

# LOUISIANA BACK-TO-SCHOOL GUIDE

## *for Parents of Students with Disabilities*

A new school year means new experiences, new teachers, and new goals. This guide provides you, as a parent of a child with a disability, with a quick overview of what you can do to help prepare your child for a smooth transition back to school.

### WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP)?

#### *Why is it important?*

- Outlines individualized learning plans for a student receiving special education services
- Defines student needs based on a comprehensive evaluation process and ongoing progress monitoring
- Sets measurable learning goals aligned to grade-level expectations

### HOW CAN I PREPARE MY CHILD FOR *a smooth transition back to school?*


#### STUDENT LEARNING

- ✓ Review IEP goals with your child and make sure your child understands expectations for the year.
- ✓ Contact your child's teachers and related-services providers to share information and answer any questions about your child's individual needs.
- ✓ Know your child's accommodations and practice using them at home.
- ✓ If your child is just entering high school and may be eligible for an alternate pathway under [the April Dunn Act](#), schedule an IEP meeting within the first 30 days of school to develop additional IEP goals and objectives.

#### ASSESSMENTS

The majority of students with disabilities will participate in the LEAP 2025 assessments designed for their grade level in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies. At the high school level, the tests are aligned to the following courses: English I, English II, Algebra I, Geometry, Biology, and U.S. History. Students should be provided accommodations as outlined in their IEPs.

For students who have significant cognitive disabilities, and who meet the required criteria, an alternate assessment known as [LEAP Connect](#) is available for ELA and mathematics grades 3-8 and 11, and a science assessment is given at grades 4, 8, and 11.



The IEP is developed by a team of individuals that includes key school staff and the student's parent or guardian. The team meets, reviews available academic performance information, and designs an educational program to address the student's specific educational needs that result from their disability.

## HOW CAN I SUPPORT *Student Learning at Home?*

At home, you can play a critical role by supporting your child and setting high expectations for learning. As a parent, equip yourself with an understanding of what your child should know and be able to do and then have on-going, meaningful conversations about it with your child and your child's teacher(s). By taking these small steps, you will help your child become successful.

### **STUDENT** *Conversations*

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What are you learning  
in \_\_\_\_\_ class?

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Do you understand  
what you are learning?

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Do you get any additional help from your  
teacher (or related-services providers, such  
as a speech pathologist) with this topic?

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Do you feel comfortable  
asking for additional help  
when you need it?

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### **TEACHER** *Conversations*

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What types of accommodations and supports  
does my child receive every day?

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Is my child able to effectively communicate  
with you?

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Is my child making the progress necessary  
to keep on track with peers?

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What can I do to continue to help my child  
improve?

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## *Tools and Resources* **TO SUPPORT PARENTS AND STUDENTS**

Below are additional resources that you can access to further support your child's learning at home.

### **LOUISIANA'S FAMILY SUPPORT TOOLBOX LIBRARY**

Information on standards, test results, and other  
assessment resources.

### **BELIEVE TO ACHIEVE: EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES**

Serves as the Department's roadmap to improving  
outcomes for all Louisiana children

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES INFORMATION PAGE**

Resources and guidance for families to help support  
their children with disabilities

### **RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Resources to assist parents in advocating on behalf  
of their children with disabilities and becoming active  
participants in the education process

### **STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS: A GUIDEBOOK FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Information and resources to support students with  
disabilities

## **WHOM DO I NEED TO CONTACT** *with questions?*

Please call or email your child's teacher with questions about their progress. Additional questions that can't be addressed by their teacher should be directed to the school principal.

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