional development for educators across Louisiana.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov to learn more about the [Teacher Leader Advisor program](#).

Seeking Nominations for Excellent Educators

The Department recognizes great teachers and school leaders are critical to student success. Annually, the Department honors some of the state's most successful educators through the Louisiana Teacher and Principal of the Year programs, as well as the Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year programs and the New Teacher of the Year program. (Candidates for the New Teacher of the Year program must have less than one year teaching experience.)

Part of the selection process for naming the school system and state-level winners includes recommendations from teachers, principals, school system employees, parents, colleagues, and community members. To assist with the process, a [nominations portal](#) was created.

The [nominations portal](#) is open and will close on September 22. Multiple nominations are accepted, as well as self-nominations. Upon portal close, the nomination information will be shared with school systems for their consideration. Please share the information for the [nominations portal](#) with stakeholders and encourage everyone to nominate outstanding teachers and leaders.

Please contact the following with questions.

- Teacher/Principal of the Year- excellenteducators@la.gov
- New Teacher of the Year- laurie.carlton@la.gov
- Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year- shallan.jones@la.gov

Evaluation Updates

The deadline for leaders to finalize 2022-2023 teacher, counselor, and librarian evaluation data in the Compass Information System (CIS) will follow VAM release in October. Evaluators should meet with evaluatees to review 2022-2023 observation and Student Learning Targets (SLT) scores.

All evaluators are required to renew certification annually to evaluate, per [Bulletin 130](#). The [2023-2024 Rater Reliability Evaluator Training](#) and [companion](#) document are now available in the [Compass Library](#). Upon completion of the training, evaluators should complete the jot form in the companion document to ensure participation.

Leaders should share the [2023-2024 Evaluation Guide for Teachers](#) with all teachers, counselors, and librarians. This document outlines all evaluation components to prepare teachers for the evaluation process.

Leaders are encouraged to begin assisting teachers, counselors, and librarians with setting [SLTs](#) for the 2023-2024 school year. Resources for [goal setting](#) are available in the Compass Library. **Evaluators and evaluatees must meet to discuss all SLTs.** SLTs may be entered into CIS once the system opens for the new year.

Per [Bulletin 130](#), all educators will require two observations for the 2023-2024 school year.

Please contact compass@la.gov with questions.

Best Practices Level 1 and 2 Trainings for New School ILT Members

The Division of School Improvement is pleased to continue the partnership with NIET to provide foundational training in Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) and Teacher Collaboration (TC) throughout the Fall of 2023. These Level 1 and 2 trainings are offered at no cost and are appropriate for leaders who have not completed this foundational training. This includes new school leaders, ILT members, and teacher leaders who facilitate teacher collaboration sessions. These trainings are offered both virtually and on-site at regional locations from August through October. Please visit the [NIET Best Practices Training](#) site for session schedules and to register.

Please contact schoolimprovementdivision@la.gov with questions.

School Support Institutes

The first sessions of the [2023-2024 School Support Institutes](#) (SSI) are fast approaching! Nearly 1,400 members of Instructional Leadership teams across the state have registered to participate in this exciting professional learning opportunity. Brand new content for all SSI learning pathways is focused on cultivating instructional coherence that meets the needs of all learners and supporting HQIM implementation.

Please see the [SSI logistics page](#) for detailed venue, parking, and pre-work information. Please note that the Baton Rouge cohort is split between two locations depending upon the learning pathway. All registered participants will receive reminder emails with detailed session information.

| School Support Institutes Session #1 | |
|---|---|
| Dates | Cohort Locations |
| September 11 | <i>Monroe Cohort:</i> University of Louisiana Monroe, Bayou Pointe, 1 Warhawk Way, Monroe |
| September 12 | <i>Shreveport Cohort:</i> Shreveport Convention Center, 400 Caddo Street, Shreveport |
| September 13 | <i>Lafayette Cohort:</i> University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Student Union Building, 620 McKinley Street, Lafayette |
| September 14 | <i>Baton Rouge Cohort:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ILT, TC & Literacy Pathways: The Cook Hotel and Conference Center at LSU, 3848 W. Lakeshore Drive, Baton Rouge• Observation & Feedback Pathway, Pedagogy of Potential Pathways: LSU Student Union, 310 LSU Student Union, Baton Rouge |

Please contact ldoessisupportteam@tntp.org for technical support.

RESOURCES

Academics

2023 Louisiana Guide to World Languages Programming Grades 9-12

The LDOE is excited to announce the release of the new [2023 Louisiana Guide to World Languages Programming for Grades 9-12](#). This resource stresses the importance of world languages education and offers guidance for world languages programming implementation, such as, scheduling, creating a pathway to the Louisiana State Seal of Biliteracy, and providing information about the [World Languages Indicators for the High School Interests and Opportunities Index](#).

Please contact languageacquisition@la.gov with questions.

ELA

ELA Guidebooks 3-5 (2022) Updates

The LDOE has partnered with teachers across Louisiana to update the [ELA Guidebooks 3-5 \(2022\)](#) curriculum. These updates include

- anticipated responses added to teaching notes to support formative assessment;
- additional diverse learner supports linked in teaching notes; and
- three new level three units to be released spring 2024.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

ELA Guidebooks 6-8 (2024) Release and Review Information

The LDOE will release new ELA Guidebooks 6-8 (2024) units in spring 2024. The [unit overview](#) document and [writing progression](#) for these units are now available on the [ELA Guidebooks web page](#).

Additional information regarding the ELA Guidebooks 6-8 (2024) units, including webinars and feedback opportunities, will be shared in future communications.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

ELA Guidebooks 9-12 (2020) Updates

The LDOE has partnered with teachers across Louisiana to update the [ELA Guidebooks 9-12 \(2020\)](#) curriculum. These updates include

- updated mentor sentence and vocabulary activities to deepen students' understanding of important skills and vocabulary;
- additional diverse learner supports linked in teaching notes to ensure all students are supported in their learning; and
- four new units to be released spring 2024 to provide school systems an additional option to select for implementation.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

Social Studies

Social Studies Professional Learning

The LDOE has released a [new professional learning resource](#) for social studies teachers and support staff. Teachers in grade 4 and grade 5 now have access to asynchronous professional learning modules that guide them through the design and key features of the [Bayou Bridges](#) curriculum, as well as a unit study tool to support initial curriculum implementation.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

Math

Zearn Impacts Louisiana Students

New research indicates [Zearn impacts Louisiana students](#) by providing just-in-time support for students while informing the teacher of the performance and success of students in grade-level mathematics.

Zearn can be used during core instruction, extra math time, or in summer learning programs.

To make the [greatest impact](#), ensure that

- students engage with three grade-level lessons per week;
- create incentives for students who meet the three lesson goal; and
- [inform parents](#) of how they can support their students with Zearn.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

New Math Refresh Resources

To support school systems, schools, and teachers in implementation of high-quality instructional materials, the LDOE has released several new resources on the [Math Refresh](#) page. Resources include the following:

- Available now
 - [Accelerating Learning in High School Math](#)
 - [Zearn Implementation in Louisiana](#)
 - [Math Refresh Summer Webinar Series Recording and Slides](#)
 - [Family Math Engagement Library](#)
- Coming soon
 - Updated Louisiana Guides to Implementing adopted high-quality resources
 - New Foundational Lessons for Accelerating Math Education (FLAME) Resources

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

Science

Updated Louisiana Guides to Piloting OpenSciEd High School Courses

To support school systems, schools, and teachers implementing the high-quality pilots for OpenSciEd in [biology](#), [chemistry](#), and [physics](#), the LDOE has released updated guidance. This guidance for each course provides options for systems and schools who

- want to implement all of the OpenSciEd units regardless of field test or revised status; or
- are interested in beginning to implement the OpenSciEd high school units and want to prioritize complete, revised units.

All Louisiana Guides to Implementing High-Quality Pilots, as well as Louisiana Guides to Implementing High-Quality Instructional Materials, are located on the [K-12 Science Resources](#) web page.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

Ed Tech

Back to School LMS Supports

Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, and Canvas are key educational technology tools with the primary purpose of supporting and enhancing the learning experience for our students. To support schools and teachers in utilizing best practices in their digital classrooms, the LDOE has released several new resources on guidance for LMS best practices.

- [Back to School: Google Classroom](#)
- [Back to School: Canvas](#)
- [Back to School: Microsoft Teams](#)

Additional resources will be available on the [Digital Learning](#) web page.

Please contact digitallearning@la.gov with questions.

Literacy

Literacy Screener Support

The K-3 Literacy Screener consists of a set of measures for assessing reading skills. This universal screening identifies which students may be at risk for experiencing reading difficulties. Teachers use this data to set and monitor literacy goals, as well as to provide instructional support.

- Additional information can be found on the [new literacy screener landing page](#), such as literacy screener training videos,
- literacy alternate assessment information,
- administration materials and
- family reporting documents.

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

Diverse Learners

Literacy Alternate Assessment Rubric (LAAR)

The Literacy Alternate Assessment Rubric (LAAR) is the alternate assessment to the K-3 Literacy Screener, DIBELS® 8th Edition, for students with significant cognitive disabilities in grades K-3. Only those students whose IEP team has used the K-2 Alternate Assessment Decision Making Tool or the 3-11 Alternate Assessment Criteria to determine eligibility should be scored on the literacy screener using the LAAR. Literacy screener and the [LAAR](#) resources are located in the [Literacy Screener Library](#).

Please contact diverselearnersupport@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

New Teacher Experience: Professional Learning Modules: Registration Extended

The Department, in partnership with A+PEL, developed [Professional Learning Modules](#) on topics that are critical for new teacher success. These modules, designed to build learning throughout the year, include online asynchronous content followed by an in person learning lab where participants practice and apply these concepts.

- Module 1: Classroom Management/Classroom Environment
- Module 2: Standards and Curriculum
- Module 3: Data Literacy
- Module 4: Literacy for 21st century learners
- Module 5: Parent and Community Engagement

Teachers are expected to complete the entire series of Professional Learning Modules. After completing the [registration](#), participants will receive details on selected training locations. This learning opportunity is provided at no cost to systems; however, any travel costs should be covered by the school system. This is a great opportunity for new teachers and early career teachers.

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

New Teacher Experience: Affinity Group: Registration Extended

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 that [registration](#) is now open for 2023-2024 Affinity Groups.

Affinity Groups provide support for beginning teachers across Louisiana through monthly virtual meetings.

The goals of these groups include

- creating a pathway for novice teachers to experience socialization and collaboration with their peers;
- linking new teachers by a common purpose or interest (teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities, second grade teachers, etc.);
- ensuring an inclusive environment where new teachers are valued, included, and empowered to succeed;
- improving their craft through discussion, collaboration, and purposeful materials and leadership in each group; and
- building new teachers' confidence in their abilities to instruct students and manage classrooms.

There is no cost to join affinity groups, but seats are limited. [Registration](#) will be on a first come, first serve basis. Don't let your new teachers and early career teachers miss out on this great opportunity.

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

Call for Proposals for Louisiana Association of Teachers of Mathematics and Louisiana Science Teachers Association Joint Conference

The Louisiana Association of Teachers of Mathematics (LATM) and the Louisiana Science Teachers Association (LSTA) are hosting a joint conference on November 2-3 in Baton Rouge. This annual

conference provides professional development and networking opportunities for all math and science educators throughout the state. Math and science educators are invited to [submit proposals](#) for concurrent sessions through **August 25**. Conference [registration](#) is now open.

Please contact scienceandmatheducators@gmail.com or STEM@la.gov with questions.

BESE Tuition Program for Teachers: Applications for spring and summer opening soon!

The [BESE Tuition Program for Teachers](#) provides tuition funding for selected classroom teachers to enroll in courses at regionally accredited colleges or universities in Louisiana. Online applications for coursework funding for the spring and summer of 2024 semesters will open **September 4**. Program details, as well as a link to the application, are located on the [Continuing Opportunities for Educators page](#).

For questions about the BESE Tuition Program for Teachers, visit the [Frequently Asked Questions page](#) or contact believeandprepare@la.gov.

Quality Science and Math (QSM) Grant Program

The [Quality Science and Math Grant Program](#) awards grants of up to \$2,000 to Louisiana pre-K-12 public school teachers for the purchase of non-consumable materials and equipment to be used in science, math, and STEM courses. The [application portal](#) is now open and will close on **September 10**. [Grant writing resources](#) and full program details are available on the [QSM website](#).

Please contact qsminfo@lsu.edu with questions.

Free Registration for Educators for the LASTEM Annual Summit

[LASTEM](#), Louisiana's Regional STEM Network, is a system of STEM leadership entities strategically positioned across Louisiana where communities, parishes, multi-parish regions, and the state can achieve improved access to STEM education, participation, and advancement. The [LASTEM Summit](#) will be held **October 17** at the Cajundome and Convention Center in Lafayette. [Registration](#) is free for educators; however, those interested in attending should register soon as spaces are limited. For more information please visit the [LASTEM Summit web page](#).

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

PRINCIPAL NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

Do you have a colleague who would benefit from receiving this newsletter? Forward this copy and encourage them to [subscribe](#) to 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 the [LDOE Principal's Newsletter Leader Spotlight Nomination Form](#). This note of appreciation will be included in our next monthly newsletter.

DATES TO CONSIDER FOR BUILDING-LEVEL LEADERS

| Important Dates | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Louisiana Association of Teachers of Mathematics and Louisiana Science Teachers Association Joint Conference Proposals Due | August 25 |
| Monthly Principal Webinar: Math Initiatives | August 28 at 1 p.m. |
| New Teacher Experience: Professional Learning Modules: Registration | September 1 |
| New Teacher Experience: Affinity Group: Registration | September 1 |
| Quality Science and Math Grant Due | September 10 |
| School Support Institutes - Register for a session near you. | September 11-14 |
| Nominations for Excellent Educators due | September 22 |
| Monthly Principal Webinar: Social Studies updates | September 25 at 1 p.m. |
| Math Refresh Regional Tour - Register for a session near you. | Fall 2023 October - November |