

Louisiana Believes

Superintendents Call
November 6, 2019

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Statewide Highlights

2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Louisiana achieved [nation-leading outcomes](#) in 2019 on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which measures the reading and math proficiency of students across the U.S. and individual states. NAEP is considered the nation's report card and informs a number of national education rankings.

- Louisiana ranks No. 1 in the nation for 2019 improvement in 8th grade math scale scores and proficiency rates.
- Louisiana's pace of improvement since 2009 in all subjects significantly exceeds national trends.
- Louisiana ranks among the Top 10 states for improvement over the last decade in all four NAEP assessments.

Learn more about [NAEP](#).

School System Highlights

2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools

The U.S. Department of Education recently announced **six Louisiana public schools have won 2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools awards**. The [National Blue Ribbon Schools Program](#), established in 1982, honors schools in each state that are either high-performing or have closed achievement gaps, especially among minority or disadvantaged students. These schools demonstrate that all students can achieve at high levels.

Congratulations to the following **2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools**:

- Bayou Black Elementary School, Terrebonne Parish
- St. Charles Elementary School, Lafourche Parish
- Early College Academy, Lafayette Parish
- Haynes Academy School for Advanced Studies, Jefferson Parish
- Patrick F. Taylor Science and Technology Academy, Jefferson Parish
- Thomas Jefferson High School for Advanced Studies, Jefferson Parish

An awards ceremony will be held November 14–15 in Washington, D.C. to honor each of the recipients.

Reporting on School and Center Performance

Early Evidence of Improvement in Struggling Schools

Public school scores announced today mark an important milestone in the implementation of the state's plan to comply with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which requires states to identify and improve struggling public schools.

Results indicated promising initial outcomes in schools identified as needing improvement.

- Of 219 schools identified in the ESSA plan, excluding alternative schools, **79 schools (36 percent) increased by three or more SPS points**, 88 schools (40 percent) remained steady, and 52 schools (24 percent) declined by three or more SPS points.
- Improving schools in the ESSA plan **grew by an average of 4.8 points**, compared with 3.9 among other improving schools.
- Of 219 schools identified, excluding alternative schools, **43 schools (20 percent) improved a full letter grade**, compared with 13 percent among all other public schools.

Example of Progress: East Baton Rouge Parish Zone

A zone strategy concentrates resources—financial and human—and allows for one leader to manage the strategy for student learning within these schools.

East Baton Rouge Parish was among the most improved school systems in 2018-2019 and demonstrated significant gains in its 14 persistently struggling schools included in its zone strategy.

- Of 14 EBR schools included in the zone strategy, **12 (86 percent) improved their school performance score** from 2018 to 2019. On average, these schools improved 5.3 SPS points.
- Of all 23 EBR schools identified in the ESSA plan, 21 (91 percent) improved their school performance score and **6 (25 percent) improved a full letter grade.**
- The **District Performance Score improved 3.7 points**, ranking 7th in the state for improvement.
- The percent of East Baton Rouge Parish **students enrolled in failing schools, excluding alternative schools, declined by 3 percentage points.**

Ongoing Need for Improvement

While Louisiana is beginning to see early signs of success, the state's annual results signal there is more work to be done to ensuring every child, every day, has access to a high-quality education.

- The Department has identified a total of [571 schools](#) as requiring comprehensive or urgent intervention, and school systems are required to submit improvement plans for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Select school systems with struggling schools will present on their progress to the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) at its December 2019 meeting.
- The 2020-2021 Super App launched on November 4. BESE will approve funding to support these plans in April 2020.

Early Childhood Access and Quality

Early childhood centers across the state have shown continued progress in the years since the state Legislature passed the landmark Act 3. However, the results emphasize the need to further expand access to these high-quality programs, particularly for children birth to age 3.

Low-performing sites that implemented improvement plans saw greater gains than did other sites that did not:

- **95 percent of sites implementing improvement plans have improved this year**, compared to only 33 percent of Approaching Proficient sites that did not participate.
- **45 percent of sites implementing improvement plans are showing growth of 1 point or higher**, compared to fewer than 1 percent of other Approaching Proficient sites.

Despite improvements in early childhood classroom quality, there are still far too few economically disadvantaged birth through three year olds that can access high-quality, publicly-funded care:

- While 86 percent of economically disadvantaged 4 year olds have access to quality early learning, **only 1 percent of our infants, 6 percent of our toddlers, and 26 percent of our 3 year olds do.**

Next Steps in Supporting School and Center Improvement

Actions	Date
Supervisor Collaborations focused on 2019-2020 School System Planning Process and Super App	November
Schools hold parent nights to share school performance results with families	Winter
Department and network teams provide technical support to early childhood programs and school systems in completing their improvement plans	November to January
School systems submit plans in Super App	February 7
BESE approves competitive allocations and school systems begin implementation	April

Supporting Center and School Improvement: Communicating Results

The Department released a [communications toolkit](#) to support schools and early childhood centers in having conversations with families about this year's performance scores.

Tool	Description
Louisiana K-12 accountability system overview	Brief overview of Louisiana's accountability system, and what is new for this year's school performance scores
Louisiana School Finder Flyer	Flyer directing families to the Louisiana School Finder and how to find information on their school/center
Parent Night Presentations (K-12 and ECE)	Customizable presentations that highlight school/center successes, explain how to navigate Louisiana School Finder, and information on how families can support learning at home
Animated school and center performance score videos	Videos explaining K-12 school and Early Childhood performance scores, available in Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic on the Department's YouTube channel

Additional School Finder promotional tools such as social media graphics, website button, flyer, and poster are available in the "School Finder Toolkit" section of the [Principal Support Library](#).

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School System Support and Planning

2019-2020 Academic Strategy

Every day, all **students** are in schools that treat them with dignity and respect and where they have the opportunity to...



build knowledge
of the world,

+



read
meaningful texts,

+



express ideas through
writing and speaking, and

+



solve
complex problems.

2019-2020 Academic Strategy

In order to achieve these goals, **teachers** are fully prepared to deliver high-quality instruction every day and are supported by...



*Principals, Content Leaders,
and Mentor Teachers*

- ✓ use **observations, common planning time, and coaching** to support teachers



School Systems

- ✓ create supportive structures to facilitate **teacher preparation and student learning**



*The Louisiana
Department of Education*

- ✓ provides tools and resources to **support school systems** in executing academic plans

Implementation for 2019-2020 School Year

In order to ensure **students** do the majority of the work everyday,

1. **All Teachers**—including special education, English language, and reading interventionists—are fully prepared to deliver high-quality lessons.
2. **Principals, leadership teams, Content Leaders and Mentor Teachers** use classroom observation, common planning time, and one-on-one coaching to support each teacher to deliver high quality lessons.
3. **School systems** support principals and school teams as they provide support to teachers.
4. The **Department** supports school systems to execute their improvement plans.

Louisiana School Improvement 2019-2020

In 2019-2020, the Department will support school systems to achieve this vision through two areas of focus.

- 1. Implementation:** Supporting Comprehensive Intervention Required (CIR) schools to implement plans focused on curriculum implementation through the provision of trainings, ongoing support, and tools.
- 2. Planning:** Facilitating an improved 2020-2021 school system planning process focused on schools identified as CIR and Urgent Intervention Required (UIR) through the launch of a new Super App planning process.

Louisiana School System Planning Process



CREATE A PLAN

School systems review data and identify priorities for the coming year.

+



DEVELOP AN ALIGNED BUDGET

School systems budget formula funds and request competitive funds in alignment with priorities.

+



IMPLEMENT WITH SUPPORT

School systems implement approved plans with support from Network teams and vendor partners.

2020-2021 CIR and UIR-Academics Strategy Requirements

Next school year, 2020-2021, CIR and UIR-Academics schools will continue to focus on:

1. High-quality curriculum in all grade levels
2. High-quality professional development for all teachers on the selected curriculum
3. High-quality assessments
4. Teacher preparation partner to address schools' greatest needs
5. Increased school based capacity through Content Leader, Intervention Content Leader, and/or Mentor Teacher participation

Improvements to the 2020-2021 Strategy

CIR and UIR Improvements

1. **Professional Development Plan:** School systems submit a plan that includes content module redelivery and unit unpacking for CIR schools.
2. **Post-secondary planning partner:** Schools will have at least one partner to support Individual Graduation Plans (IGPs) at CIR high schools.
3. **District leader responsible for UIR-D schools:** School systems will have a leader to coordinate support and planning for UIR-D schools.

Other Strategy Improvements

1. **Science:** School systems can apply for funds to support the purchase of science curricula and the training of teachers on this curricula.
2. **Early Childhood:** The planning process for governance, access, and quality is now included in Super App.
3. **Special Education:** Funding for professional development on specialized supports is available for schools with a UIR label for the subgroup with students with disabilities.

Planning: Professional Development Plans

In order for all students to achieve grade level standards, teachers must be trained and supported on the use of high-quality curriculum. Each year, school systems with CIR schools should build a plan to ensure all teachers receive training and ongoing support.

Plans should include:

- Content module redelivery
- Unit and lesson preparation

The [Professional Development Planning Guidance](#) will help schools and school systems to complete the [Professional Development Planning Template](#) required in Super App under CA2.3, High-Quality Teacher Professional Development.

Planning: 2020-2021 Super App Launch

The November Super App Launch [events](#) began this week to review the 2020-2021 School System Planning process with school system planning teams. Presentations from the Launch can be found in the [School Improvement Library](#).

Support for completing the Super App will be provided through:

- [School Improvement Library](#)
- [LDOE Weekly Newsletters](#)
- [School System Planning and Superintendent Calls](#)
- [Network Teams](#)
- Office Hours at 11:00 a.m. on November 18, December 16, and weekly beginning in January until February 7

All questions related to school system planning and Super App should be sent to ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov and include “Super App” in the subject line.

Teaching and Learning

Supporting Early Childhood Site Improvement

In August, 66 low-performing sites were notified that they must participate in Early Childhood Site Improvement Planning based on 2018-2019 preliminary performance scores. The improvement process has begun for this year, and sites in your community may be participating.

Sites participating in Early Childhood Site Improvement Planning:

- work with Department staff to complete a needs assessment and develop an improvement plan;
- are connected to opportunities for high-quality coaching and professional development through Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, school systems, and others; and
- maintain monthly communication with Department field staff to ensure progress is being made.

This process showed demonstrable success last year, with 95 percent of sites making improvement and 46 percent of sites improving by more than 1 point.

Pre-k/Elementary Instructional Support: Early Literacy Commission Meetings

[Senate Resolution 182](#) and [House Resolution 222](#) established the Early Literacy Commission to study and make recommendations on developing and implementing an aligned system to provide effective evidence-based reading instruction for children from birth through third grade. In January of 2020, the Early Literacy Commission will make its final recommendations to BESE and the Legislature.

The Early Literacy Commission met on October 14. During this meeting, the committee heard from a panel of educators who shared experiences and challenges in early literacy.

The remaining Early Literacy Commission meetings are listed below.

- [November 20](#) (Small workgroup meetings)
- [December 16](#) (Full panel meeting/Open Meeting /12:00–3:00 p.m., Thomas Jefferson Room)

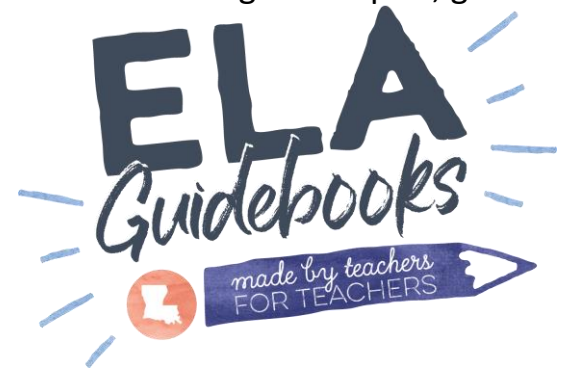
Meeting materials and recordings are available on the [State Advisory Council](#) page.

New Louisiana ELA Guidebooks 9–12: Coming Spring 2019

The new [Louisiana ELA Guidebooks 9–12](#) curriculum will be released February through May 2020. Educators will access the curriculum from a free, open source platform.

In the Louisiana ELA Guidebooks 9–12, students read, understand, and express their understanding of complex, grade-level texts. They:

- explore central questions that connect units in a year-long pathway;
- examine texts by diverse authors and about substantive topics;
- engage in varied reading, discussion, writing, and presentation opportunities in and out of class; and
- experience integrated instruction and assessment leading to a comprehensive ELA experience.



More detailed information, including upcoming webinars, training, and unit releases, will continue to be released via monthly School System Planning Calls.

2019-2020 LEAP 2025 Humanities Updates

Research shows that students need to possess deep knowledge of a subject in order to effectively read, comprehend, and write about complex texts. However, reading tests traditionally use passages that include contexts and vocabulary that students may have never encountered, placing those who have fewer life experiences at a disadvantage.

To solve for this disconnect and better assess students' knowledge of complex texts, school systems are [piloting an innovative, joint English language arts \(ELA\) and social studies assessment](#) that ensures all students have an equal opportunity to succeed on the test. October 21–November 1 was the first window of the operational Grade 7 LEAP 2025 Humanities assessment. Students completed assessments aligned to the first unit studied in their ELA classes. School systems can participate in the 2019-2020 cohort by piloting assessments in grades 6–8 during spring of 2020. School systems interested in participating in the 2019-2020 cohort are encouraged to contact chanda.johnson@la.gov and **confirm participation by November 29**.

To find out more about Louisiana's Innovative Assessment Pilot, please review the Innovative Assessment Pilot [summary document](#).

English Learner (EL) Data Snapshots

As part of the October EL Community of Practice PD series, EL Data Snapshots were shared with EL supervisors. The data is intended to depict system-level EL demographics, proficiency rates, growth, and EL pre-K enrollment.

The Department has placed these system-level snapshots into the Data Management FTP.

An [EL School System Snapshots Overview Webinar](#) will be held on **November 13 at 3:00 p.m.** to provide guidance on reading and interpreting the data.

School systems should use this data to analyze system-level trends and to develop a strategy for improving English learner programs. These are unsuppressed documents and for district planning use only. Do not share publicly.

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Graduation Pathways

2020 Jump Start Convention Registration

The Jump Start Convention is going to be held on January 28 at the Raising Cane River Center in Baton Rouge. The theme is *Jump Start 2.0: Modern Pathways for a Prosperous Future*.

Attendees will learn the latest trends in career and technical education and take a deep dive into the new streamlined Jump Start 2.0 pathways that will be considered for adoption in spring 2020.

[Registration](#) is now open and will close on **January 3**.

A list of [discounted hotels is available for this event](#).

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Educator Workforce

Pre-Educator Pathway



In October, BESE approved a pre-educator high school pathway. This pathway offers:

- a K–16/pre-education program for both TOPS University and TOPS Tech diploma-seeking high school students who intend to pursue a career in the field of education
- an opportunity to cultivate highly skilled educators, beginning in high school; and
- a dynamic curriculum that blends academic knowledge and skills coursework with education-focused coursework and field experiences.

Students who decide not to pursue the university option may pursue an integrated STEM pathway leading to a career in the cyber security field.

The pathway also provides an opportunity to strengthen partnerships between K–12 school systems and education preparation programs seeking to expand and diversify the pipeline of teacher candidates.

For more information, access the available [Pre-educator Pathway](#) brief.

Policy Shift: Mentoring Requirements for Post-Baccalaureate Candidates

Based on research demonstrating high-quality mentoring can reduce or eliminate the “first-year teacher effect” and on pilot programs in rural school systems through Louisiana, BESE approved regulatory shifts in October to strengthen mentoring during the alternate candidate’s residency year.

These shifts include:

- **removing** the 80-hour pre-residency practice requirement; and
- **replacing** the pre-residency practice requirement with an assurance from the employing school systems that new teachers have co-taught, been observed, or have planned collaboratively for at least five hours per week in their first year of teaching.
 - School systems will verify mentoring through an attestation form that is part of a candidate’s application for a Level 1 certificate or renewal of a Practitioner License.

These new mentoring requirements will go into effect beginning in the 2020-2021 academic year. The Department will launch implementation supports this winter.

Mentor Teacher and Content Leader Trainings

To transition to [state-approved trainings](#) for Mentor Teachers and Content Leaders after 2019-2020, BESE has approved several providers to offer these trainings.

The following programs are approved to offer Mentor Teacher or Content Leader training.

Mentor Teacher Training		ELA Content Leader Training	Math Content Leader Training
A+PEL Grambling State University Learning Forward* Louisiana Tech University NIET Nicholls State University McNeese State University	Southeastern Louisiana University Southern University and A&M College Teaching and Learning Center University of Louisiana at Lafayette University of Louisiana at Monroe	Great Minds Louisiana Tech University School Kit* Teaching Lab*	Louisiana Tech University University of Texas Dana Center*

**Providers that have been facilitating the state provided training for the past three years*

Mentor Teacher Stipends

Believe and Prepare formula funding will include a \$1,000 stipend for mentors of year-long undergraduate residents. This allocation was approved by BESE in October, and funds are available in eGMS now.

To access funds, school systems will need to complete contact information and enter a budget in eGMS for the grant titled ***Believe and Prepare Formula Funds*** no later than **January 10**.

School systems that did not submit all required data by the September 13 deadline will have funding approval considered at the December BESE meeting.

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Policy & Legislative Report

Student Fee Policies

[Act 240](#) of the 2019 Regular Legislative Session requires all public school governing authorities, including state authorized charter schools, to adopt policies **no later than December 1**, relative to fees charged to students. The Department is charged with verifying policies that have been adopted that reflect the new state law and reporting this information to the Louisiana Legislature.

School systems that have already adopted this policy are encouraged to complete this [survey](#) at earliest convenience. All others are asked to complete the survey immediately following student fee policy adoption, **not later than December 2**, so the Department can include each school system in the required report to the Legislature.

Measuring Results

LEAP 360 Updates

LEAP 360 will continue to be a Department-funded resource for school systems in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. This includes access to K–2 formative tasks, diagnostics, and interim test forms at no cost to school systems.

Given school systems' continued work to reduce unnecessary testing through the increased use of high-quality curriculum with embedded assessments, the LEAP 360 program is evolving:

- The number of ELA interims is being reduced this year to provide only Form 1 for each grade or course.
- Math will continue to offer two forms in grades 3 through 8 and three forms in high school.

LEAP 360 resources (e.g., A Teacher's Guide to LEAP 360, A District's Guide to LEAP 360), available in the [Assessment Library](#), will be updated to reflect this change later this month.

School systems that wish to continue using LEAP 360 will be required to sign and return the [LEAP 360 MOU](#) by June 26.

LEAP 2025 High School Fall Test Administration

Test set-up is now open in the DRC INSIGHT portal for the LEAP 2025 high school fall test administration.

District and school test coordinators should:

- create test administrator numbers,
- verify accommodations for students, and
- assign students to test sessions.

Accountability codes should be applied by the end of the testing window and are only required for initial testers. Retesters do not need an accountability code. Please hold all transfer accountability codes until the end of the window.

Fall 2019 [Test Administration](#) and [Test Coordinator](#) manuals are available in eDIRECT for printing and distribution to school test coordinators and test administrators.

End-of-Course (EOC) English III Administered by School Systems

Beginning this fall, the EOC English III assessment will no longer be administered as part of the statewide online testing system. It will now be:

- administered by school systems to eligible students who need to pass the test as part of their graduation requirements, and
- a paper-based test that school systems will have to score according to procedures detailed in the scoring guide for each form.

All English III EOC materials, including the test administration manual and scoring guides, will be available by mid-November, bundled into a single folder and placed on the secure FTP.

Requests for Braille forms should be sent to assessment@la.gov.

Open Data Collections

School system data managers are submitting data that directly impact schools and students. The Department data management team will reach out to superintendents if critical issues arise.

2018-2019 Dropout Correction Collection

- for the correction of potential dropout data

Fall Data Collections

- for the submission of school calendars, teacher data, student data, and schedules for all classes including CTE/CDF and interest and opportunities. This data is used for funding, federal reporting, assessments, accountability, and Value-Added Model (VAM).