

TEACHER LEADERS

ENGAGE. EMPOWER. INSPIRE.



August 2020



After much anticipation, many changes in policies and procedures, and maybe more than a few emotional “moments”, we can finally say: Welcome back! It looks and feels completely different than our typical start of school, but one thing that will always remain consistent is that we miss our students tremendously.

I’m Courtney Alvarez, School Social Worker for the Iberville Parish School Board. My main role in our district focuses on providing direct services to students and offering support to staff related to student behavior. It’s no secret that educators experience a significant amount of stress daily. Encouraging self-care skills, including practicing mindfulness and meditation, physical exercise, gratitude, and relinquishing control, can greatly circumvent burnout that so many of us feel. Self-care can support teachers’ resilience and improve their ability to overcome adversity and adapt to challenging situations, as required during the COVID-19 pandemic and distance learning. In these uncertain times, caring for ourselves is even more critical to ensure we are able to identify and assist with all of our students’ needs.

To address the well-being of educators, I help coordinate our district’s weekly *Mental Health Minute*, which is a snippet of information regarding mental health and self-care. I also coordinate our quarterly newsletter, *Inspire Iberville*, which focuses on teacher and student well-being, understanding what mental health needs look like in children, and other relevant topics. Our intention in creating these resources is to shine light on mental health and wellness in order to reduce the stigma in seeking help when needed. These resources encourage our employees to seek further support through our Employee Assistance Program, which provides counseling, life coaching, legal, financial, and other services free of charge. The feedback we have received has been overwhelmingly positive.

Mindfulness is a hot topic currently and for good reason. During the school year, teachers are prone to increased psychological stress symptoms. Practicing mindfulness is not only personally beneficial, but also increases positivity in interpersonal relationships. Incorporating mindfulness into our daily lives has such an impact on the way we teach and how our students learn and helps to eliminate biases. It increases compassion and adaptability, which is something we could all use right now.

I wish you all the best in the 2020-2021 school year. Stay well, and know that it will all work out.

In This Issue

- [Support For Diverse Learners](#)
- [ELA Resources](#)
- [Math Resources](#)
- [Social Studies Resources](#)
- [Science Resources](#)
- [Educator Opportunities](#)
- [Educator Recognition](#)
- [Student Opportunities](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

SUPPORT FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Strong Start 2020 Guidance for Special Education Leaders

The Department released [Strong Start 2020 Reopening Guidance for Special Education Leaders](#) to support school systems and educators in preparing for a successful school reopening that supports the needs of students with disabilities. This guidance includes guiding principles and considerations for supporting students with disabilities in facility reopening plans, staffing plans, academic plans, and the delivery of direct services across virtual, traditional, and hybrid learning scenarios.

Please contact specialeducation@la.gov with questions.

ELA RESOURCES

ELA Guidebook's Strong Start 2020 Updates

[Louisiana's ELA Guidebooks Distance Learning Strong Start: Instructional Materials Guidance](#) can be used to support school systems and teachers as they plan to implement ELA Guidebooks for the 2020-2021 academic year. This document is updated frequently to reflect the most up-to-date guidance and information about newly released resources.

The latest edition includes the following updates:

- Access to ELA Guidebooks grades 3-8 using the Bulk Downloader Tool on Louisiana Curriculum Hub;
- Access to Distance Learning Guidebook Companions and Feedback Guides, including an updated release schedule;
- Links to Teacher Leader Summit session materials and recordings for all sessions related to ELA Guidebooks;
- Guidance for adapting ELA Guidebooks for multiple learning scenarios;
- Access to Knowledge Packs, created in partnership with CommonLit, and Independent Reading Protocols to support flexibility during virtual/hybrid learning; and
- Access to ELA Guidebook Parent Guides for each grade level for grades 3-8.

In addition to being able to access some materials via Louisiana Curriculum Hub, the [ELA Guidebook webpage](#) has been updated to include download boxes for ELA Guidebook related content. Many of the resources described in the Strong Start guidance are accessible on this page.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

Knowledge Pack Training Opportunity

In-person learning, focused on high-quality curriculum implementation and virtual distance learning, should be prioritized. However, the Department recognizes that if school buildings do not physically open, or if a hybrid model needs to be implemented, the time available for those types of interactions might be limited.

It is important to remember that learning and activities assigned to students should be meaningful and should be in service of helping students master the knowledge and skills of each ELA Guidebook unit. Therefore, the Department has partnered with [CommonLit](#) to create six [Knowledge Packs](#) at each grade level, 3-12, to support students in building knowledge and vocabulary as a supplement to in-person and virtual/hybrid models of high-quality curriculum instruction.

To support Louisiana teachers in utilizing this resource, [CommonLit](#) will provide virtual, synchronous training. Two options will be available on a first-come, first-served basis for up to 500 registered participants. Both sessions will provide the same content. The training will be recorded and shared on the [ELA Guidebook webpage](#).

Webinar Topic: Virtual Instruction with CommonLit for Louisiana Knowledge Packs

Description: In this hour-long webinar, CommonLit will introduce educators to CommonLit’s digital reading program to support the use of Louisiana’s Knowledge Packs. Louisiana Educators will learn how to create accounts, navigate CommonLit’s curriculum, assign digital lessons, and grade student work. Teachers will also have the opportunity to ask the CommonLit team questions throughout the training.

Option 1	Option 2
Tuesday, August 25 at 10 a.m.	Thursday, August 27 at 4 p.m.

[Registration](#) for this virtual professional development is now open.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

LDOE’s ELA Guidebook Resource Bank

The Department has created a [form](#) to collect ELA Guidebook resources from teachers to share freely across the state. Examples can be uploaded directly into the form. These resources will be compiled by grade-level, vetted, and shared. Please consider sharing examples of:

- Unit/Lesson Slide Decks
- Unit/Lesson Planning Document(s)
- Unit/Lesson Scope and Sequence/Pacing Examples

- Student and/or Parent Facing Resources

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

MATH RESOURCES

Illustrative Math Lesson Videos Available On-Demand for Grades 6-8 and Algebra I

The Department— in partnership with Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB), Illustrative Math (IM), and SchoolKit— selected 20 of the critical lessons in each grade level to broadcast on LPB in July of 2020. These lessons along with a few others are available on demand on the SchoolKit website at the links below:

- Grade 6: <http://schoolkitgroup.com/video-grade-6/>,
- Grade 7: <http://schoolkitgroup.com/video-grade-7/>,
- Grade 8: <http://schoolkitgroup.com/video-grade-8/>, and
- Algebra: <http://schoolkitgroup.com/video-algebra/>.

Available on the [K-12 Math Planning Page](#), [Video Lessons for Illustrative Mathematics: Grades 6-8 and Algebra I](#) includes a list of available videos along with unit and lesson information and direct links, and [Guides to Implementing Illustrative Math](#) will be updated soon to include this information.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Intensive Algebra I School Guidance

To support school systems in strategic planning for the 2020-2021 school year, the Department has released [Intensive Algebra I Guidance for Schools](#), a research-based course designed to support students who persistently struggle in math with passing Algebra I in their first year of high school.

The guidance includes information on the following:

- Course overview,
- Enrolling students ,
- Scheduling recommendations , and
- Selecting a curriculum.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

SOCIAL STUDIES RESOURCES

Continuous Learning Updates

The teacher materials and student materials sections of the social studies distance learning packets will be separated starting in unit 2. The teacher materials have been [password protected](#) to help ensure only teachers have access to the answer keys. For more information on distance learning packets, see below:

In an effort to provide standards-aligned content experiences and enable continuous learning in the event of school facility closures at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, [distance learning packets](#) are being developed for each course in grades 3-8 and US History for units 1, 2, and 3. The packets do not cover the entire content of the unit but instead focus on a key topic. Teachers can use the packets as a cornerstone to build materials for additional content coverage. The materials are designed to be low tech but can be adapted for schools using an online learning platform. The Department will evaluate the need for more distance learning support throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Unit 2 packets will be released on a rolling basis from now until September and will be posted on the [K-12 Social Studies Resources](#) page when completed. Unit 3 packets will be released in November. A pre-recorded webinar will be posted in August to provide guidance and recommendations on how to use the distance learning packets to support social studies instruction.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

SCIENCE RESOURCES

Science Distance Learning Resources for Middle and High School

To support school systems, schools, and teachers in ensuring continuous learning in science in distance learning and blended instructional models for the 2020-2021 school year, the Department is releasing guidance for implementing high quality open-source science curricula in a remote learning setting on a [rolling schedule](#).

Resources available now for OpenSciEd:

- 6th Grade Unit: [Light & Matter](#)
- 7th Grade Units: [Weather](#) & [Thermal Energy](#)
- 8th Grade Unit: [Plate Tectonics](#)
- [Recorded Webinar](#) and [Slide Deck](#)

Resources available now for inquiryHub Biology:

- [Unit 1 Bend 1](#)
- [Recorded Webinar](#) and [Slide Deck](#)

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

Teacher Leader Advisor Applications: Closing Soon

The Department is searching for **highly-motivated educators** to support the mission and vision of the Department's academic content team. You **do not** need to be a school-site Teacher Leader in order to apply.

Becoming a Teacher Leader Advisor (TLA) not only allows educators to expand their positive impact by influencing over 750,000 students and over 50,000 Louisiana educators, but it also provides an

opportunity to deepen and refine their leadership skills, learn about key priorities and projects at the Department, and develop their understanding of curricula and teacher training.

There is a specific need for expert educators in the areas of **early literacy, intervention specialist, early childhood (birth to age 3 and pre-K), and K-12 science and STEM**. Also needed are **K-12 teachers across ELA and math** content areas and **librarians**. **Special education teachers** who specialize in these areas are encouraged to apply.

The [Application](#) closes **August 14**.

Please contact louisianateacherleaders@la.gov with questions.

New Definition of Dyslexia

Please share with district and school level SPED/IEP/504 coordinators, school psychologists and Education Diagnosticians.

The Dyslexia Resource Center is hosting a free webinar regarding recently passed [Act 206](#), which provides a common language definition to define dyslexia using the most current information available. Kayla Reggio, Director of the Dyslexia Resource Center, and Special Guest Representative Joe Marino, who authored the bill, will cover the new definition in law in detail and how this law impacts dyslexic students in your school and community. The webinar will be held on **August 20 at 12:00 p.m.** Participants can [register](#) now.

Please contact kreggio@dyslexia1n5.com with questions.

EDUCATOR RECOGNITION

Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST)

Congratulations to prior long-serving Teacher Leader Advisor, Maggie Acree, of Sterlington High School for receiving the [PAEMST](#) for Grades 7-12 Math! This award is the nation's highest honor for teachers of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Maggie has been a mathematics teacher for 19 years and has taught everything from sixth grade mathematics to Calculus.

Her teaching career has been characterized by identifying and learning about the best instructional practices that foster successful mathematics in her students. She is not afraid to implement new strategies and curriculum that result in a deep conceptual understanding of mathematics for her students. She utilizes activities such as discussion groups and open-ended prompts that result in a more student-led classroom, and her career has been driven by her desire to promote excellence in mathematics education, working with colleagues throughout the school, district, state and nation. Congratulations, Maggie! Well-deserved!

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

U.S. Senate Youth Scholarship Program

Due to the many uncertainties posed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. Senate Youth Program (USSYP) Washington Week 2021 is currently on hold. Applications nationwide are not being accepted at this time. The Department will post USSYP updates on the Department's [web page](#) when available.

Please contact marian.johnson@la.gov with questions.

CONTACT US

For questions related to...	Contact:
AP Courses and Exams Contact	collegereadiness@la.gov
Assessments and Related Supports	assessment@la.gov
Collaborations	districtsupport@la.gov
Compass	compass@la.gov
Educational Leader Licensure Policy Update	believeandprepare@la.gov
ELA Guidebooks	elaguidebooks@la.gov
Financial Aid Assistance	ldefinancial@la.gov
Graduation Requirements	highschoolacademics@la.gov
Instructional Support and Resources including Leap 360 and Eagle	classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov
Jump Start	jumpstart@la.gov
PD Vendor Guide	louisianacurriculumreview@la.gov
Pupil Progressions	ppp@la.gov
Registration for the Teacher Leader Summit	ldoeevents@la.gov
STEM	STEM@la.gov
Teacher Certification	certification@la.gov
Teacher Leaders, Content Leaders, Mentor Teachers, and Teacher Leader Advisors	louisianateacherleaders@la.gov