

LOUISIANA PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

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

December 20, 2022

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PRINCIPAL CORNER



Happy Holidays from North DeSoto High School and DeSoto Parish! What a wonderful time of year to celebrate such a great profession and professionals! As an administrator of eleven years and principal of seven, I have learned much and still have much to learn. There are practices that I feel have a positive impact on those with which I partner. I tend to lean on these practices and strive to perfect them. Four of my “go tos” I hold dearly are communication, praise, presence, and team.

Communication is a practice in which many often take for granted; we feel as though keeping those around us in “the know” is easy. I can tell you that from my experience, true communication takes practice. As a principal, I quickly learned that one important strategy to hold when communicating is consistency. As educators we work on a schedule and routine is important to most. I have also found that while face-to-face communication is important, it is not always required. If I can communicate a message through email or Remind, I do so. North DeSoto High School’s most important weekly communication is “Reminders of the Week.” This email is sent every Sunday afternoon at 1:00 pm and highlights specific activities for the week along with a daily outline of events. I have found that if our staff does not receive it, they are emailing me. As high school principals, we also know we have kids in and out on a very regular basis, and communication of those absences is vitally important. That is another consistent email - teachers get those names every morning at 6:30 am. These sorts of practices help keep everyone on the same page. Our staff has learned important times to check for emails, and they do not feel as though they are tied to it. If emergencies come up during the day, I normally use Remind. Now there are times for face-to-face whole staff communication. Those important times are the beginning, middle, and end of the year for getting to know one another and discussing important procedural information. There are also times as leaders when we “just recognize” those times when it is needed for morale or to stress the importance of any action. Communication and developing routines is essential for any leader and their school.

Next, praise is so important and needed by all, staff and students alike. When I go into a classroom for a learning walk, no matter what, I am going to find something for which to praise the teacher. When I find it necessary to have a conversation with a staff member about an adjustment that needs to be made in instruction or procedures, I am going to do my best to start and end that conversation positively. When I visit with students about those actions that we do not want to have happen anymore, I do my best to end those conversations on a positive, upbeat note. I also try to recognize our groups outside of the school day for their extracurricular activities and praise their accomplishments and efforts. We might win a ball game or do well in a competition; I do my best to post pictures and updates and send “Remind” messages to staff so they know to congratulate their students the next day on the accomplishment. One of my favorite praise routines I have developed over the years is the handwritten note. I make a point to send a handwritten note to at least one person per week - sometimes more - a student, staff, district, parent, or community member. All of these practices are good for the person receiving the praise but also for me; it helps keep me constantly looking for the good and not dwelling on the bad.

Thirdly, I feel presence is so important. This may seem to be a simple thought, but when one really thinks about it, presence is necessary and needed consistently. My day starts with a presence in the hallways. This allows me to visit with students as they go to class and each teacher in my building. I am able to tell them good morning and it gives me an opportunity to “gauge” issues. It also allows teachers to ask me quick questions without having to come to my office, and I can verify we are all accounted for and ready for the day. Presence in classrooms is so important. Our team works on a schedule for learning walks and cluster feedback in an effort to support all teachers - seasoned and new - strong and those that need more support. I will admit, I am not sure I have the practice of classroom visits mastered and we adjust as we go. I really want to be in all classrooms daily but I strive to balance just “being in a classroom” and “being in a classroom with purpose.” If I go into a classroom, I want to be there long enough to give feedback and that takes time. I am still working on this practice. Finally, presence at after-school events is so important. I am a principal of a 4-A school, and our school is busy 5-6 days per week. It is important for me that I, or a member of my leadership team, is present at all events. This presence is so important for students, staff, parents, and the community. Now, it does take a toll on any leader's team, and as principal, I strive to know and understand their family roles and adjust as needed.

Lastly, as a leader, I am only as good as those that I have around me and I must say, my team at North DeSoto High School and DeSoto Parish is AMAZING!!! When building a team, any leader needs to first understand their strengths and weaknesses and surround themselves with those that will complement them. A good leader is a hard worker and willing to do any task they hand off but when giving a task, that leader needs to learn to trust and “let go” of those responsibilities they give to their team. Just because they do not do it as you would do it, does not mean it is wrong; it may be even better. A good leader is not always right nor do they have all of the correct answers and they must realize that. They value the opinions of those around them and seek those opinions out. When something comes up and needs to happen, pull in members of your leadership team and teachers and ask them. I promise they know all the right answers because they live in the classroom every day. To be a good leader one must remember you do not have to know it all, just utilize those around you that do. They will appreciate you for it, most of the time.

Being a principal has been such an honor for me; it is an honor to serve those with which I work, the students in my building, their parents, and the community. The role does come with much responsibility and it is not always a “bed of roses,” but the positives far outshine the negatives. In this role, I have had the opportunity to meet and learn from many wonderful people and I have learned so much about myself. My encouragement to you is to work to develop your four leadership practice “go-tos” and to do what you do best and depend on others to do theirs as well.

Tamela Phillips, 2023 High School Principal of the Year, North DeSoto High School, DeSoto Parish

LDOE CORNER

The Office of Career and College Readiness believes that all students in Louisiana should graduate from high school with an individualized plan for a prosperous future. We work towards this vision by developing policies, delivering programs, and providing access to resources, that help all students:



Explore and define a plan for the future, through access to academic and career counseling, course and work experiences, and mentoring.

Persist through to graduation, through access to interventions and dropout prevention programs.

Accelerate their journey to career readiness, through opportunities to attain employer-valued credentials, to experience quality work-based learning, and to develop skills needed for success in the workplace.

Build a feasible path to post-secondary education, through opportunities to attain early college credit, and support with financial aid planning.

Create healthy and safe environments, through collaboration with health professionals and emergency preparedness stakeholders.

The work streams within our office cover the following:

- **Foundational Skills**, led by Angela Jordan, focuses on providing needed support for student success as they enter high school. Programming includes dropout prevention; re-inventing high school; and graduation planning. This workstream also provides support for Professional School Counselors by publishing the monthly Counselor Newsletter; coordinating the fall and spring Counselor Institutes; and publishing the High School Planning Guide. Guidance and support surrounding alternative education and child welfare and attendance also reside within this workstream. This team leads the implementation of the annual Child Welfare and Attendance Summit bringing together key stakeholders to learn best practices surrounding attendance. Rayla Hunt, Shelneka Adams, and Terran Perry support the work of Foundational Skills.
- **Quality Diplomas**, led by Jessica Vallelungo, focuses on programming that encourages student success throughout high school. Support is provided in the areas of Jump Start, dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and opportunities for students to participate in educational opportunities that may not be available at the school campus through Supplemental Course Allocation. This team also leads the implementation of the annual Jump Start Convention bringing together educators and business & industry to provide a forum focused on career and technical education. Charmaine Cureton, Tiffany Thomas, and Troy Bone support the work of Quality Diplomas.
- **Postsecondary Readiness**, led by Stephanie Marcum, has a focus on ensuring students have the needed tools and resources for success as they exit high school. Individuals focus on providing opportunities for students to participate in relevant Fast Forward pathways; ensuring students have a path to success whether their plan is to attend a university, college, technical college, or enter a career pathway; and opportunities for community service. Support is also provided for student awards within this workstream. Barrye Bailey, Marian Suzy Johnson, and Linda Zigler support the work of Postsecondary Readiness.

- **Healthy Communities**, led by Michael Comeaux, focuses on the health and safety of all students. Support is provided in the areas of school safety, health and physical education, and transportation. Support is also provided to systems opting to participate in school-based Medicaid. The School Health Provider of the Year Award program is based in this workstream as well. Our annual School Safety Summit is spearheaded by this team with a focus on ensuring a safe educational environment for students and educators. Elizabeth Duncan supports this work.
- **Well-being**, led by Dr. Byron Hurst, has a focus on student and educator well-being. Team members assist school systems in developing well-being advisory councils; promote strategies to meet the needs of individual students to improve academic engagement; provide support to systems on the implementation of various grants; and support schools with improving discipline practices. Levillia Moore, Rachel Bunch, and Stephen Guccione support the work of Well-being.

Students in Louisiana have many opportunities to succeed and The Office of Career and College Readiness welcomes the opportunity to provide assistance. We believe in the success of Louisiana!

Dr. Ernise S. Singleton, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Career and College Readiness

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Teacher Leader Lagniappe: New Episode Released

Teacher Leader Lagniappe Season 2, Episode 10: Louisiana Is on the Rise with Superintendent Brumley

By popular demand, Dr. Brumley is back to chat about Louisiana's State priorities, assessments, and the 2022 NAEP results. Em Cooper is also super excited to smile about Northshore Charter School, Hurst Middle School, George Washington Carver High, DeSoto, Point Coupee, and West Feliciana Parishes for their speedy implementation of literacy resources.

Educators can [submit pictures and stories](#) to be highlighted on the podcast. Subscribe through [Apple](#) Podcasts, Google Play, and [Spotify](#).

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

Principal's Webinar Series: Literacy

In November, the Department held a webinar highlighting effective literacy practices through the lens of a school leader. Led by the Executive Director of the Literacy Division, Shanna Beber, this webinar focused on improving literacy outcomes for all students in Louisiana through Louisiana's Literacy Pillars. The [slide deck](#) of the webinar can be found in the [Principal Support Library](#).

Please reach out to louisianaleaders@la.gov with questions.

2021-2022 Leader Evaluations

The deadline to finalize leader evaluations in the [Compass Information System \(CIS\)](#) is January 6. No evaluations may be edited or [uploaded](#) after this date.

Please contact compass@la.gov with questions.

New Teacher Experience: Professional Development – Late Registration for Modules 2-5 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 that [registration](#) has been extended for the Professional Development Modules.

The [Professional Development Modules](#) are on topics that are critical for new teacher success. These modules will begin with an asynchronous online component that new teachers complete independently followed by in-person professional development. Teachers can register for Modules 2-5 *no later than Thursday, January 5th, 2023*. This will be the last chance to take advantage of this professional learning opportunity.

The in person Professional Learning Lab will be offered at two different locations on the following dates:

- Monday, January 9, 2023 (Ruston)
- Saturday, January 14, 2023 (Lafayette)

There is no registration fee for this great professional development opportunity, but seating is limited. [Registration](#) will be on a first come, first serve basis. Registration will close on January 5, 2023, or until we reach capacity. Seats are filling quickly!

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

Zearn Accounts and Related Professional Learning for All LA Public Schools Grades K-8

As part of the [Louisiana Math Refresh](#), the Department is partnering with [Zearn](#) to provide Zearn school accounts, which will be activated in January 2023, to all public schools serving K-8 students.

Professional learning (PL) registration is now open to support teachers and leaders in successful implementation. Please see the [PD for Louisiana Educators flier](#) for information about the December and January virtual sessions for math teachers, support teachers/tutors, math coaches, and master teachers. See the [Professional Development for Leaders: Accelerating Impact with Zearn flier](#) for details on the regional, onsite opportunities for principals, CAOs, math curriculum supervisors and coaches.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

Support for Diverse Learners

The Diverse Learners Team will host office hours on Tuesday, January 24 from 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. Educators are invited to join the Zoom call to discuss topics relating to support of diverse learners.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** January 24 at 3:00 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/99463888239>
- **Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID #:** 994 6388 8239
- **Passcode:** 311142

Please contact diverselearnerssupport@la.gov with questions.

K-2 ELA/Literacy Instructional Materials Update

This summer legislators passed a [law](#) to ensure that all textbooks and instructional materials used to teach students to read are scientifically researched with proven results in teaching phonological awareness, letter formation, phonics, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

The Department required publishers to submit their materials for re-review to ensure compliance with this [law](#). The following titles were not submitted by publishers for re-review: [ARC Core, Grades K-2](#), [IRLA Foundational Skills Toolkit, Grades K-2 \(FS Only\)](#), and [Language Arts 1 A/B, Gr 1](#). Therefore, these instructional materials have been removed from the Tiered Reviews webpage and added to the [Not Reviewed for Compliance Under Act 517](#) report. These materials are no longer considered Tier 1.

The Department recommends that school systems engage in a [local review process](#) of their instructional materials to ensure that they **require students to draw on their phonics knowledge to decode words and do not prompt students to use cues** such as looking at the picture or drawing on context to identify words. Classroom instruction and practice should be modified to remove any and all use of three-cueing, MSV, etc. Examples of three cueing include instructing students to memorize sight words, pre-teaching words using context clues (often pictures), using predictable texts that often rely on pictures, and using images with a main focus on the first letter of the word.

K-3 school leaders and teachers can find additional support on literacy instruction from their science of reading training and resources in the [literacy library](#). Additional information about instructional materials re-reviews will be provided in future communications.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

RESOURCES

Sample Literacy Activity Videos

Brief exemplar videos of Louisiana teachers have been added to the [Literacy Instruction, Intervention, and Extension Library](#) to provide teachers and support staff with quick examples of how to engage in literacy activities. The new topics include [Blending](#), [Blending with Phonological Awareness Support](#), and [How to Use a Sound Wall](#). Teachers are invited to submit their own videos to louisianaliteracy@la.gov for review and use in the Literacy Library. Videos for any type of evidence-based literacy activity are encouraged.

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring Program

In an effort to provide families with additional opportunities to advance their child's literacy development, the Louisiana Department of Education launched a new literacy tutoring program for eligible public school students in grades K-5 in November. For more information on this program, school leaders can access the [Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring Admin Letter](#) in the [Literacy Library](#) under [Instruction, Intervention, and Extensions](#).

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

OpenSciEd Elementary Science Pilot Coming Soon

As part of an effort to increase statewide access and opportunity for students to engage with [high-quality science instructional materials](#) aligned to standards, the Department is seeking **elementary educators** to pilot [OpenSciEd](#) science materials for grades K-5 during the development phase. Participating teachers will have the opportunity to represent Louisiana and help shape the curriculum's design by field testing and providing feedback on the units. Professional learning for teachers selected to participate in the pilot for the first round of field test units will begin in the summer of 2023. Anyone interested in nominating an individual teacher or cohort of teachers for participation in the pilot should secure the necessary approvals from school and system leadership and complete this short [form](#).

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

Hazards Mitigation Elective Pilot Course for Students in Grades 9-12

Hazards Mitigation Pilot is an innovative effort to provide curricular resources for high school STEM education that engages students in explorations and applications of measures that humans can use to manage and mitigate hazards connected to weather, geologic phenomenon, and aquatic phenomenon. The University of Louisiana at Monroe's (ULM) development team is composed of researchers and educators with experience in a broad array of disciplines. The Louisiana Department of Education is partnering with the ULM development team to support interested Louisiana educators in conducting a pilot of the materials and providing feedback to inform the design and potential future implementation of high school STEM coursework for Louisiana's teachers and students. The Hazards Mitigation Pilot integrates a series of electronic resources, lab activities, videos, and assessments that involve students in building relevant knowledge and skills within STEM and Earth Science topics. The course will be a one credit elective in the 2023-2024 school year.

The goals of the Hazards Mitigation Pilot are to

- support teachers with best practices and practical tools to authentically immerse students in the exploration of natural hazards, mitigation strategies, and Earth Science;
- increase teacher content knowledge and student understanding; and
- build student proficiency in the analysis and feasibility of mitigation strategies.

Who should apply?

- Pilot teachers should be educators who are comfortable teaching STEM, Environmental Science, and/or Earth Science.

The important logistics for school system leaders are

- professional development will be offered virtually in July 2023 over 1 week; **dates TBA**
- there are no textbooks or fees associated with training or for students taking this course; and
- there are supplies needed for teaching the course and this may be accessed by emailing casehanks@ulm.edu.

Please contact casehanks@ulm.edu with any questions.

EDUCATOR RECOGNITION

Nominations for the 2023 Presidential Awards for Mathematics and Science Teaching

[Nominations](#) are now open for the [2023 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching](#). This award is the highest and most prestigious honor bestowed by the United States government specifically for K-12 science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and/or computer science teaching. This year's cycle will recognize teachers of grades 7-12. Nominations close on **January 9**.

Please contact info@paemst.org 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.

Dr. Laura Adelman Cannon, International School of Louisiana - Uptown in International School of Louisiana

"Dr. Adelman-Cannon provides commitment to her students which in turns ensures the success of International School of Louisiana. She unselfishly provides support wherever needed - even within the classroom where she has been teaching English Language Arts since the start of the school year in addition to her daily administrative duties." *submitted by Melissa Boudreaux*

Dwayne Taylor, Brame Middle School in Rapides Parish

"Mr. Taylor is such a good man. He finds ways to discipline the students and still love them. His demeanor is calm, cool, and collected. We need more people like him in the world!" *submitted by Joel Stevison*

Kimberly Burgoyne, Florida Avenue Elementary in St. Tammany Parish

"Excellent job leading ILT and PLC meetings! Your commitment to these processes allows teachers to grow and glow together as they increase their knowledge of teaching and learning." *submitted by Dorable Dangerfield*

DATES TO CONSIDER FOR BUILDING-LEVEL LEADERS

Important Dates	
Deadline to finalize Leader Evaluations for 2021-2022	January 6
K-12 Computer Science Education Listening Sessions	January 9-18
2023 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching Nominations Due	January 9
Support Diverse Learner Webinar	January 24 at 3 p.m.
Practicing Principal Webinar: Math Refresh	January 30 at 1 p.m.
Zearn Professional Development for Leaders: Accelerating Impact	Various Dates, Register Using Flier