Louisiana Believes

Special Education Advisory Panel Meeting
January 25, 2017

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION

Public Comment Procedures

Public Comment Overview

- Comments will be allowed on all agenda items for a maximum of three minutes per person
  - The panel will receive all comments and may engage in further dialogue on the agenda item as a result of the comments received
- A person may only comment once per agenda item unless allowed an exception by the chair
- Comment cards must be submitted to the chair or LDE staff member prior to the vote on the motion
- The order and time of comment is left solely to the chair
- Persons making public comments shall identify themselves and the group they represent, if applicable
- Persons addressing the panel shall:
  - confine remarks to the merits of a specific agenda item before the panel
  - refrain from attacking a panel member's motives
  - address all remarks through the chair
  - refrain from speaking adversely on a prior action not pending
  - refrain from disturbing the meeting

Approval of November 16, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Objectives

- Approve minutes of November 16, 2016 meeting

Consideration of a discussion on Louisiana's Annual Performance Report (APR)

Objectives

- Review results of Louisiana's Annual Performance Report

SPP / APR

State Performance Plan (SPP) –

- We are currently in the FFY 2013 – 2018 cycle
- Sets targets for 17 indicators
  - Mix of compliance (ex: child find) and student outcome (ex: proficiency) measures
  - Established with stakeholders through a series of webinars
- Indicator 17 – State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
  - Steered by a stakeholder engagement group with additional feedback from families and other groups

Annual Performance Repot (APR) –

- Annual update to the SPP - this year FFY 2015
- Reports on data / outcomes for each indicator against targets
- States can change targets, if needed and justifiable

SPP/ APR Indicators

The SPP/APR contains 17 indicators. The indicators in **black** require us to set annual targets while the compliance indicators in **green** are measured by targets of 100%.

- Indicator I: Graduation Rate
- Indicator 2: Drop out
- Indicator 3: Participation and Performance on Statewide Assessments
- Indicator 4A: Suspensions/Expulsions (All Students with Disabilities)
- Indicator 4B: Suspensions/Expulsions (Race/Ethnicity)
- Indicator 5 and 6: Educational Environment ages 6-21, ages 3-5
- Indicator 7: Preschool Outcomes
- Indicator 8: Parent Involvement
- Indicators 9 and 10: Disproportionate Representation
- Indicator 11: Child Find
- Indicator 12: Early Childhood Transition
- Indicator 13: Secondary Transition
- Indicator 14: Post School Outcomes
- Indicator 15 and 16: Hearing Resolutions and Mediation
- Indicator 17: State Systemic Improvement Plan

SPP / APR Results

Successes – Louisiana continues to see progress on a number of results-oriented targets:

Indicator	2013	2014	2015	Trend	2015 Target	2015 Target Met
1-Graduation	36.70%	42.80%	44.30%		≥ 42%	
4A-Suspensions / Expulsions	31.54%	16.86%	14.91%		≤ 19.5%	
8-Parent Involvement	33.45%	42.60%	77.63%		≥ 38%	

Challenges – Some outcomes have remained relatively stagnant, resulting in missed targets:

Indicator	2013	2014	2015	Trend	2015 Target	2015 Target Met
5A-Ed. Env. 6-21, 80% or More	62.37%	61.34%	59.67%		≥ 62.5%	
5B-Ed. Env. 6-21, 40% or Less	13.90%	14.31%	13.91%		≤ 13.65%	
5C-Ed. Env. 6-21, Separate	1.36%	1.30%	1.33%		≤ 1.3%	

SPP / APR Next Steps

OSEP-supported approach to assessment (3B, 3C) & SSIP (17) submission:

- February 1st – SPP / APR due (all indicators except 3B, 3C and 17)
- Mid-February – Indicators 3B/3C – Assessment Participation and Proficiency Results
- March – Update SEAP on SSIP progress
- April 3rd – SSIP due
- Early April – Update SPP / APR with assessment results during clarification period

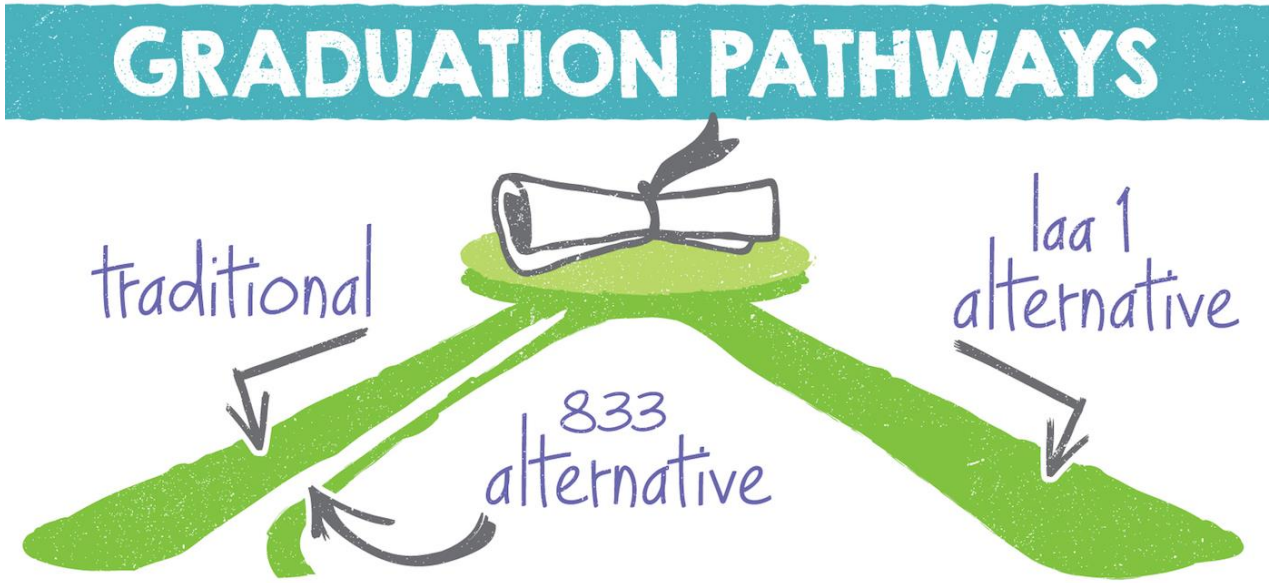
Consideration of a discussion of students with disabilities in Louisiana's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan

Objectives

- Provide feedback on Louisiana's plan to include students who take alternate assessments and earn high school diplomas in the cohort graduation rate

ESSA and Diploma Pathways

The ESSA regulations differentiate between a “regular high school diploma” and a “state-defined alternate diploma” for purposes of school and district accountability. The regulations do not change the diploma pathways available to students with disabilities in Louisiana or how the culminating credential is presented to the student.



Opportunity

The ESSA provides states the opportunity to include a state-defined alternate diploma in the cohort graduation rate. The state-defined alternate diploma is only for students who take the alternate assessment and must be standards based, aligned with the state requirements for a regular high school diploma, and obtained within the time period for which the state ensures the availability of a free and appropriate education (FAPE). {NOTE: per the definition of a regular diploma in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) receipt of the alternate diploma does not terminate FAPE}.

Policy Timeline

Policy Component	Actions	Timeline
Eligibility Criteria	Define the student group eligible to take the alternate assessment	Fall 2014
High School Experience	Establish an aligned high school completion experience	Winter 2015
Louisiana Accountability	Revise the high school accountability formula to recognize successful high school completion in graduation index	Spring 2015
English Language Arts and Math Standards Alignment	Align the extended standards to the Louisiana Student Standards	Fall 2016
ESSA Opportunities	Consider further accountability revisions	Spring 2017

Louisiana's Plan

Diploma Requirements

- Students who take the alternate assessment and meet the academic, assessment, workforce readiness, and high school transition components of the diploma pathway are eligible to obtain a Louisiana high school diploma at the point in which they are ready to exit high school (and in accordance with the provision of a free and appropriate education)

Accountability

- Beginning with graduates in 2018, students will be included in the cohort graduation rate and strength of diploma index for the year in which they graduated, or the year in which they exited, after at least four years in high school with no subsequent re-enrollment by October 1 of the following academic year.

Reporting

- LDOE will develop a structure for reporting diploma outcomes for all students with disabilities on a state and local level that includes graduation and return rates of students who earn alternate diploma accountability points

Consideration of a discussion of priority areas for IDEA funding

Objectives

- Understand process and timeline for developing priorities to be reflected in the FFY17 IDEA grant application

IDEA Grant Application Development Timeline

- December 7, 2016: Work Group Virtual Kick off Meeting
- January 10, 2017: Work Group In Person Meeting
- January 18, 2017: Work Group Virtual Meeting
- January 25, 2017: SEAP Meeting
- February 2, 2017: Work Group Meeting
- March 2017 (specific date tbd): IDEA grant application released for public feedback
- March 29, 2017: SEAP Meeting
- May 2017 (Specific date tbd): IDEA grant application submitted

IDEA Grant Overview

The federal grant award details the amount that must be spent in the following three categories of expenditures:

IDEA Flow Through

The state must flow this money directly to LEAs for the provision of special education services to eligible students. This historically comprises 85 percent or greater of the total award.

IDEA State Set Aside

Set aside funds are approximately 10 percent of the total grant award and are managed at the state level to support projects that improve outcomes for students receiving special education services.

IDEA State Admin

The administrative funds are approximately 2 percent of the total grant award. These funds are reserved at the state level to carry out administrative functions of the grant (policy staff, program implementation, databases, travel, etc.)

Process for Developing Focus Area

- Reviewed the challenge areas outlined in the ESSA framework and considered:
  - Barriers to success for Louisiana's students with disabilities
  - Statewide systemic changes needed to help students overcome barriers
  - Statewide systemic change needed to ensure principles, teachers, and families understand how to support students with disabilities
- Identified
  - common themes
  - guiding principles
  - priority focus areas

Alignment with ESSA

The ESSA draft framework outlines five major challenge areas in improving student achievement among students that were gleaned from public comment and analysis of student performance and will be addressed through the state's ESSA plan:

- **Challenge 1:** Ensuring students leave high school with the skills needed to succeed in community colleges, universities, or the workplace
- **Challenge 2:** Focus on ensuring academic progress for all students, especially those deeply struggling as expectations continue to rise
- **Challenge 3:** Rewarding, funding, and ensuring access for all students to critical, non-tested experiences essential to their success beyond high school
- **Challenge 4:** Elevating the teaching profession so that it is competitive with others and ensuring existing educators have a clear career pathway for success
- **Challenge 5:** Supporting persistently struggling schools by providing them with access to proven academic models for comprehensive or targeted improvement

Common Themes

During the second meeting of our work group the following themes were identified throughout the discussion:

- Investing in teacher development- current and aspiring teachers
- Alignment of special education activities to larger education activities
- Access to technology and appropriate accommodations
- Repetition of efforts across the state
- Better career preparation coordination and transition
- Understanding and responding to identification and disproportionality issues
- Access to aligned instructional and intervention resources
- Meaningful and actionable reporting of data
- Building a special education leadership pipeline

Guiding Principles

All IDEA priorities and funded activities should be sensitive to the needs of students, educators, and families and provide appropriate support. Additionally, they should:

1. Be responsive to and provide additional support the overall education funding environment specific to students with disabilities
2. Align to the larger education initiatives across the state and have a specific focus on students with disabilities
3. Be rooted in a system of routine data analysis and response to outcomes

Funding Priority Areas

1. Build a workforce that is prepared to respond to the needs of all students with disabilities
2. Develop standards aligned tools and resources that support the growth of students with disabilities and minimizes redundancy across the state
3. Provide support for understanding and appropriately responding to the unique ways different disabilities manifest in the classroom
4. Establish structures that ensure students have:
    - individual needs identified and appropriate support provided as early as possible
    - effective transitions to life after high school

Example- Focus 1

Building a workforce that is prepared to respond to the needs of all students with disabilities

Potential Activities:

1. Investing in current teachers/ staff capacity to serve students with disabilities through professional development
2. Preparing all new and aspiring teachers to work with students with disabilities through residencies and mentorships
3. Building preparation programs with SPED focus
4. Developing a leadership pipeline for special education teachers- teacher leaders/ mentors, SPED Leader Academy

Example- Focus 1

This example, using the FFY16 grant application, outlines the process of priority focus areas moving into expended funds.

Focus Area:
Building a workforce that is prepared to respond to the needs of all students with disabilities

Activity:
Support preparation programs in producing teachers that are prepared to work with students with disabilities through residencies and mentorships

IDEA Grant Application Category:
Category L: To assist local education agencies in meeting personnel shortages

Expending of Funds:
In winter 2017, $473,000 of IDEA funds will support residencies for 185 candidates serving 1,384 students with disabilities in 18 LEAs across the state.

Consideration of an update on the Louisiana Connectors for students with significant disabilities implementation

Objectives

- Understand process and timeline implementation of the Louisiana Connectors for students with significant cognitive disabilities
- Review draft implementation guidance

Standards Alignment Process: Timeline

Time (2016)	Key Engagement
July	Initial stakeholder discussions (process, timelines, guiding principles)
August - September	Alignment proposal (LDOE worked with stakeholders and experts to determine alignment approach and develop drafts)
October 18 – November 18	Public comment
November 1 and 3	Alignment overview webinars (over 120 participants)
November 16	Special Education Advisory Panel (endorsement of Bulletin 127 revision for the Louisiana Connectors for students with significant disabilities)
November	Finalize proposals (review public feedback and finalize proposals)
December 6	BESE approved policy revisions

Background

The Louisiana Connectors are the pathways for students with significant disabilities to meet the Louisiana State Standards; they are not learning standards that stand separate and apart from the standard expectations we have for typical students.

The Louisiana Connectors capture the “big ideas” of each content area, while also maintaining alignment to the standard expectations. Each individual Louisiana Connector names the benchmark to be met on the pathway to achieving of the Louisiana Student Standard.

	Former	**Proposed**
Standards	Extended Standards	Louisiana Connectors
Assessment	LAA 1	LEAP Connect: Students with Severe Disabilities

Purpose of Louisiana Connectors

- Students with significant disabilities can learn much more academic content than once thought possible
- Grade-level expectations are the highest expectation we have for any student
- Students with significant disabilities will have the same opportunity to reach grade-level achievement
- The Louisiana Connectors provide developmentally appropriate content for all grades and maintain high expectations for all students

Curriculum and Instruction Resources for Louisiana Connectors

In order for the Louisiana Connectors to be used successfully during the 2017-2018 school year, educators and the Department will work together to implement the following academic support plan.

- **Assessments** – preview of assessment design and structure (summer 2017), new assessment administered (spring 2018)
- **Teacher training and professional development** – trainings on new standards (spring and summit 2017 and on-going) and provide recommendations to districts for continuing support (ongoing)
- **Curriculum and resources** – New standards and parent communication tools (May 2017), Curricular supports (fall 2017)

Email louisianastandards@la.gov with questions.

Follow-up/ Next Steps

Panel Membership

SEAP bylaws

- Panel members will serve 3 year terms (each term begins on July 1st and ends on June 30).
- If a member vacates their position a new member will fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term of the previous member.
- Appointments will be staggered so that 1/3 of membership rotate off at the end of each year.
- Members shall serve no more than 2 consecutive terms (must reapply at the end of their term).

Membership Recommendations

In order to establish a one third rotation over the next three years, the following guiding principles were used:

- equal distribution of roles over the three year cycle
- diversity in roles assigned to each rotation year
- individuals assigned to rotation year based on appointment date and role they represent on the panel

2017	2018	2019
Parent- *Rana Ottallah* (2012)	Parent- *Patsy White* (2012)	Parent- *Laura Nata* (2015)
Administrator- *Susan Vaughn* (2012)	Parent- *Melvin Porter* (2014)	Parent- *Sabrina Langley* (2016)
Teacher- *Amanda Trahan* (2012)	**Administrator- *Bonnie Buckelew* (2012) (one year term)**	Charter School Rep- *Andrea Bond* (2014)
Private School Rep- *Kimberlee Gazzolo* (2012)	LEA McKinney-Vento Rep- *Pittre Walker* (2012)	Teacher- *Lyndsey Jackson* (2016)
Higher Ed Rep- *Paul Mooney* (2013)	Individual with a disability- *Lynette Fontenot (2013)*	State Juvenile and Adult Corrections Rep- *VACANT*
State Child Welfare Foster Care Rep- *Toni Buxton (2014)*	State Rep Responsible for Related Services- *Mark Martin* (2012)	Rep of vocational, community, or business providing transition- *Libby Murphy* (2015)

(year) represents the year the member joined the panel

Interview Process

- Applications must be posted on LDOE website three months before term ends or whenever vacancy is advertised.
- Applications will be accepted for a minimum of thirty days.
  - Advertise: March 7- April 11, 2017
  - Interview: April 24-28, 2017
  - Appoint: May 1-5, 2017

Unique Communication Needs Initiative

Stakeholder meetings (face-to-face and online) to secure input on building the capacity of Louisiana to support students with unique communication needs

- **Progress to date**
  - Draft definition of population
  - Draft state goal and objectives
  - Draft revision of *Tools for Developing Communication Plans*
  - General recommendations for resources and professional development(e.g., supports for parents, assessment and fidelity check tools)

- **Next steps**
  - Finalize definition and goals and objectives
  - Establish method(s) to track progress
  - Make adjustments in SER to support communication planning and tracking of progress
  - Build upon recommendations for resources and professional development