

Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway Guidance

A compilation of guidance and resources for school systems developing access to the Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway and other Grow Your Own strategies.



Contact believeandprepare@la.gov with any questions about the [Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway](#).

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Using This Guidance.....	2
Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway Overview.....	3
Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway Overview.....	3
Building a Network to Support Aspiring Educators.....	3
Roles and Responsibilities.....	5
Instruction, Coursework, and Curriculum.....	8
Recruiting and Retaining Aspiring Educators.....	10
Pre-Educator Pathway General Recruitment Strategies.....	10
Pre-Educator Pathway Year-At-A-Glance.....	13
Supporting Aspiring Educators Through Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway Transitions.....	14
Closing.....	16
Appendix.....	17
Budgeting for the Pre-Educator Pathway.....	17
Planning for Micro-credentials in Coursework.....	18
Example Student Recruitment Strategies.....	18
Community Involvement in the Pre-Educator Pathway.....	20
Service Learning Opportunities for Aspiring Educators.....	21

Using This Guidance

This guide is an accumulation of resources intended to guide and assist Louisiana school systems in the development and expansion of their Grow Your Own strategies through the Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway. The guide is not exhaustive and only aims to serve as a centralized hub for effective strategies and resources for developing Pre-Educator coursework and experiences in K-12 schools or systems.

- The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) does offer an open-sourced curriculum for Louisiana schools made by Louisiana educators. *Aspiring Educators: Shaping Louisiana’s Future* can be found on the [Professional Learning Platform](#).
- For specific questions about accessing and using additional curriculum resources, the LDOE recommends reaching out directly to the curriculum providers.

Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway Overview

In 2019, the [Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway](#) was approved as a K-16 pathway. State industry-based credentials were approved in Fall 2020.

The Pre-Educator Pathway provides a K-16/pre-education program for both TOPS University and TOPS Tech diploma-seeking high school students who demonstrate interest in a career in the field of education.

The ultimate mission of this pathway is to cultivate highly-skilled educators by guiding young people on a path to becoming accomplished teachers, beginning in high school and extending through college and into the profession. The blended curriculum provides strong foundational academic knowledge and skills and education-focused coursework that builds an understanding of all learners and the learning environment.

The pathway grows opportunities and resources so aspiring educators are able to see an attainable future career as a Louisiana educator. The Pathway is a Grow Your Own strategy grounded in the following beliefs and ideas:

- The next generation of Louisiana’s educational leaders is currently sitting in the desks of our middle and high schools.
- Strategically expanding access to the teaching profession will benefit overall teacher retention and quality.

The Pathway aims to develop an avenue into the teaching profession for students with the following dispositions, interests, and characteristics.

- Open-minded
- Compassionate
- Respectful
- Considerate of all learners
- Service-oriented
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Desire to serve children and the community through improving outcomes for all children
- Desire to teach children to be responsible, empathetic, and caring citizens
- Passionate about a certain content area
- Effective communication skills in both speaking and listening
- Enjoys collaborative activities
- Interested in any of the service professions, such as ministry, law enforcement, health services, counseling

Building a Network to Support Aspiring Educators

Aspiring educators and Grow Your Own programs need strong collaborative networks to ensure success and sustainability. Each stakeholder group within a Grow Your Own network contributes critical support.

School Teams

- The work of Pre-Educator Pathway *teacher leaders* is multi-faceted and integral for supporting the growth of aspiring educators through the development of meaningful lessons, facilitation of field experiences, and advising for student organization activities.

- *School counselors* support Grow Your Own programs by helping to identify students for enrollment in coursework, tracking student progress in the Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway, and providing transition support for students exploring post-secondary programs leading to careers in education.
- The *school administration and Instructional Leadership Team (ILT)* sets the tone for a Grow Your Own program by providing a positive environment for aspiring educator development, ensuring teacher leader access to resources and other support, advocating for Grow Your Own program support with school system and community leaders, and facilitating formalized post-secondary partnerships that promote matriculation into educator preparation programs.

School System Teams

- *Career and Technical Education (CTE)* supervisors play an important role in Grow Your Own program sustainability through locating funding streams that can be used for program resources (e.g., dual enrollment fees, field experiences, travel). CTE supervisors also assist in interpreting state department policies for Grow Your Own program implementation, processing of Grow Your Own and Pre-Educator Pathway program paperwork, and student access to Grow Your Own coursework and organization activities.
- *Human Resource/Talent Staff* members help to support Grow Your Own programs by making explicit connections between aspiring educator development and fulfillment of system workforce needs through mentoring, employment incentives for program participants and completers, and post-secondary collaboration.
- System *superintendents*, similar to school administration teams, advocate for the mission of Grow Your Own programs through collaboration with community leaders, funders, policy makers, and the public.
- School system teams support and encourage participation in opportunities at the local, regional, state, and national levels, including the Louisiana Aspiring Educators Summer Academy.

Post-Secondary Partners

- School and system teams work with post-secondary partners to develop agreements for prior learning credits (e.g., dual enrollment and dual credit), scholarships, and transition support for high school Grow Your Own completers.
- Many *community and technical colleges* offer associate degrees in education fields that can provide a foundation for education paraprofessionals, childcare teachers, and workers.
- University *teacher preparation programs* can help Grow Your Own completers to achieve teacher certification in fields ranging from early childhood through secondary education, and some programs have transfer agreements with community and technical colleges for associate degree completers wishing to pursue a bachelor's degree and teacher certification. Post-secondary partners can also participate in joint programming with high school Grow Your Own programs for field experiences, service learning, and organization activities.

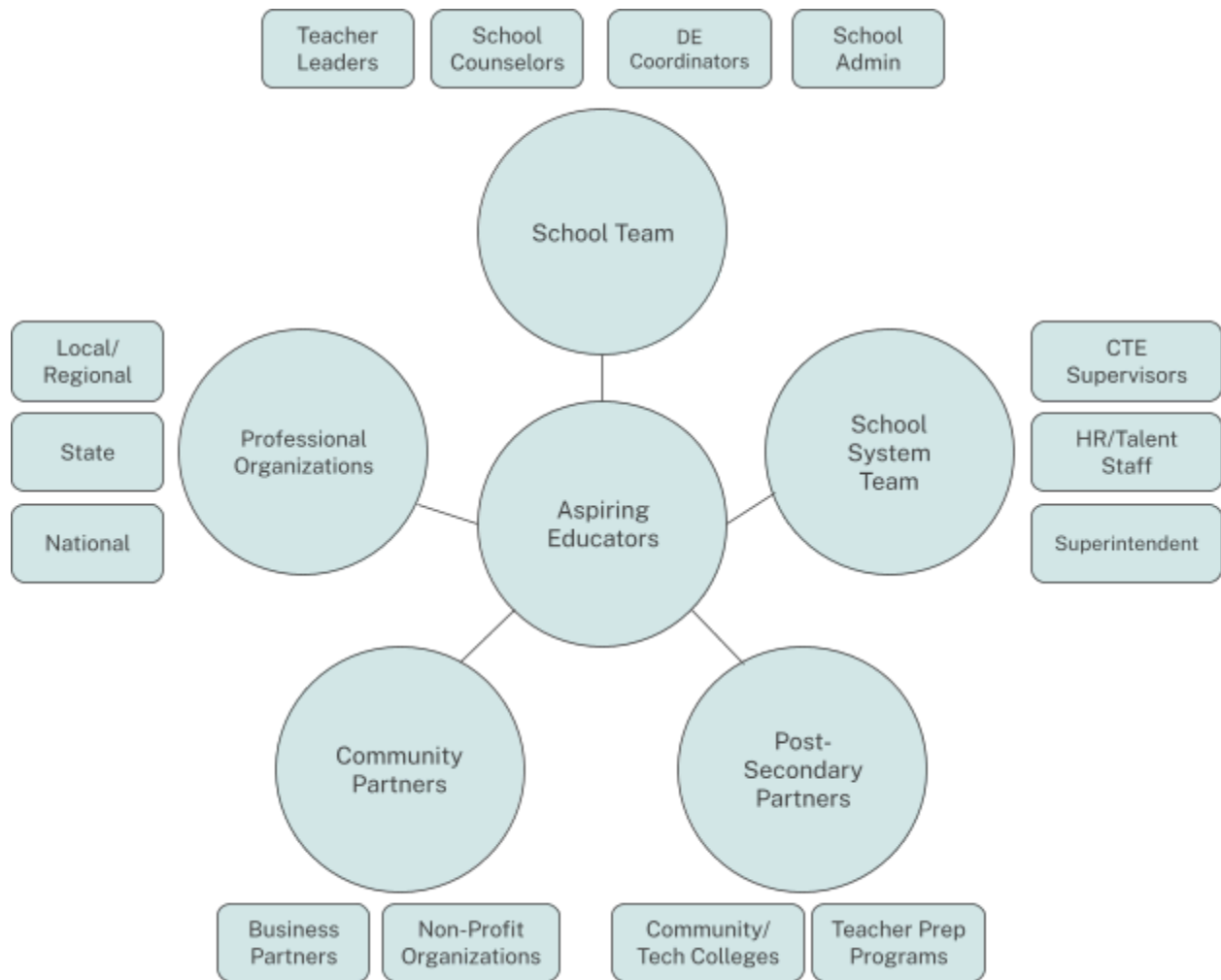
Community Partners

The mission and sustainability of Grow Your Own programs can be enhanced with support from a variety of community partners.

- Business leaders can support Grow Your Own programs through funding and resources for organizational activities, scholarships, and coursework.
- Non-profit organizations, including civic groups, service agencies, and governmental agencies, can support the work for Grow Your Own programs through joint programming, service learning, and mentoring experiences.
- Local, state, and national professional organizations can support the mission of Grow Your Own programs.

Roles and Responsibilities

As a Grow Your Own initiative, the Pre-Educator Pathway's effectiveness is dependent on a supportive school community. Each member of the school system has an important role to play in supporting aspiring teachers and their future colleagues.



Aspiring Educators

- Participate in an established club, class, or organization focused on the professional learning of future educators.
- Participate, where possible, in the Aspiring Educator Summer Academy.
- Pursue post-secondary pathways that lead to careers in the field of education.

Teachers/Coaches/Paraprofessionals

- Encourage aspiring teachers through one-on-one conversations about what they are learning through the Pre-Educator Pathway.
- Serve as a positive role model for students who are aspiring to be educators.
- Host aspiring teachers as observers and inform the Teacher Leader about special activities in class that the aspiring teachers may enjoy.
- Notify the Teacher Leader about availability to chaperone a field experience.

- Promote the Pre-Educator Pathway in the school and community by supporting informational meetings, sharing social media posts, and providing information through word of mouth.
- Express interest in being a future Teacher Leader, let the administrator and/or system personnel know to begin training.

Teacher Leaders

- Create and implement structures to ensure students earn the Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway Distinction.
- Serve as the teacher of record for *Learning Communities* and/or *Foundations of Education* courses.
- Lead campus recruitment efforts.
- Review and provide feedback on the curriculum to the School System Lead.
- Participate in ongoing professional learning focused on teacher preparation strategies.
- Exhibit professionalism and effective instructional methods for aspiring educators.

School Counselors

- Work closely with school system personnel to develop an appropriate course progression for the school to support the Pre-Educator Pathway.
- Work closely with the administrator to develop a master schedule that maximizes aspiring teachers' ability to take the courses for the Pre-Educator Pathway.
- Promote the Pre-Educator Pathway to students and parents, and collaborate with the Teacher Leader to create an informational handout for distribution, which can be distributed with scheduling materials.
- Contact the Teacher Leader and offer to be a guest speaker and/or chaperone for a field experience.

Dual Enrollment Coordinators

- Facilitate the process of credentialing for the campus, courses, and teacher leaders for the pre-educators pathway coursework with the post-secondary partner.
- Work with teacher leaders, post-secondary partners, and prospective dual enrollment students during their application and enrollment process for Pre-Educator Pathway courses offered for dual enrollment.

School Administrators

- Provide the Teacher Leader with appropriate training and planning time. It is recommended that Teacher Leaders:
 - Receive training with a university partner;
 - Are provided with a stipend for the additional work required to establish and maintain an effective program; and
 - Are provided with a supplementary planning period to organize field experiences, supervise observation experiences, and coordinate with school and community leaders.
- Build a relationship with aspiring teachers by:
 - Joining them on field experiences, such as service projects and school tours;
 - Speaking to the class about personal experiences as an educator; and
 - Coordinating field experiences and/or guest speakers in collaboration with the Teacher Leader. Administrators have a wide network of educator connections that can enrich the experience for aspiring teachers.

School System Leads

- Develop system-wide professional learning opportunities for aspiring educators and teacher leaders.
- Provide updates to school leadership, counselors, and CTE Coordinators about Pre-Educator Pathway/Grow Your Own.
- Collaborate with CTE Coordinators to create student support networks through important

experiences and transition points in the program (e.g., field experiences, transition into post-secondary programs).

- Participate in ongoing professional learning focused on teacher preparation strategies.
- Collaborate with university Pre-Educator Pathway Coordinators to align school-level system initiatives with expectations of Institutions of Higher Education.
- Support teacher leaders in developing and executing recruitment strategies.

Career and Technical Education Coordinator/Jumpstart Coordinator/System Teacher Leader

- Support sustainability for Grow Your Own programs by ensuring funding for coursework and organization activities, facilitating teacher assignments and incentives, facilitating contractual requirements for micro-credentialing access, and managing pathway certification with the LDOE.
- Participate in state collaboration networks for Grow Your Own programs, including Pre-Educator Pathway webinars, annual Teacher Leader Summit, and post-secondary partner summits.

Human Resources Staff

- Support school teams by advocating for course assignments and incentives to be awarded to the most qualified teacher leaders for Pre-Educator Pathway courses.
- Support the nature of Grow Your Own programs by incentivizing and celebrating the pursuit of a career in the field of education and returning to the school system for employment. This could include hosting teacher preparation signing days for seniors, sign-on bonuses for program completers, and other employment opportunities for program participants and completers (e.g., summer tutors, paraprofessionals, substitute teachers).

Superintendents

- Support system and school teams for Grow Your Own initiatives by advocating and serving as a liaison with community leaders, policymakers who influence the program through policy and funding (local, state, and federal), media outlets, parents, and students.
- Interact with aspiring educators to encourage a commitment to the community through a career in education or in adjacent roles that can positively impact schools and the community. Interactions may include serving as a guest speaker, guiding a tour of the school board, or hosting aspiring educators at a school board meeting.

University Pre-Educator Pathway Coordinators

- Establish and maintain relationships with regional K-12 systems.
- Create and maintain opportunities for aspiring teachers to visit and learn more about campus teacher preparation programs.
- Collaborate with school system leaders to develop professional development opportunities for teacher leaders.

Community Partners

- Support student travel to events, classroom materials, or scholarships.
- Elevate the visibility of the aspiring educator program through media, events, or local board engagement.
- Help students envision themselves as future educators rooted in and supported by their communities.

Instruction, Coursework, and Curriculum

Selecting Pre-Educator Pathway Teacher Leaders

Selecting a qualified, enthusiastic Teacher Leader will be an essential part of establishing a strong Pre-Educator Pathway program. The individual will serve as the school-based advocate for the program and will play a critical role in developing future educators for the school system.

Job Description:

- **Instructor of High School Coursework:** Grow Your Own Teacher Leaders will be instructors of education-oriented high school coursework for aspiring educators. Courses may include: *Learning Communities* and *Foundations of Education* from the [Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway](#).
- **Instructor of Post-Secondary Dual Enrollment Coursework:** Grow Your Own Teacher Leaders are encouraged to go through the process of credentialing as an instructor for dual enrollment coursework so that students can earn postsecondary credit for completion of Grow Your Own courses. Serving in this role is dependent upon the formation of formal agreements with post-secondary partners and is subject to approval from the LDOE and the Louisiana Board of Regents.
- **Field Experience Facilitator:** Grow Your Own Teacher Leaders will facilitate a variety of course-embedded field experiences for aspiring educators, including observations, guest speakers, panel discussions, roundtables, field trips, and assisted teaching experiences. Some of these field experiences may be linked to [micro-credentials](#), which are associated with credentialing processes for the [Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway](#) and [Louisiana Workforce Investment Council IBC State Focus List](#).
- **Organization Advisor:** Grow Your Own Teacher Leaders are encouraged to supplement coursework and field experiences with organization activities that include competitions and conference attendance to help aspiring educators build their professional networks. Educators Rising is a national initiative that includes a Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) offering [local](#), regional, [state](#), and [national](#) chapters and activities.

Teacher Leader Dispositions

Although this list is not exhaustive, and Teacher Leaders may not demonstrate all these qualities, these are qualities to look for:

- Open-minded
- Compassionate
- Respectful
- Service-oriented
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Desire to serve children and the community through improving outcomes for all children
- Desire to teach children to be responsible, empathetic, and caring citizens
- Passionate about a certain content area
- Effective communication skills in both speaking and listening
- Enjoys collaborative activities
- Understands and may represent various stakeholders within the community and profession
- Exhibits professionalism and effective methods for instruction

Minimum Teacher Leader Requirements for Dual Enrollment Coursework	Suggested Teacher Leader Requirements for Courses Completed for Prior Learning Credit
The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges(SACSCOC) credentialing with a minimum Master’s Degree in an education-related program of study	Minimum 3 years of teaching experience or a Master’s Degree in an education-related program of study

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Coursework

<p>Course 1: Learning Communities (LDOE Course Code 100677)</p> <p>Course 2: Foundations of Education (LDOE Course Code 100678 - BOR DE Common Course Code CEDU 1013)</p>

<p>Dual Enrollment (DE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MOU with a post-secondary partner institution ● Student eligibility for DE ● Cost determined by post-secondary partner ● Letter grade credit on post-secondary transcript upon completion of course(s) 	<p>Prior Learning Credit (PLC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MOU with a Post-secondary Partner Institution ● School cost are based on the completion of micro-credentials ● Credit Only (CR) on postsecondary transcript upon student full-time enrollment at the partnership institution and proof of required documents (e.g., high school transcript, passing score on approved micro-credential, observation documentation)
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<p>Additional Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mixed courses with both Dual Enrollment and Prior Learning Credit student enrollment. This still requires approval and credentialing by the post-secondary partner institution.

Micro-credentials

<p>General Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Digital Promise offers micro-credentials through collaboration with Educators Rising. Students will submit at least one portfolio of work per course to complete micro-credential requirements. ● Students will submit the micro-credential portfolio of work for each course to Digital Promise.
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<p style="text-align: center;">Learning Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Recommended micro-credential:</i> Effective Classroom Leadership 	<p style="text-align: center;">Foundations of Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Recommended micro-credential:</i> Collaboration ● <i>Alternative micro-credentials:</i> Learner Engagement or Formative Assessment
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Curriculum

The LDOE recommends that school systems use the open-source curriculum [Aspiring Educators: Shaping Louisiana’s Future](#) to support Pre-Educator Pathway requirements and goals. While school systems may choose to adopt or supplement with other aligned curricula, the LDOE-developed resource is available statewide and designed to reflect Louisiana’s vision for cultivating future educators.

Field Experiences

School systems should design high-quality experiences that allow aspiring educators to deepen their knowledge and develop essential skills. The [Aspiring Educators: Shaping Louisiana’s Future](#) curriculum includes embedded, high-quality field experiences that support this goal. These experiences should be relevant to teaching in a 21st-century classroom and reflect the unique context of the school system. When planning, consider what experiences will best prepare aspiring educators to advance along their pathway.

School systems should work with post-secondary partner institution(s) to determine the minimum number of hours and the method for documenting field experiences required per course. Documentation may be in

a digital space that can be accessed by the post-secondary partner institution (e.g., Google Drive, Dropbox).

When possible, clinical experiences should be planned at the system level to assist in balancing workload for coursework and extracurricular organization.

Suggested Experiences for Aspiring Educators

- Observations
 - Elementary (PK-5)
 - Middle (6-8)
 - High School (9-12)
 - Alternative (special education, adapted physical education, alternative school)
 - Observations for micro-credentials
- Interviews
- Panel discussions
- Assisting roles in a classroom
- Service learning

Extracurricular Organization

- **Meetings**
 - Workshop format
 - Panel format
 - School-based
 - School system-based
 - Regional
 - State-wide
 - Service learning
- **Conferences**
 - Regional, State, and National
 - Campus Visit Days
 - Aspiring Educator Summer Academy
- **Student Competitions**
 - Regional, State, National opportunities
 - Scholarships
 - Middle, high school, and collegiate divisions
 - Students must [join at the national level](#) to be eligible for state and national competitions.

Recruiting and Retaining Aspiring Educators

Pre-Educator Pathway General Recruitment Strategies

General Tips:

- Recruiting may be difficult if announced as the “Teacher Class” or “Future Teachers Club” as students already have set (and often negative) outlooks on the teaching profession. Instead, try announcing like:
 - “Are you interested in making a positive impact in our community? Do you see yourself in a career making a lasting impact on people and helping to improve lives for future generations? If so, join us at _____ to discuss your place in an exciting new class/club we are offering”.
- Student ambassadors can be the greatest recruiters for the program.

- Ensure there is an enthusiastic and effective teacher or staff member leading the program.
- Enlist administrators, counselors, and other faculty members to promote the program.
- Recruitment should be ongoing throughout the school year, so the program is well-known to the students.
- The program's activities should be promoted throughout the school year to draw students' interest.
- Consider starting a club until the school can support a class period.
- Beginning with a small group of energized students can help to ensure a high-quality foundation for a sustainable program.

Targeted/Specific Recruitment

- Work with the school's most "in touch" teachers and other school leaders to identify students who have already **displayed critical skills needed for great teachers**, such as:
 - Growth mindset
 - Empathy
 - Curiosity
 - Leadership
 - Collaboration skills
 - Creativity
 - Problem Solving
 - Supportive of others
 - Challenges thinking
 - Open to learning about all learners
 - Seeks out or responds well to coaching/constructive feedback
 - Good communication skills
 - Good listening skills
- **Promising Practice from Monroe City Schools:** Teachers and school administrators are asked to nominate students who exhibit these characteristics. The Pre-Educator Pathway teacher visits English II classes just before master scheduling to speak about the program and to answer questions. Students are invited to an information session led by school administrators, guidance counselors, and the Pre-Educator Pathway teacher to talk more about the course options and to determine scheduling options.
- Purposely seek out 1 or 2 students who will serve as great ambassadors or "influencers" for the course/club, even if they are not 100% likely to become educators. They will still become more informed taxpayers with a healthy respect for teaching, while building interest for others to follow suit.
- Think outside the box when recruiting students to the program. 21st-century teachers teaching in 21st-century classrooms may not be students with perfect 4.0 grade point averages. Use the results of the ACT and other interest inventory results to determine interest in service professions.
- Look again at students who may have been challenging in the past. Their "rambunctious" spirits as teenagers might prime them perfectly for being powerhouse change makers in their own classrooms.
- The most important factor in student recruitment is having adults in the building whom they respect and trust to invite them to explore education as a profession. This can be the instructor teaching the educator pathway course, but can also be a teacher of a different course, an extracurricular activity sponsor or coach, a school counselor, or any other adult that the student interacts with regularly. It is crucial to both help students see why their talents align with the profession and also serve as a counterexample to the prevailing narrative of education as a thankless job.

Methods of Identification

- **Middle School Clubs:** School systems with aspiring teacher middle school clubs should align with high school programs, so students can efficiently schedule courses for the Pre-Educator Pathway. High school Pre-Educator Teacher Leaders should actively build relationships with these students to strengthen the pipeline from middle school to high school.
- **Teacher Referrals:** Pre-Educator Teacher Leaders should solicit teacher referrals from colleagues to identify potential aspiring teachers. Using a list of characteristics and/or teacher questionnaires, classroom teachers can recommend students to Teacher Leaders. Then, Teacher Leaders can contact those students through school email and/or regular mail to invite them to an informational meeting targeted at recruitment to the program.
- **Open House/Informational Meeting:** Host an informational meeting for students, parents, teachers, and community members who are interested in joining and/or supporting the program. Have scheduling materials available for distribution at the event and a school counselor who can assist with scheduling and/or pathway questions.

Tips for Interest Meetings

- Consider having more than one meeting that accommodates various interests and schedules (e.g., different lunch shifts, before/after school) or schedule one-on-one meetings with students who have been identified as having an interest or great potential for the course/club.
- Keep it short and sweet but POWERFUL.
- Invite the most influential teachers to lead the class/club and use them as the inspiration leaders in the interest meeting.
- After the first cohort, invite students who have taken the class or have been in the club to help with recruitment and give their testimonials for the impact of the program.
- Mention BIG selling points such as dual credit, classroom observations, scholarships, internships, and unique experiences (e.g., school board meetings, conferences, national convention)
- Remember what **teenagers** want to hear.

Select Students for Official Enrollment/Membership

- Make membership somewhat exclusive, combating the idea that “anybody can teach.”
- Make sure administrators and guidance counselors understand and support the mission of this program and are strategic in scheduling the course at the best time to accommodate the students who are most interested and qualified for the course.
- Start small with 5-10 students to make experiences such as observations, field trips, conference attendance, and micro-credential/signature assessments manageable.
- Make sure that school leaders and instructors of record are excited and committed to the program and show this excitement to newly selected students. Do something fun and personal to welcome students into the program. Make sure it is something special and that will get positive interest from other students and from the community. Celebrate this new adventure!

Pre-Educator Pathway Year-At-A-Glance

Timeframe	Events/Activities
March – May	<p>Pre-Work Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Master scheduling of coursework ● Visioning with guidance, admin, and teachers ● Student recruitment activities (school-wide, small group, individual) <p>End-of-Year Organization Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conference registration (state and/or national) ● Competition preparation (state and/or national) ● Regional and state conferences and competitions ● Scholarship applications submitted - National scholarship information can be found on Educatorsrising.org. Check with state and local partnerships for additional scholarship opportunities. <p>End-of-Year Coursework Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● End-of-year research surveys, interviews, and focus groups with stakeholders (students, instructors, admin, post-secondary partners) ● Coursework portfolio compilation (Student) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Micro-credential completion (submit proof of passing scores to post-secondary partner institution) ○ Documentation of field experiences (20 hours per course) ● Teacher Program Signing Day (by school or system) ● Final reports submitted to post-secondary partner institution (Instructor) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Class rosters with final grades ○ Verification of micro-credential completion ○ End-of-year feedback for continuous improvement
June – July	<p>Organization Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● National conference and competitions <p>Coursework Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Post-secondary Partner/School System MOU updates and addendum revisions ● Annual DE verification with post-secondary partner (DE only) ● Curriculum planning/revisions ● LDOE training for instructors and Pre-Educator Pathway partners ● Annual training for DC/DE instructors and partners
August – September	<p>Organization Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Back-to-school kick-off events (officer elections, welcome receptions, Principal/Superintendent keynotes, Teacher of the Year welcome) ● Student annual dues (\$15 paid to Educators Rising) <p>Coursework Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verification of student enrollment in coursework (DE/DC) ● Preparation for field experiences (panel speakers, observations, interviews)

Timeframe	Events/Activities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Backward design intro of course-based micro-credential requirements and DE/DC requirements for post-secondary credit ● Set up professional binders (hard copy or digital) for students to keep up with coursework documentation ● Overview of: Aspiring Educators: Shaping Louisiana's Future <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning Communities ○ Foundations of Education
October – December	<p>Organization Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workshops with guest speakers ● Service learning projects ● Regional events and campus visits <p>Coursework Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Schedule and prepare students for field experience activities (panels, observations, interviews) ● Revisit requirements for micro-credentials - students should complete the first essays toward micro-credentials by midterm ● Update student professional binders
January – February	<p>Organization Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Workshops with guest speakers ● Regional events and campus visits ● Preparation for regional/state competitions <p>Coursework Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Field experience activities (panels, observations, interviews) ● Revisit requirements for micro-credentials and conduct observations and/or mini-teaching ● Update professional binders

Supporting Aspiring Educators Through Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway Transitions

Acceptance and Onboarding into Pre-Educator Pathway and Coursework

- School leaders and the pre-educator instructor of record should work as a team to identify, recruit, and onboard students in the year prior to enrollment in coursework.
- At the beginning of the year for enrollment in coursework, school and system leaders should celebrate aspiring educators and previous experiences (field experiences, field trips, competitions, conferences, scholarship opportunities).
- As the program continues from year to year, current students can play an active role in recruiting and onboarding the next cohorts of aspiring educators.

Key Activities and Experiences for Year 1 and Year 2

- **Field Experiences:** virtual and in-person observations, assisting in classrooms.
- **Guest speakers:** individual and panel discussions aimed at helping aspiring educators to think critically about current issues in education and to make real-world connections to coursework
- **Field trips:** visits to a variety of educational settings, including classrooms and other educational facilities (media center, school board office, school warehouses, college campuses).
- **Conferences and competitions:** regional, state, and national.

- **Submission of at least one micro-credential:** teachers should allocate ample time for preparing essays, conducting observations, and editing prior to submission, as well as for any needed resubmissions before the end of the school year. Additionally, teachers should work with school and system leaders to map out logistics for students to access, pay, and submit micro-credentials online.

Example Regional Clinical Experience Day from Rapides Parish

Today's Agenda: SEPTEMBER 24

- 9:00 a.m.-9:20 a.m.: Mr. Powell, Superintendent of Schools (Objective 1)
- 9:20 a.m.- 9:50 a.m.: Mr. Stevison, Mrs. Stevison, Mrs. Tarver; Curriculum Specialists (being a teacher 101)
- 9:50 a.m.-10:10 a.m.: Mrs. Nichols; Grant Writer (Objective 2)
- 10:10 a.m.-10:30 a.m.: Ms. Williams; Payroll (Objective 3)
- 10:30 a.m.- 11:00 a.m.: Mrs. Belvin, Ms. McDowell; Human Resources (Objective 4)

Location: Rapides Parish School Board

Objectives

- 1. Describe the policies, processes, and politics that drive operations of and decision-making for a school district.
- 2. Conduct research to understand the leadership, departments and roles, and funding sources and allocation for the local school district.
- 3. Conduct research to understand the salary and benefits offered to teachers in the local school district.
- 4. Identify and explain key policies for teachers and students within the local school district.

Schools

- Buckeye High School: Mrs. Sasser
- Peabody Magnet High School: Ms. Mayeux
- Pineville High School: Mrs. Diaz
- Tioga High School: Mrs. Smith

Transition from Year 1 to Year 2 Coursework

- As Year 1 students progress in coursework and participate in field experiences, provide frequent and meaningful opportunities for them to reflect and discuss how they can use these experiences to frame their consideration of education as a profession. Students should take time to celebrate and deeply reflect upon the submission of the micro-credential.
- Near the end of Year 1, conduct surveys and one-on-one sessions with students to gauge their interest in teaching and to pursue Year 2 coursework. Submit a list of Year 2 students to school leaders to ensure scheduling into Year 2 coursework.
- The Pre-Educator Pathway also includes a Career Development Fund ([CDF-qualifying internship](#)) for interested students.

Transition from High School Pre-Educator Pathway to Post-Secondary Pathways

- As students in various stages of the Pre-Educator Pathway approach graduation, help them to explore post-secondary options toward careers in education. Considerations in this process could include:
 - Explore educator preparation program (EPP) options (e.g., programs of study, cost of attendance, financial aid and scholarship opportunities, collegiate chapters of Educators Rising). This can include online research and/or guest speakers from EPPs.
 - Help students to envision their post-secondary pathways by comparing their current academic credentials to admissions standards (e.g., GPA, ACT, dual enrollment credits, prior learning credits). Students may also explore community college pathways that can help them bridge their acceptance into an EPP.

- Plan or help facilitate campus visits for students (e.g., group tours, individual tours, recruitment events).
- Ask “on fire” teachers and school leaders to share about their journeys toward teacher certification and careers in education. Be sure to highlight traditional and non-traditional careers in education.
- Celebrate students who choose to pursue a post-secondary pathway toward teacher certification. Options may include:
 - An education signing day with participation of EPPs, in which students will be enrolling.
 - Scholarship recognition for students receiving scholarships in their field of education.
 - System-wide celebration for program completers with a Grow Your Own commitment from system leaders.

Closing

Louisiana believes educators are valued professionals and the backbones of our school communities. Building access to the teaching profession through the Pre-Educator Pathway is an investment in our school systems and can play a significant role in developing and retaining a highly effective workforce. The Pathway serves to establish collaborative partnerships between Louisiana Teacher Preparation Programs, K-12 School Systems, and Aspiring Educators to ensure that future educators have a clearly designed route to teaching in a Louisiana classroom.

The LDOE would like to thank Dr. Lori Benoit (McNeese State University) and Dr. Amy Weems (University of Louisiana at Monroe) for their development of this guidance, and Calcasieu, Lafayette, and Rapides Parish Schools for their contributions.

Additional resources can be found in the [Pre-Educator Pathway Resource Library](#). Contact believeandprepare@la.gov with questions.

Appendix

Budgeting for the Pre-Educator Pathway

This list of potential expenses is intended to guide systems and schools as they implement the Pre-Educator Pathway. It is not comprehensive, nor must each item be implemented to support an effective program. Systems and schools should implement the Pre-Educator Pathway in a method that is appropriate to their programming and budget needs.

1. **Curriculum:** The Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway does not require the use of a specific curriculum. However, as a no-cost option that aligns with the pathway's requirements, the LDOE offers an open-source curriculum: [Aspiring Educators: Shaping Louisiana's Future](#).
2. **Micro-credentials:** Micro-credentials associated with the Pre-Educator Pathway are available through [Digital Promise](#). Systems should align their micro-credential credentialing with university partners. Refer to the [Micro-credentials Overview](#) for more information.
3. **Travel:** While not required for program implementation, these opportunities play a valuable role in supporting strong and effective Pre-Educator Pathway programs.
 - a. **Student Conferences and Events:** Students may participate in and/or compete at regional, state, and national Educators Rising conferences. Participation can enhance students' leadership skills, deepen their interest in the education profession, and provide meaningful networking experiences.
 - i. **Regional Conferences:** Regional events are typically held in January or February. To learn more about conferences in your area, contact your local university partners.
 - ii. **State Conference:** The Louisiana State Educators Rising Conference is usually held in early to mid-March. For details, email: edrisingla@gmail.com.
 - iii. **National Conference:** Information about the national conference, including dates, location, and competition guidelines, can be found on the [Educators Rising website](#).
 - b. **Conference Costs:** Expenses vary by event and may include registration fees, lodging, meals, and transportation. It is recommended that school systems begin by participating in regional events and develop fundraising plans to support attendance at state and national conferences as budgets allow.
 - c. **Aspiring Educator Summer Academy:** Held annually in mid-July, the Aspiring Educator Summer Academy is hosted at a different location each year. This no-cost opportunity is available to up to 100 students statewide. Interested students must submit an application to be considered for participation.
 - d. **Field Experiences:**
 - i. Effective programs provide students with a range of field experiences, including volunteering at schools or community education events, touring system facilities, and collaborating with university and system partners for special training and/or experiences.
 - ii. Systems with more than one school participating in the program can effectively and economically support field experiences by pooling resources to support all schools through system-organized field experiences. For example, if a system has three schools participating in the pathway, rather than having each school organize its own tour of system offices, the system may coordinate a single tour to accommodate three schools simultaneously. Similarly, instead of each school arranging separate transportation to a regional conference, the system could provide a single mode of transportation to serve all three schools.
4. **Professional Learning:** Systems should partner with universities to align coursework and professional learning to support the Pre-Educator Pathway. Although much of this is provided at no cost by the universities, it is recommended that teachers be reimbursed for travel and provided with stipends.

5. Promotion and Recognition:

- a. Advertising and promotion for the program may include free sources, such as social media and newspaper articles, as well as options that may require fees, such as newspaper advertising, student and/or teacher yard signs.
- b. Effective programs often recognize students during awards ceremonies with graduation cords, medallions, and/or certificates.

Planning for Micro-credentials in Coursework

Accessing Micro-credentials

- [Digital Promise](#): Micro-credentials are administered through Digital Promise. Align with university partners to determine which micro-credentials are accepted at their university.

Micro-credential Purchasing Guidelines

Each system should determine in advance the method of payment and clearly relay that to the administrators and Teacher Leaders. Here are some options:

- School Credit Card
 - Students can complete all parts of the micro-credential to prepare it for submission. Then, a school official who is authorized to use the school's credit card can visit the class to enter the payment information and allow students to submit.
- System Voucher
 - Systems can provide purchase order and/or credit card information directly to Digital Promise. Then, Digital Promise can issue a system-specific voucher code that students can enter at the time of submission and payment.
- Student Purchase
 - Some systems may require students to pay for the micro-credential themselves. Additionally, some systems may reimburse students for passing micro-credentials. In this case, students will be required to enter their own credit card information. If reimbursements are issued, systems may decide to write checks directly to students.

Managing Student Data

- Log-in Information
 - Students should use personal emails instead of school-issued emails because many systems have firewalls that do not allow access to Digital Promise.
- Documentation
 - Students should save their portfolio submission and micro-credential badge digitally and print a hard copy.
 - Both Teacher Leaders and students should keep the digital and printed documentation.
 - Students should submit their micro-credentials to university partners soon after they earn them, even if they decide to attend another university in the future.

Example Student Recruitment Strategies

Posters & Flyers

Have current Pre-Educator Pathway design promotional posters and flyers posted in high-traffic areas on campus.

Example interest fliers from St. Bernard Parish



Tabling Events

With administrator approval, allow students to design and display a tri-board (or several tri-boards) about their experience in the Pre-Educator Pathway course. They can display it on a table in a high-traffic area at lunch or before school and engage passing students in recruitment conversations. This could also be used for Open House events as well, so parents are informed about the course.

Social Media

Have students create a promotional video to run on the school and/or the school system's social media accounts. View a [sample](#) from one Louisiana high school.

Administrator and Counselor Blitz

Prepare a handout for counselors to share with students who are interested in the program. Make copies for them. Then, invite the administrators and counselors to a thirty-minute informational session after school. Walk them through the Pre-Educator Pathway, collaborate on how best to align coursework, and strategize on recruiting potential students during the scheduling sessions for the upcoming school year.

Colleague Referrals

Send an email or a letter explaining the Pre-Educator Pathway program and explain how they can help with recruitment. If they know of students who are interested in pursuing education and/or students who display strong teacher dispositions, have them share the students' names and contact information. Then, send the students an email and/or hand-written note personally inviting them to attend an informational meet-and-greet about the program.

Informational Meet-and-Greet

Host at least three thirty-minute informational meet-and-greet sessions where students review the Pre-Educator Pathway, learn about the course, and have opportunities to ask questions.

Pre-Educator Pathway Week

Host a Pre-Educator Pathway Week before students schedule classes for the next school year. Have a different event each day to promote the teaching profession and the class. Engage as many stakeholders as possible. Here are some ideas:

- **Thank-a-Teacher Day:** Make postcard-size copies with a template on it that allows students to personalize a brief thank-you note to their teachers. Pass them out as students arrive at school, and encourage them to complete them and give them to teachers.
- **Service Learning Project:** Sponsor an education-related donation and/or volunteer drive that ends during this week. Make the delivery and/or serve during this week. Some examples include: hosting a book drive for local elementary schools, collecting hygiene products to make kits for students in need, and coordinating a school supply drive for schools impacted by natural disasters.
- **Social Media Takeover:** Gain permission for one of the skilled Pre-Educator Pathway students to take over the school's social media account to highlight the school's faculty and staff.
- **Pre-Educator Pathway Promo:** Allow Pre-Educator Pathway students to make a commercial about their experiences in the course. Send it to as many news outlets as possible, including local news agencies, the system, and school social media.
- **Affirmation Campaign:** Have students design a school-wide campaign that includes sticky-note affirmations and random acts of kindness.

Community Involvement in the Pre-Educator Pathway

Reaching out to a wide range of stakeholders is essential to providing support for the program. Here are a few ideas:

Educational Partners

Develop relationships with local schools (public, charter, and private). The Teacher Leader will need help facilitating field experience, observations, and mentorships.

Develop a relationship with the local university's teacher preparation college. Many universities have Educators Rising Collegiate organizations that can provide college ambassadors to connect with students. Also, university personnel can provide professional learning to ensure the materials and practices are aligned with what students will need in college. They also provide support, assist with grants and other funding, and can build bridges to other resources and support.

Civic Clubs

Ask civic clubs if students can provide a brief presentation at one of their weekly luncheons or breakfasts. These leaders are typically well-connected and civic-minded, so this connection can lead to other connections. Also, they can provide funding in the form of scholarships or travel funding.

Non-profit Organizations

Try to connect with organizations that provide supplies and uniforms for students (e.g., literacy organizations, special needs supporters, high-needs students supporters). These entities can provide excellent guest speakers, field experiences, and volunteer/employment opportunities for the students.

Businesses and Industries

Many of these have initiatives to assist schools, so reach out specifically to those contacts. They can provide funding for travel and promotion, assist with materials for learning experiences, and provide authentic audiences when students have a performance or competition.

Retired Teachers

Reach out to these valuable resources as guest speakers, chaperones for field trips, volunteer co-teachers, and authentic audiences for performances or competitions.

School System Leaders

Keep in close contact with the program coordinator and other system decision makers. They are excellent guest speakers, can assist with field trips, assist with funding, and provide authentic audiences for performances or competitions. They can also ensure that students are provided with quality materials and experiences.

Policymakers

Invite local, state, and federal policymakers to visit with students to discuss policies, funding, and concerns about education issues. They can also discuss their roles in shaping education systems. These representatives could be local or state school board members, representatives, or senators.

Service Learning Opportunities for Aspiring Educators

Service learning is a great way to extend learning from coursework into field experiences that reinforce content knowledge and professional skills for aspiring educators. Resources and ideas are listed below.

Overview:

Service learning is an experiential learning pedagogy that moves students beyond the classroom to become active participants in their learning and develop civic knowledge and skills. Students who take service-learning courses work with local, national, and international non-profit and public organizations to deeply learn and practice course content by working on a real, community-identified need. Students learn the course material, get to work directly on an issue facing the community, and learn about their communities in the process.

For aspiring educators, education-focused service learning is recommended. Partner with local educator preparation programs (EPP) to conduct joint service learning projects with high school and collegiate members included.

Promising Practices:

Northwestern State University Literacy Empowerment Access Partnership (LEAP)

The Literacy Empowerment Access Partnership (LEAP) is a partnership between the Northwestern University (NU) Settlement House, Early Childhood Education, and the Child Language Lab from NU. This is a collaborative project between teachers, principals, researchers, and parents. LEAP's primary goal is to promote early literacy by: 1) creating the "I Can See Myself" library, a preschool lending library that has been stocked with affirming books so that children and caregivers feel represented in the books they read; 2) developing a Parent Fellowship Program where caregivers share what literacy means to them, identify the literacy practices that they already have at home, and address any questions or concerns on early literacy and bilingualism. Through these two components, the goal is to bridge early literacy practices between home and school for all children and families.

University of Louisiana Monroe (ULM) Take Flight Through Reading Project

In collaboration with area schools and the United Way of Northeast Louisiana, ULM provided a book, authored and illustrated by ULM staff, to over 2,000 area 3rd graders. The book's main character is the President, Dr. Ronald Berry, who tells the story about how education and the University of Louisiana Monroe changed his life. The book is intended to inspire hope in the belief that students can do and become whatever they set their minds to, as long as they continue to dream. Over 100 volunteers, including members of ULM Educators Rising Collegiate Chapter, helped read the book on the university's campus and in local classrooms. Printed on the first page of the book is a "2031 Centennial Scholarship" award, amounting to \$500.

Modes for Implementing Service Learning:

1. **Direct Engagement** engages students in person-to-person contact with those in need.

Examples:

- Cook/serve/deliver food for the homebound or homeless
- Read books to students in an elementary classroom
- Tutor, mentor, or coach youth

2. **Indirect Engagement** meets a clear need but has benefits to the larger community.

Examples:

- Collect supplies for a school in need
- Raise funds for children in need during the holidays
- Assist with an environmental project
- Participate in urban renewal projects such as mural or house painting
- Fundraise with direct interaction with a nonprofit beneficiary
- Create brochures, flyers, posters, or annual reports for a nonprofit organization

3. **Research Engagement** involves students collecting information for public welfare or interest. The research must be done with a direct connection to a community-based organization.

Examples:

- Work in a school or non-profit agency to meet a community need
- Conduct research to protect endangered species
- Conduct research for a community organization

4. **Advocacy Engagement** allows students to lend their voices, writing ability, and other talents toward an issue in the public interest.

Examples:

- Conduct information campaigns
- Draft legislation that helps or protects the community
- Lobby on behalf of a community issue
- Organize a nonpartisan letter-writing campaign for a social issue

Critical Components of Effective Service Learning

For service to have value and meaning and to build effective partnerships between students, faculty, and community members, five critical elements must be included in the design and direction of courses and community service programs.

1. **Community Voice/Student Voice:** Community and student voices are essential to build bridges, drive change, and solve pressing problems. Academic courses that include service and campus community service programs must ensure that the voice and needs of the community and students are included in the development of programs and service placements.
2. **Thoughtful Action:** Thoughtful action means that the service that is being provided is necessary and valuable to the community itself. Meaningful action benefits both the community and students in that both feel that the service makes a difference in a measurable way and is a productive use of time and resources. When service is not perceived as necessary and valuable, students and community members will quickly lose motivation for the service and the partnership.
3. **Orientation and Training:** Orientation and training are important first steps for any service experience. The students, faculty, and community members should be provided with information that will help them prepare for the experience. For example, community agencies or members working with students should receive information about the course, a list of contacts on the campus, an academic calendar, and information about any expectations regarding their participation in the training, supervision, and evaluation of students. Students should receive information about the community, the issue, agency, or community group they will be working with, as well as specific training for their service placement and expectations regarding their participation, supervision, and evaluation.
4. **Reflection:** Reflection is a crucial component of the service-learning experience and works as both a vehicle to process the experience and apply academic work. Students, faculty, and community members share reactions, stories, feelings, and facts about the service and the issues, which help to place the experience into a broader context.

5. **Evaluation/Continuous Improvement:** Evaluation measures the impact of the students' learning experience and the effectiveness of the service in the community. Students, faculty, and community partners should evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership and the service. Continuous improvement measures give direction for improvement, growth, and change.

Suggested Steps for Conducting Service Learning

1. **Pre-Reflection:** Have students brainstorm in writing the ways in which they can help their world or their local community.
2. **Research:** Guide students in techniques to help them search topics and potential partner organizations wisely and efficiently. Students should summarize their findings using embedded images, graphs, and other multimedia elements.
3. **Presentations:** Have students present their findings to the school, each other, and outside stakeholders to determine the best fit for a topic and partner organization. Once this partner organization is selected, reach out to them to determine their needs and schedule opportunities for them to interact with students, such as providing information about their organization and ways to implement a service project.
4. **Planning:** Work with students to plan and publicize the selected service project. Ensure that all students can contribute to the success of the project in creative ways that best fit their skills and personal resources.
5. **Implementation:** Clearly communicate and monitor student participation in various aspects of planning, publicizing, implementing, and closeout of the selected project.
6. **Reflection:** Ask students to think back on what they gained from journeying through this project. Have them reflect on the following:
 - a. What did you learn about the topic?
 - b. What did you learn about yourself?
 - c. How do you now think differently?

Assessment of Service Learning

Another element that tends to make service learning unique is that multiple stakeholders assess students.

1. **Community assessment:** Community partners can actively participate in evaluating students, offering feedback based on their engagement. They may also contribute to developing the evaluation rubric, ensuring the assessment reflects real-world expectations and community needs.
2. **Teacher assessment:** In addition to evaluating students on content knowledge, assess their proficiency in writing, graphing, researching, or speaking.
3. **Student assessment:** Students might conduct self-assessment as a form of reflection. They also may assist in developing the rubric that other stakeholders use to assess them.

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Sample Post-Secondary Partnership Agreement

This sample MOU addendum includes objectives and responsibilities for a system and a post-secondary partner. The programs included in this addendum are Educators Rising, Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway, and a 4-year teacher preparation program.

ADDENDUM TO MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Between

(Insert Name of Post-Secondary Partner Organization)
School of Education (Hereinafter [Insert Short Name])

and

(Insert School System) (Hereinafter School System Short Name)

This document constitutes an Addendum to the current MOU agreement between (Insert Short Name) and School System for implementation from (insert start date) to (insert end date).

1. Objectives

The objective of this Addendum is to describe the roles of responsibilities of each party relative to the implementation of Educators Rising and the Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway.

Pursuant to these initiatives, (Insert Short Name) will:

- a. Provide mandatory annual training for all instructors of record for Learning Communities Education and Foundations of Education coursework.
- b. Provide ongoing technical assistance for coursework, field experiences, competitions, micro-credentials, and assessments.
- c. Consult with system and school stakeholders to support recruitment, publicity, student transition needs, and continuous improvement protocols.
- d. Host and support field experiences and extra-curricular activities through (INSERT SHORT NAME) campus events, feedback sessions for competition preparation activities, networking for field experiences, etc.
- e. Serve as a liaison between school/system personnel and the (INSERT SHORT NAME) Office of Extending Learning for awarding of dual enrollment credits upon successful completion of applicable courses.
- f. Assist students in applying for dual credits for applicable courses upon enrollment at (INSERT SHORT NAME).

Pursuant to these initiatives, the System will:

- a. Offer the following courses in the schools listed below: (list schools and courses)
- b. Participate in mandatory annual training for instructors of record and designated administrators for courses listed above.
- c. Work with the (INSERT SHORT NAME) Office of Extended Learning for SACSCOC credentialing of applicable dual enrollment courses, high school sites, and instructors of record.
- d. Obtain access to the Educators Rising Virtual Academy curriculum or a mutually agreed-upon comparable curriculum for dual enrollment/dual credit coursework.
- e. Recruit and enroll eligible students in Pre-Educator Pathway coursework and the (INSERT SHORT NAME)/Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway.
- f. Participate in monthly check-ins offered by (INSERT SHORT NAME) and/or the Louisiana Leader network.

- g. Participate in (INSERT SHORT NAME) IRB-approved research studies related to Educators Rising and the Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway upon request.
- h. Provide support, resources, and access for students to submit applicable micro-credentials and other applicable pathway assessments required for dual enrollment/dual credit and completion of the Pre-Educator Pathway.
- i. Provide support for student transition from the Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway to postsecondary education and/or careers in the field of education.

All terms and provisions from the original MOU also apply to this Addendum.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Addendum on the ____ day of _____, _____.

(INSERT SHORT NAME):

School System:

(Insert Name, Title, and Department of (INSERT SHORT NAME) Signatory)

(Insert Name, Title, and Department of System Signatory)

Signature

Date

Signature

Date