

Last Friday, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved a number of policy revisions and other Department recommendations. A summary of board actions that directly impact the activities of local education agencies are listed below.

Any bulletin revisions, with the exception of emergency rules, must run in the Louisiana Register as a Notice of Intent for 90 days and complete the rulemaking process before becoming rule and appearing in the bulletins on the BESE website. For more information or questions on any of these policy changes, please contact [Bridget Devlin](#).

#### **Approval of Jump Start Graduation Pathways**

Graduation pathways indicate how students can graduate with a Jump Start Career Diploma by taking courses and attaining industry credentials relevant to an industry sector. Jump Start Regional Teams develop and submit graduation pathways to the Jump Start Graduation Pathway Review Panel. This Panel consists of members from Louisiana Economic Development, Louisiana Workforce Commission and Louisiana Department of Education (LDE). This Panel collaborates with the regional teams to ensure that: (1) pathway course offerings are relevant; (2) credentials are relevant and rigorous; and (3) sample schedules provide appropriate guidance to school counselors and educators.

Graduation pathways approved by the Panel are forwarded to the State Superintendent for review. The Superintendent forwards meritorious graduation pathways to BESE for approval. Once approved by BESE, the graduation pathway can be adapted and adopted for approval by other Jump Start regional teams.

At last week's meeting, the Board approved [eleven \(11\) Jump Start Pathways](#), bringing the total number to approved pathways to forty-five (45). The approvals from this meeting include pathways specifically for Act 833-eligible students.

#### **Approval of Recommendations Relative to the Louisiana Competency-Based Education Program**

In response to questions and concerns raised regarding the standards and assessment transition for Louisiana, the Board directed the Department to take three actions, which may be found [here](#).

Please note that the Board's first recommendation was amended to require the Department provide a report to the Board with a comparison of the raw cut scores for Basic, Mastery, and Advanced for math and English language arts for the 2015 tests, when they are available, with the three previous years for all tests given in grades 3 – 8.

#### **Revisions to Bulletin 111, *The Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System*, and Bulletin 1566, *Pupil Progression Policies and Procedures*, Relative to the Transition to Higher Standards and Assessment**

Bulletins 111, *The Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System*, and 1566, *Pupil Progression Policies and Procedures*, provide for transition policies with regard to school letter grades and student promotion policies based on state assessment results. Such policies recognize that schools, educators, and students need time to learn the higher standards and be able to demonstrate their progress on aligned assessments without fear of negative consequences throughout the transition period.

Past policy stipulated that for the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years, the distribution of school letter grades based on school performance scores shall not be lower than the distribution in 2012-2013, and that districts, not the state, shall determine student promotion decisions as it relates to state assessment results.

The approved policy revisions extend these policies by one year, through the 2015-2016 school year, in order to ensure sufficient time to learn the higher expectations and provide for a two-year baseline associated with new assessments. Using two years' worth of data to determine the baseline allows for an improved evaluation of statewide student performance and a better basis for establishing accountability policies.

[Click here](#) to view the revisions to Bulletins 111, *The Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System*, and [here](#) for revisions to Bulletin 1566, *Pupil Progression Policies and Procedure*.

**Revisions to Bulletin 741, Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators regarding Carnegie Credit Courses Offered in Middle School Grades as it relates to Physical Education**

The Board approved revisions to Bulletin 741, *Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators* to clarify that Carnegie credit courses may be offered in middle school grades in all subject areas with the exception of physical education. Louisiana state law requires that opportunities for physical activity be provided throughout a student's education, including high school.

[Click here](#) to view the revisions to Bulletin 741, *Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators*.

**Revisions to Bulletin 111, The Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System, relative to the Calculation of School Performance Scores for Schools with Early Graduates, but Without Cohort Members**

Bulletin 111, *The Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System*, outlines the formula for calculating school performance scores for all schools. Previous policy required the inclusion of the ACT scores of all 12th grade students in the ACT index.

The approved revisions amend this policy for schools growing in grade configuration (e.g., from 9-11 in 2013-2014 to 9-12 in 2014-2015) that do not yet have cohort graduation members, but do have ACT testers who are early graduates. In this rare instance, the revision ensures those ACT scores remain in accountability for the year in which the early graduates were expected to graduate, rather than the year of early graduation.

[Click here](#) to view the revisions to Bulletins 111, *The Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System*.

**Establishment of Bulletin 139, Louisiana Child Care and Development Fund Programs, as required by Act 868 of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session**

The Board approved the establishment of Bulletin 139, *Louisiana Child Care and Development Fund Programs*, as part of the transition regarding the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) per Act 868 (2014), and the establishment of a letter grade accountability system per Act 3 (2012). This bulletin provides policy concerning the LDE's administration of CCDF programs. Specifically, this proposed bulletin allows for the continuation of the current early learning center rating system (Quality Start) until the letter grade rating system is fully established.

[Click here](#) to view Bulletin 139, *Louisiana Child Care and Development Fund Programs*.

**Revisions to Bulletin 130, Regulations for the Evaluation and Assessment of School Personnel, Relative to the Teacher and Leader Evaluation Program (Compass)**

In 2012-2013, Louisiana began the statewide use of the Compass tool for teacher and leader evaluation, and, in September 2014, the Act 240 subcommittee, made up of accountability commission members, educators, and lawmakers, began reviewing the program to "...report on and make recommendations regarding the overall effectiveness of the evaluation program."

In February 2015, the subcommittee endorsed a legislative report, inclusive of recommendations of the subcommittee to improve the Compass tool. Based on the recommendations and feedback received, the Board approved revisions to Bulletin 130, *Regulations for the Evaluation and Assessment of School Personnel*.

[Click here](#) to view the Act 240 Subcommittee's report to the legislature and [click here](#) to view the BESE approved revisions to Bulletin 130, *Regulations for the Evaluation and Assessment of School Personnel*.

**Approval of the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) Formula for FY 2015-2016**

The Board approved the FY 2015-2016 Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) formula. [Click here](#) to view the FY 2015-2016 MFP Formula. Additionally, the Board added a request to the transmittal letter that in the event additional funds are realized, the Legislature will return the MFP formula to the Board so that the additional funds can be included in the base per pupil rate

**Approval of Allocations**

The Board approved eight allocations of funding to local districts at last week's meeting relating to: Safe and Supportive Schools, Math and Science Partnerships, School Improvement Grants, the Educator Leader Cadre, Student Summer Safety Session, the Nonpublic School Early Childhood Development Program, the Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program, and the TAP Conference

[Click here](#) to view the list of allocations approved at last week's meeting.