

CORE CONNECTION

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FOR LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES



March 11, 2020

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Every Child (and Household) Counts: Census 2020

April 1st

Census Day is observed nationwide on April 1st. By this date, every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census.

Intra-Office Competition

In preparation for Census Day, the Department is excited to host an intra-office competition between **March 16 - March 30** for completion of the 2020 Census.

[How to respond to the 2020 Census](#) starting mid-March:

1. Online
2. By phone
3. By mail

After submitting a response on behalf of your household, staff should complete a brief form - [LDOE Census 2020 Competition](#) - to receive credit for your team.

In addition to earning the title of "**Census Champions of the Decade**," the office that submits the highest percentage of responses by 5:00 PM CST on March 30, will earn a jean day on Census Day (April 1st).

We look forward to announcing the winner on March 31st!

Update Signature Lines

In addition to participating in the competition, we encourage staff to add the 2020 Census link at the bottom of your email signature starting now through July 2020: <https://2020census.gov/>

About the Census

The 2020 Census count impacts the federal funds that communities receive each year for programs and services that are critical for schools, students, and younger children, such as:

- Special education, Head Start, after-school programs, and classroom technology.
- Food assistance, including free and reduced-price school lunches.
- Maternal and child health programs.

Completion of the census **ensures federal funding to support Louisiana students** . In February, [the Department released the 2020 Census Toolbox](#) for school systems and families to communicate the importance of the 2020 Census to their students and children.

[Watch this short video to learn more about the 2020 Census](#) .

To learn more, visit <https://2020census.gov/>.

LA Deferred Compensation Visit

March 18th

LA Deferred Compensation will visit the Claiborne Building on Wednesday, March 18. You are invited to schedule an appointment with Patrick Hannie, your Retirement Plan Advisor.

Montana Room 1-142

**Times: 8:00 am - 9:15 am
10:15 am - 4:00 pm**

Your Retirement Plan Advisor will:

- Help you determine a possible retirement age.
- Help you project your future retirement income from all sources, including: pension, Louisiana Public Employees Deferred Compensation Plan, and other retirement accounts.
- Provide suggestions for your retirement, including savings rate

Click [here](#) to schedule an appointment with Mr. Hannie.

** Your spouse is welcome to attend.*

FY20 Year-End Deadlines

The Office of Fiscal Operations, Appropriation Control has set the deadlines noted below to ensure that the Department uses all of its FY20 funding. **Failure to meet these deadlines risks funding availability.** The Department cannot guarantee the payment of late claims and/or late claims might have to wait until the following fiscal year (June 2021) for funds to be available. We appreciate your cooperation and thank you for helping us be good stewards of our funds.

Travel Deadlines

June 19	All claims for travel that occurred up to May 31, 2020 , due to the Office of Fiscal Operations, Appropriation Control/Travel
June 19	Any June travel to be paid with 8g funds due to the Office of Fiscal Operations, Appropriation Control/Travel
	Any June travel to be paid with TANE or Carl Perkins funds due to the Office of Fiscal Operations

July 6	<u>Any June</u> travel to be paid with TANF or Carl Perkins funds due to the Office of Fiscal Operations, Appropriation Control/Travel
July 10	<u>Any other June</u> travel due to the Office of Fiscal Operations, Appropriation Control/Travel

Purchasing and Contracts Deadlines (before confirming purchase with vendor, ensure that deliver can occur on or before June 30, 2020)

March 23	Last day to submit Requisitions \$5,000 and over
May 8	Last day to submit Professional Services contracts/amendments

P-Card Deadlines*

May 15	Last day to submit Requisitions \$5,000 and less
May 31	Last day for FY20 P-Card purchases
June 1 - July 9	All P-Cards reduced to \$1.00 spending limit
July 10	P-Cards return to standard limits

* If there are June events for which a P-Card holder needs an exception, please submit a written request to Natoria Ingram at natoria.ingram2@la.gov.

Invoice Deadlines

June 22	<u>Any invoice to be paid with 8g funds</u> due to the Office of Fiscal Operations, Appropriation Control - Payables Unit
July 6	<u>Any invoice to be paid with TANF or Carl Perkins funds</u> due to the Office of Fiscal Operations, Appropriation Control/Payables Unit
July 15	<u>Any other invoices</u> due to the Office of Fiscal Operations, Appropriation Control/Payables Unit

LEA/Subgrantee Claims Deadline

June 22	8g claims due in eGMS
July 6	Carl Perkins claims for June expenses are due in eGMS
July 15	All other state and federal awards (excluding 8g and Carl Perkins) ending June 30, 2020 , due in eGMS

Access2day Health Regional Webinars

Available Now Online

In early February, Access2day Health held several regional webinars. The Office of Group Benefits (OGB) was made aware that not all members were able to participate in the webinars for their regions. Access2day recorded all of the webinars and they are now available to view at a time that is convenient for you.

The recorded webinars can be found on the Access2day Health webpage under Webinars. You can visit the website at <https://access2dayhealth.com/ogb.php> and then select the Webinars tab.

ORM Safety Spotlight

Coronavirus and Flu

The Coronavirus is in the news and undoubtedly, you have heard about it. While there are currently only 15 cases here in the United States, it is still a concern. The Coronavirus has sickened over 64,000 people worldwide and there have been at least 1,380 deaths.

While the coronavirus is a concern, the common flu remains active and should not be taken lightly.

The CDC estimates that so far this season there have been at least 26 million flu illnesses, 250,000 hospitalizations and 14,000 deaths from flu. The CDC expects the flu season to last for several more weeks. In Louisiana, there have been some 68,000 flu cases reported this flu season.

Flu Prevention:

Get the flu vaccine. It is not too late to be vaccinated.

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- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone for 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. After using a tissue, throw it in the trash and wash your hands.
- [Wash your hands](#) often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like flu.

Coronavirus Prevention:

There is currently no vaccine to prevent 2019-nCoV infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using facemasks.
 - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory viruses, including 2019-nCoV.
 - Facemask should be used by people who show symptoms of 2019 novel coronavirus, in order to protect others from the risk of getting infected. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Preventing both the Flu and the Coronavirus involves practical measures that we should all be taking. Washing hands, staying away if you are sick, disinfecting surfaces, and covering your cough or sneeze are essential.

Lastly, relying on credible sources for information is key. The CDC and Louisiana Department of Health provide updates regarding infectious diseases daily. Do not rely on hearsay for your information regarding Flu or Coronavirus.

For further information, contact the CDC at www.cdc.gov or www.ldh.la.gov.

Live Better Louisiana March Newsletter

Please click [here](#) to view the March Live Better Louisiana Newsletter for more information from OGB.

The Office of Group Benefits (OGB) is closely monitoring the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it could impact our members. OGB has asked each of the health plan vendors to provide us with their contingency plans regarding care and coverage members may need should they contract the disease. This information can be found on the OGB website. Additionally, OGB has included links to information from the CDC regarding the Coronavirus and what members can do to avoid contracting it.

Members can access this information by visiting info.groupbenefits.org and clicking on the COVID-19 link on the homepage, or they may access it by clicking [here](#).

OGB will continue to monitor and make updates as necessary.

2021 Insurance Premium Credit Live Better Louisiana Clinics

Earn your 2021 premium credit in just one step by completing your preventive health checkup. Blue Cross works with an industry leader, Catapult Health, to bring preventive checkups to a site near you. You can schedule a free checkup with a licensed nurse practitioner and health technician through the online scheduler. You will get lab-accurate diagnostic tests and receive a full **Personal Health Report** with checkup results and recommendations.

What do you do? Schedule your appointment online at <http://www.timeconfirm.com/OGB> or call **1-877-841-3058**, and complete your clinic to receive the credit. If you are unable to go to a clinic, have your doctor fax a completed **Primary Care**

Upcoming Clinics

Below is a list of clinics scheduled throughout the state. Remember, you have until **August 31, 2020**, to get your preventive health checkup in order to be eligible for the 2020 wellness credit!

Live Better Louisiana Clinics	
Date	Location
3/09 - 3/13	DCFS - Lafayette Parish Child Welfare Office (Lafayette) Southeastern Louisiana University (Hammond) Pennington Center University of Louisiana at Monroe (Monroe) Washington Parish - Franklinton High School Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Headquarters (Baton Rouge) State Archives Building (Baton Rouge) Franklinton Elementary School - Washington PSB (Franklinton) Washington Parish - Thomas Elementary School
3/16 - 3/20	University of Louisiana Lafayette (Lafayette) Tangipahoa Economic Stability Office (Amite, LA) St. Tammany Economics Stability/Child Welfare Office (Covington) Louisiana Tech University (Ruston, LA) Court of Appeals 5th Circuit (Gretna) Probation and Parole New Orleans District LA Retirement Systems Building TRSL (Baton Rouge) Vernon Parish School Board - Hornbeck High School (Hornbeck)
3/23 - 3/27	Department of Agriculture and Forestry (Crowley) Vernon Parish School Board - North Polk Elementary School (Fort Polk) McNeese State University - LaJeuneese Room (Lake Charles) Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Headquarters (Baton Rouge) DCFS (Livingston) Orleans Parish Civil District Court (New Orleans) DCFS Economic Stability Midtown (New Orleans) Office of Public Health Laboratory (Baton Rouge) Ouachita Parish School Board Central Office (West Monroe) Parkway Elementary School - Vernon PSB (Leesville) Central LA Human Services Anacoco High School - Vernon Parish School Board (Anacoco) Probation and Parole (Monroe)
3/30 - 3/31	Central Office - Concordia Parish School Board Bossier Parish Community College (Bossier City) DOC Headquarters (Baton Rouge) Mangham High School - Richland Parish (Mangham)

2020 Teacher Leader Summit

May 27th - 29th

The 2020 Teacher Leader Summit will take place May 27-29 at the Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. To best support you in your planning endeavors and to answer questions you may have, we have established internal office hours. There will be no set agenda for these office hours-come with your questions, and the Summit Logistics Team will be available to assist you as needed.

Date and Time	Zoom Link	Dial-in Information
March 17: 3 pm - 4 pm	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/605833548	Phone #: 646-876-9923 Meeting ID: 605833548
April 21: 3 pm - 4 pm	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/492290964	Phone #: 646-876-9923 Meeting ID: 492290964
May 5: 3 pm - 4 pm	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/985731360	Phone #: 646-876-9923 Meeting ID: 985731360
May 18: 8 am - 9 am <i>*unlike the other Office Hours, we will use this time to review staffing roles and responsibilities and conduct training in addition to answering your questions</i>	https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/221106967	Phone #: 646-876-9923 Meeting ID: 221106967

We have developed key documents for your reference.

- [Overview Document](#): Provides a general overview of the event. *Public facing and can be shared externally.*
- [Summit Milestone Dates](#): Key dates to use as a guide through the planning process. *For internal use only. **Not** to be shared publicly.*
- [External Important Dates](#): External: Slimmed down version of the internal document. *Public facing and can be shared externally.*

Key Points to Note:

- All presenters, including LDOE staff who are presenting sessions, will need to register via Eventbrite. The first step in this process is completing a survey. Within a week of your survey submission we will send you a registration code and next steps. The Logistics Team will email all presenters directly with the survey link.
- Travel information, including hotel rooming blocks, will be shared on April 8 with approved Summit travelers. Prior to this information being shared, travelers will be asked to complete a survey beginning February 21 if they plan to support or present at the Summit.
- Individual office hours will be scheduled with the designated contact person(s) for each office and the scheduling coordinator to discuss session requests.

We are happy to assist you as possible. Please direct questions to LDOEEvents@la.gov.

Online Tax Withholding Elections

Suspended via LEO

Tax Withholding elections through LEO are currently suspended until further notice. This suspension is due to the upcoming IRS changes to the 2020 Form W-4. Employees wishing to make changes to their State or Federal withholding's will need to submit the appropriate tax forms to Human Resources for data entry.

For further questions, please contact Human Resources at (225) 342-3774.

3rd Quarter Safety

Review by March 31st

LDOE General Safety Rules

Safety rules provide a safe work place for employees. These tend to eliminate circumstances that could result in personal injury or property damage. They have no other purpose except to explain how to perform your job in ways that prevent you from being injured or from becoming ill while doing your work.

Please review the LDOE General Safety Rules [here](#).

LDOE Brand and Communications Style Guides



Both guides can be found in your Google Team Drive under LDOE Documents and Training > Public Affairs > Branded Documents, and will be updated as new templates and tools are created. You can provide feedback to the Office of Public Affairs by emailing _DOE-PublicAffairs@la.gov.

Employee Birthdays - March



1st Leonard Augustus Tonya Johnson Allison Oliver	2nd Kawanda Beauchamp Autumn Duchamp	3rd	4th Joan Hunt	5th Venise Ortego Ursula Wilson
6th Rebecca Frederick	7th Janet Johnson-Dupre	8th Youwen Gong	9th Bryan Gendron Laura Knaps Roy Walker	10th E'Deltress Brown Norman Woodridge
11th Jennifer Wichers	12th Stacie Griffin	13th	14th Karen Schexneider Kasandra Woods	15th Dawnielle Broussard Melanie Legier
16th Joy Thomas	17th	18th Leslie Gilliland Jessica Vallelungo	19th	20th Susan Gonzales
21st Chandra Goins-Williams	22nd	23rd	24th	25th Mary Bacan Regina Poole
26th	27th Erin Coker	28th Connie Stephens-Knowles Gertie Stepter	29th Veronica Buckley	29th
31st Emerald Guidry				

Team Member Spotlight

Do you want to brag on a team member? Have great news to share? Please email shannon.hunt@la.gov to be featured in the next edition of the Core Connection.

Student Opportunities Dress in Blue

On March 5, the **Office of Student Opportunities** had their annual "Dress in Blue Day." This lets allies everywhere join the mission to end colorectal cancer. By wearing blue it helps bring awareness to this disease and support, as well as honor all who are impacted by colorectal cancer.





Early Childhood Operations Football Extravaganza

The **Office of Early Childhood Operations** celebrated the football season with a football extravaganza! Throughout the season, team members were invited to represent their high school, university, NFL teams by wearing favorite team shirt. The festivities ended with a Super Bowl tailgating event.



Congratulations Lindsey Rhodes

On November 2, 2019, **Lindsey Rhodes (Office of School Improvement)** and her family welcomed their second child, Evelyn Charleigh. Congratulations on the birth of your daughter!



**Submissions for the April Core Connection must be received by Monday, April 6th.*

Welcome Our Newest Employees

LDOE is pleased to welcome our newest employees to our team!



Samantha Chaisson
Academic Content
Ed Program Consultant



Qian Wang
Academic Policy & Analytics
Education Research Analyst



Latoya Jones
Talent
Administrative Coordinator



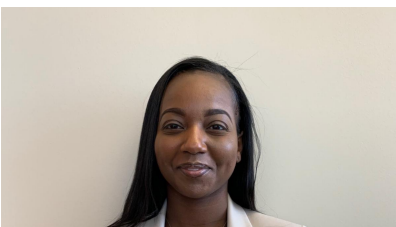
Kristen Riley
Early Childhood Operations
Social Services Analyst

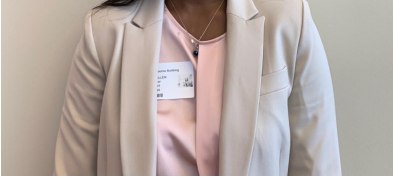


Hengbei Zhao
Academic Policy & Analytics
Education Info Consultant

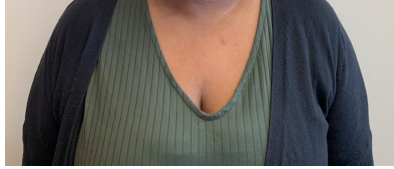


Dr. Jerrick Hornbeal
Student Opportunities
Ed Program Consultant 5-A





Chasidy Allen
Fiscal Operations
Accountant



Danita Jones-Kitts
Talent
Administrative Coordinator

LDOE Contacts

John White

State Superintendent of Education

(toll-free) 877.453.2721

Twitter @LouisianaSupe

LDOE Links

[LDOE Website](#)

[Contact Us](#)