



Teacher Leader Newsletter



April 2026

Rubén Esparza Bayona



My name is Rubén Esparza Bayona, and I am from Madrid, Spain. I work as a second-grade homeroom teacher in a Spanish immersion classroom at the International School of Louisiana in New Orleans. Teaching in Louisiana as a part of the [International Associate Teacher Program](#) has helped me grow both personally and professionally. Working with students with various traditions and linguistic backgrounds has strengthened my belief in the importance of learning world languages from an early age. Through Spanish immersion, my students not only develop strong language skills but also gain perspective, curiosity, and confidence in communicating with others. I have also learned the importance of connecting lessons to students' interests and experiences by using stories, games, and real-world examples. Creating engaging and meaningful learning experiences allows students to stay motivated and involved. Aligning these experiences with [high-quality instructional materials](#) allows me to see my students grow academically while developing a broader perspective, which has been one of the most rewarding aspects of teaching here.

Marine Ridoux



Hello! My name is Marine Ridoux, and I am originally from France. Since 2022, I have taught middle school science at École Bilingue de la Nouvelle-Orléans, a French immersion school in New Orleans. When I arrived in Louisiana as an International Associate Teacher, I discovered both the challenges and the richness of teaching in an immersion setting. In my classroom, I design lessons informed by neuroscience to reduce cognitive overload and support memory and understanding. My students are also introduced to simple neuroscience concepts and learning strategies to help them become more effective learners. Learning science in French also offers students an opportunity to discover new ways of thinking about the world. Every day, I continue to be amazed by how immersion students move easily between languages, switching between hello and bonjour, miles and kilometers, and four square and balle-assise. This reflects the Louisiana

Department of Education's (LDOE) commitment to provide [high-quality instruction](#) that supports learners across Louisiana.

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NUMERACY RESOURCES

Zearn Math Challenge

With the LEAP 2025 Assessment just a few weeks away, now is the time to maximize impact with Zearn. Schools that prioritize consistent usage, three or more grade-level lessons per week, see stronger math growth and greater student confidence heading into testing. The LDOE challenges every student to complete 30 lessons before LEAP to reinforce key standards and close learning gaps. Schools are encouraged to set clear goals and finish strong.

Please contact math@la.gov with questions.

SOCIAL STUDIES RESOURCES

Social Studies Office Hours

The LDOE will hold the final Social Studies Office Hours for the 2025-2026 school year on May 6 at 3:15 p.m. Participants will receive an overview of the 2026 Teacher Leader Summit and get a sneak peek at this year's social studies session topics and new resources.

Past office-hour slides are available on the [Social Studies Office Hour Flyer](#).

Webinar Date and Time: May 6 at 3:15 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97436075546>

Webinar Phone Number: 346-248-7799

Meeting ID#: 974 3607 5546

Please contact socialstudies@la.gov with questions.

Land of Liberty: Now Available

[Land of Liberty: The History of the United States](#) is now available for download. Teachers are encouraged to visit the [Land of Liberty](#) web page to access materials, such as:

- Land of Liberty Student Volumes
- Land of Liberty Teacher Guides
- Land of Liberty DBQ Workbook
- Land of Liberty Unit Study Tool

Information regarding the [access and purchase of printed materials](#) is available on the [Land of Liberty](#) web page under Land of Liberty Print Options.

Please contact socialstudies@la.gov with questions.

SCIENCE RESOURCES

OpenSciEd Grades 6-8 Guidance for 2026-2027

The LDOE is developing new guidance for the 2026-2027 school year for all versions of Grades 6-8 OpenSciEd. The transitional scope and sequence recommendations address feedback from Louisiana educators after years of implementation. The updates will include the following recommendations:

- The Ecosystem Dynamics unit will appear on both the Grade 6 and Grade 7 scope and sequences.
- The Genetics unit will appear on both the Grade 7 and Grade 8 scope and sequences.

The LDOE will host informational webinars this spring to provide further explanation of this guidance. School and system leaders may choose to attend one of the following webinars:

Webinar Option 1

Webinar Date and Time: May 6 at 9:30 a.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/95611340785>

Webinar Phone Number: 1-312-626-6799

Meeting ID#: 956 1134 0785

Webinar Option 2

Webinar Date and Time: May 8 at 8:30 a.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97433796902>

Webinar Phone Number: 1-312-626-6799

Meeting ID#: 974 3379 6902

Webinar Option 3

Webinar Date and Time: May 14 at 1:30 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/98940491433>

Webinar Phone Number: 1-312-626-6799

Meeting ID#: 989 40496 1433

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

K-12 Science Summer Professional Learning for Educators

To support planning with high-quality science curricula, the LDOE is hosting in-person, regional science professional learning opportunities this summer for [K-12 science educators](#) at no registration cost to systems. The one-day workshop will provide curriculum-based opportunities to track vertical progression of the Louisiana Student Standards for Science in both instruction and assessment. This opportunity is open to any formal, community-based, or pre-service K-12 science educator using any high-quality curriculum.

Session Dates and Locations:

- July 14 and July 28 in Baton Rouge
- July 23 in Ruston

Systems will be responsible for additional costs, including stipends, travel, meals, etc. Seating is limited and will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. [Registration](#) closes **May 8**.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

COMPUTER SCIENCE AND STEM RESOURCES

STEM Pathways Summer Training Opportunities

The [2026 Fast Forward Training Catalog](#) lists summer training opportunities from approved [STEM Pathways](#) providers. These trainings prepare educators to teach STEM Pathways courses in the 2026-2027 school year. Check the catalog regularly for new training sessions as providers finalize summer schedules or add additional sessions.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

EDTECH RESOURCES

Supporting English Learners Through Digital Innovation

The LDOE is excited to share new guidance on [English Learners and Academic Innovation](#), highlighting how educators can leverage educational technology and academic innovation to support English Learners (ELs). By using targeted digital strategies, educators can provide the necessary support for language acquisition without sacrificing the grade-level rigor our students require.

Key EdTech Applications for EL Support

- **Personalized Learning:** Technology enables customization of instruction to meet individual student language proficiency levels.
- **Differentiating Text Complexity:** New tools support adjustment of linguistic complexity while maintaining focus on grade-level vocabulary.
- **Assistive Technology:** Using text-to-speech and translation tools effectively reduces the "linguistic load," making core instruction more accessible.
- **Voice and Feedback:** Digital platforms can provide students with immediate, private feedback on their pronunciation and speaking fluency.

Visit the [Digital Learning](#) web page to explore additional resources that foster digital responsibility.

Please contact digitallearning@la.gov with questions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

Revised Physical Education Standards for Public Review

The LDOE is seeking public comment on the [revised physical education standards](#). These revised standards reflect the collaborative efforts of the steering committee and workgroups, which included a wide range of stakeholders, including educators, community health partners, parents, and university representatives. A summary of the review process and committee goals is available in the [Physical Education Standards Overview](#). All stakeholders can review the revised standards and submit feedback through the [2026 K-12 Louisiana Student Standards for PE Public Review Form](#) until **April 15 at 4 p.m.**

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

Aspiring Principal Fellowship Application is Now Open

Applications for the [Aspiring Principal Fellowship \(APF\)](#) are now open. This year-long leadership development program is designed to prepare educators to become principals.

The program provides participants with opportunities to visit schools with high-performing Louisiana principals, participate in collaborative learning aligned with state priorities, and gain job-embedded leadership experiences focused on developing their instructional leadership skills.

Educators who are ready to grow as leaders and committed to improving student and teacher outcomes are encouraged to apply by completing the [APF Application](#).

For additional information, please refer to the [APF Overview document](#).

Please contact louisianaleaders@la.gov with questions.

CONTACT US

For questions related to...	Contact:
AP Courses and Exams Contact	highschoolacademics@la.gov
Assessments and Related Supports	assessment@la.gov
Collaborations	districtsupport@la.gov
Compass	compass@la.gov
Content Leaders and Mentor Teachers	believeandprepare@la.gov
EdTech/Digital Learning	digitallearning@la.gov
Educational Leader Licensure Policy Update	believeandprepare@la.gov
Educator Background Credentialing	educatorclearance@la.gov
ELA and ELA Guidebooks	elaguidebooks@la.gov
Environmental Education	environmentaleducation@la.gov
Financial Aid Assistance	ldefinancial@la.gov
Graduation Requirements	highschoolacademics@la.gov
Instructional Support and Resources	classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov
Jump Start	jumpstart@la.gov
Literacy	louisianaliteracy@la.gov
Math	math@la.gov
PD Vendor Guide	louisianacurriculumreview@la.gov

Pupil Progression Plan	ppp@la.gov
Registration for the Teacher Leader Summit	ldoeevents@la.gov
Social Studies	socialstudies@la.gov
STEM	STEM@la.gov
Teacher Certification	certification@la.gov
Teacher Leaders and Teacher Leader Advisors	classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov