

Act 833 of the 2014 Legislative Session

Act 833 of the 2014 Legislative Session provides for alternate pathways for certain students with disabilities to be promoted and graduate with a diploma. The new law increases the responsibilities of IEP teams and includes additional decision points and timelines for their work.

Act 833 Directives to the LDOE and BESE

The law requires BESE to amend the current IEP team regulations to align with the new responsibilities. BESE must also provide guidance to IEPs teams for establishing minimum score requirements, however, IEP teams are explicitly not required to use these materials. The Act directs the LDE, to the extent possible, to track the performance of students with disabilities affected by the law and address concerns identified throughout the monitoring process.

BESE and DOE Commitments

Act 833 has significant implications and impacts tens of thousands of Louisiana students and cannot be implemented successfully in a short period of time. Immediately after the new law became effective, the LDOE informed school districts of the new requirements and began to draft BESE regulations, in consultation with the advocacy community, to place the new requirements and the student eligibility criteria into policy. Since the passage of the policy at the August BESE meeting, the LDOE has been developing guidance for LEAs and IEP teams on how to implement the new rules using IEPs that set students and teachers up for success. The LDOE plans to release this guidance in late September, yet discussions with LEAs about successful implementation will continue throughout the school year. The timeline listed below provides steps BESE and the LDOE have taken thus far to implement Act 833, in addition to expected dates for forthcoming resources and conversations.

Prior to BESE adoption of policies

June 6	LDOE webinar with special education administrators about Act 833 and other special education issues
June 23	Bill signed into law
June 24	LDOE meeting with bill drafters, school system representatives, and other special education advocates to discuss implementation.
July 1	LDOE notified districts about Act 833 in district newsletter.
July 2	Received letter from USDOE regarding Act 833.
July 7	LDOE call with bill drafters, school system representatives, and other special education advocates to discuss implementation and USDOE questions.
July 7	Jamie Wong, Special Education Policy Advisor, joins LDOE staff
July 15	Meeting of special education practitioner work group to discuss Act 833 and giving students with disabilities greater access to Jump Start.
July 17	LDOE discussion of Act 833 at Developmental Disabilities Council.
July 24	Superintendents' Advisory Council; included discussion of Act 833.
August 1	Law went into effect. LDOE facilitated phone call between USDOE officials and bill drafters, school system representatives, and advocates.
August 4	Meeting of the Special Education Advisory Panel to consider draft policy.
August 6	LDOE call with superintendents and charter leaders; included discussion of Act 833.

August 8 and August 12	LDOE webinar for special education directors around the state.
August 5-10	LDOE incorporated stakeholder feedback into final policy proposal for BESE.
August 11	LDOE staff has phone conference with Mr. Fleming to discuss which of his recommended revisions to BESE policy were included in the proposals submitted to BESE.
August 12-13	BESE meetings; Act 833 related policies approved as Notice of Intent.

Post BESE Adoption of Policies

August 18	LDOE released a Frequently Asked Questions document regarding the implementation of Act 833.
August 20	Meeting of special education practitioner work group.
August 20	Phone conference with all district leadership across the state where it was shared that the next monthly phone conference would have additional specific guidance for districts on Act 833.

In addition to all previous engagement, the Department intends to continue its support of districts throughout this first year of implementation. Network teams are always available to support any district with any questions they have regarding Act 833.

Sept 10	Call between Department leadership and all district superintendents with timeline for additional Act 833 guidance
Sept 18	Superintendents task force will give feedback on guidance to be issued the following week
Sept 24	Call between Department leadership and all district leadership with concrete guidance on setting goals for all students including all those impacted by Act 833.
Sept 24	Special Education Advisory Panel will discuss guidance provided to all districts.
Week of Sept 29	Webinars held for all district staff with concrete walk through of Department guidance
Week of October 13	Additional webinars for all district staff to address follow up questions from guidance.