



Preparation Provider Newsletter



Dear Teacher Preparation Partners,

As a new school year begins, we extend our best wishes to educators, school leaders, and educator preparation partners across Louisiana for a successful year ahead. The start of a new academic year is an opportunity to celebrate the dedication, passion, and excellence that define our profession, making it the perfect time to recognize Louisiana's outstanding educators.

The Louisiana Department of Education proudly celebrates the outstanding educators recognized as Louisiana's 2027 **New Teacher of the Year**, **Teachers of the Year**, and **Principals of the Year**. These educators exemplify excellence in teaching, leadership, and service to Louisiana's students.

The Louisiana Teacher and Principal of the Year program recognizes individuals who have demonstrated a lasting commitment to student success, innovative instructional practices, and a positive impact on their school communities. From first-year educators who are already making a difference to veteran teachers and school leaders who inspire those around them, each honoree represents the very best of Louisiana education.

As we celebrate their accomplishments, we also recognize the educator preparation programs that helped launch their careers. Louisiana's teacher preparation providers play a critical role in developing knowledgeable, skilled, and compassionate educators who are prepared to meet the needs of every learner.

We congratulate the following 2027 honorees:

Louisiana New Teachers of the Year

2027 Overall New Teacher of the Year: Katie Weber, St. Tammany Parish Public School System, **Out of State**

2027 New Teacher of the Year Finalists

Jared Smith, Ascension Schools, **Louisiana State University**

Jayla Anderson, Monroe City Schools, **University of Louisiana at Monroe**

Brittany Goss, Jackson Parish Schools, **Louisiana Tech University**

Morgan Vanicor, Jefferson Davis Parish Schools, **McNeese State University**

Kesha Eymard, Lafourche Parish School District, **Nicholls State University**

Grace Reynerson, Livingston Parish Public Schools, **Southeastern Louisiana University**

Jade Carroll, Ouachita Parish Schools, **B.A. University of Louisiana at Monroe**

Chloe Wilbanks, Vernon Parish School Board, **B.A. Out of State**

Louisiana Teachers of the Year

2027 Overall Teacher of the Year:

Alisha Butler, Louisiana Special School District, B.A. **Southeastern Louisiana University, M.Ed University of Louisiana at Monroe**

Louisiana Early Childhood Teacher of the Year



Preparation Provider Newsletter



Jillian Graves, St. James Parish, **iteach Louisiana**

Teacher of the Year Division-Level Honorees

Elementary: Corey Elizabeth Gilfoil, West Feliciana Parish, **Out of State**

Middle: Bridget Zeringue, Iberville Parish, **AN, B.M., Southeastern Louisiana University**

High: Kathy Michelle Blaney, Rapides Parish, **B.S., Louisiana State University at Alexandria, Louisiana State University Alternative Pathway, M.NAT.SCI., Louisiana State University**

Louisiana Principals of the Year

2027 Louisiana State Principal of the Year

Lauren Williams Rentrop, St. Mary Parish, **B.A and M.Ed. Nicholls State University**

Principal of the Year Division-Level Honorees

Elementary: Casey Cheramie, Lafourche Parish, **B.A. and M.Ed. Nicholls State University**

Middle: Terez LeBlanc, Terrebonne Parish, **B.A. Nicholls State University, M.S. Out of State**

High: Dr. Holly Franks Boffy, Lafayette Parish, **B.S. and M.Ed. Louisiana State University, ED.D Out of State**

Louisiana Early Childhood Leader of the Year

Sarah Corley, Rapides Parish, **Out of State**

Congratulations to each of this year's honorees and nominees for their remarkable contributions to Louisiana's students, schools, and communities. Your commitment to educational excellence reflects the strength of Louisiana's educators and the preparation programs that support them. We are proud to celebrate your achievements and thank you for making a lasting difference in the lives of students across our state.

Best regards,

Arthur M. Joffrion, Jr., Ed.D.

Deputy Assistant Superintendent of Educator Talent and Workforce Development
Louisiana Department of Education

NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Upcoming Dates & Events

August 1: [Numeracy Coursework Submission Opens](#)

September 8-9: [Louisiana Aspiring Educator Training, Baton Rouge](#) (University View Academy)

September 29-30: [Louisiana Aspiring Educator Training, Grambling State University](#)

October 1: [Numeracy Coursework Submission Due](#)

October 10: [Social Studies Teacher Preparation Competencies Training](#), Baton Rouge- Claiborne Building

October 14: [Social Studies Teacher Preparation Competencies Training](#), Ruston, Louisiana Tech

January 26: [Social Studies Teacher Preparation Competencies Training](#), Baton Rouge- Claiborne Building

January 27: [Social Studies Teacher Preparation Competencies Training](#), Ruston, Louisiana Tech



Preparation Provider Newsletter



Preparation Provider Spotlight Form

We want to share your good news! We invite all of our providers to complete the [provider spotlight Jotform](#) so that the amazing things happening throughout our teacher preparation provider community can be shared across our great state. Please include information regarding new grant opportunities, innovative initiatives, research/case studies around the advancement of your program(s), or faculty and residency student highlights. We are excited to hear about all the things you are doing well to grow educators who will grow students.

EDUCATOR PREPARATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Fall Louisiana Aspiring Educator Rubric (LAER) Trainings

Training on the Louisiana Aspiring Educator Rubric (LAER) will be held this upcoming school year. Training dates are as follows:

- September 8-9, [Baton Rouge](#) (University View Academy)
- September 29-30, [Grambling State University](#)

Please share the registration links with residency/placement coordinators, university supervisors, or those responsible for observing and evaluating residency students.

Should providers wish to include faculty members who are not the residency or placement coordinators or university supervisors, please contact believeandprepare@la.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact believeandprepare@la.gov.

Social Studies Competencies Trainings

Training on the Louisiana Social Studies Teacher Competencies will be held this upcoming academic year. The competencies define what a well-prepared social studies educator in Louisiana should know and be able to do and are aligned to the [Louisiana Student Standards for Social Studies](#). Organized into the domains of Content Knowledge and Content Pedagogy, the competencies serve as a bridge between standards and instructional practice.

Participants are required to attend both Fall and Spring training sessions. Opportunities will be offered in both North and South Louisiana.

[October 12 and January 26](#): South Louisiana (Claiborne Building, Baton Rouge)

[October 14 and January 27](#): North Louisiana (Louisiana Tech University, Ruston)

Please share the registration links with social studies faculty, program coordinators, and other faculty responsible for preparing teacher candidates in social studies.



Preparation Provider Newsletter



If you have any questions, please contact believeandprepare@la.gov.

Policy Implementation Timeline Guide

To navigate key policy changes affecting Louisiana's teacher preparation community, a [Policy Implementation Timeline Guide](#) has been developed. This resource outlines updates in literacy, dyslexia, numeracy, computer science, and English learners.

If you have any questions, please contact believeandprepare@la.gov.

Louisiana Aspiring Educator Rubric (LAER) as a Coaching Tool

The [LAER as a Coaching Tool](#) module is now available on the Professional Learning Platform. This module is designed to support preparation providers, mentor teachers, and school leaders who work with new teachers trained on the Louisiana Educator Rubric (LER) in using the LAER as a coaching tool. This does not replace the in-person training for the LAER certification.

Course Code: 35299E95

Please contact believeandprepare@la.gov with any questions.

Act 260 Numeracy Training

Preparation providers are invited to use the [Numeracy Professional Learning courses](#) aligned to [Act 260](#) as a guide when enhancing coursework to align with the current [Louisiana Mathematics Teacher Competencies](#).

The [information](#) provided may be used to enroll in provider-specific courses on the [LDOE Professional Learning Platform](#).

Courses specific to Educator Preparation Providers are published and should be used only by instructors in these programs. Courses specific to [teacher candidates](#) are published and may be shared.

If a faculty/ staff member is completing more than one of the Numeracy Professional Learning Courses, please have them email math@la.gov to get credit for the portions of each course that overlap with other grade bands.

Please contact math@la.gov with any questions or for more information.

Numeracy Coursework Review

Numeracy coursework updates for all math courses will be collected starting August 1 via [Jotform](#). A webinar was held on April 30. If you need a copy of the slide deck and the submission documents, please



Preparation Provider Newsletter



email believeandprepare@la.gov

CERTIFICATION AND EDUCATOR BACKGROUND CREDENTIALING

Certification and Background Credentialing Monthly Calls

Calls will be held on the following dates for the 2026-2027 school year. The link has been updated on the [school system planning calendar](#); the link and reminder may be added to individual calendars for the entire series.

Certification and Background Credentialing Monthly Call Dates and Times		
August 17, at 10:30 a.m.	September 21, at 10:30 a.m.	October 19, at 10:30 a.m.
November 16, at 10:30 a.m.	December 21, at 10:30 a.m.	January 18, at 10:30 a.m.
February 15, at 10:30 a.m.	March 15, at 10:30 a.m.	April 19, at 10:30 a.m.
May 17, at 10:30 a.m.	June 21, at 10:30 a.m.	July 19, at 10:30 a.m.

Expedite Clear Credential Processing

Teacher preparation program providers should encourage candidates to complete and submit the “Fingerprint Clearance” application in the [Louisiana Educator Certification \(LEC\) system](#) before fingerprinting. Candidates must select the checkout/cart icon to complete and submit the application.

A Social Security Number (SSN) is not always included, or may be reported inconsistently, on criminal background checks transmitted to the Louisiana Department of Education. The “Fingerprint Clearance” application provides the identifiers and permissions needed to verify the candidate’s identity, accurately match the results, and reduce Clear Credential processing delays.

Candidates should check for the Clear Credential indicator under “Certifications” in LEC one to two business days after fingerprinting. If it does not appear, the candidate should first confirm that the SSN associated with the account has been validated in the Louisiana Educator Portal (LEP). Please allow an additional business day for the Department to verify newly validated information.

For additional assistance, submit a request through the [Teacher Certification Help Portal](#), select “Background and Professional Conduct” as the topic, and include relevant details and screenshots.

For LEP/LEC technical support, direct teacher candidates to their [local data administrators](#). If the data administrator cannot resolve the issue, submit a helpdesk ticket to the [System Support Team](#).



Preparation Provider Newsletter



Pre-Practitioner's License

Effective **October 20, 2026**, teacher preparation providers may provisionally admit candidates who have not yet earned a passing score on the required Praxis content examination. Provisionally admitted candidates may complete no more than twelve credit hours, or equivalent contact hours, of coursework prior to earning a passing score on the required content examination. Coursework completed during provisional admission shall be limited to content exam preparation and classroom readiness. The Pre-Practitioner's License is valid for one year and can be renewed up to one additional year.

Please contact certification@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT

Geaux Teach Scholarship Program

[Act 463](#) of the 2022 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature established the [Geaux Teach Program](#), which provides scholarships to students enrolled in teacher preparation programs at the state's postsecondary institutions approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Funding is also available to students attending BESE-approved alternative teacher preparation programs.

Students may receive up to \$5,000 annually to cover tuition, fees, textbooks, and other instructional materials required for enrollment. Billing dates are November 1 for the fall semester/term, **May 1** for the spring semester/term, and **July 1** for the summer semester/term, when applicable.

Additional information about the Geaux Teach Program, including eligibility requirements, the [Geaux Teach Application](#), and answers to [Frequently Asked Questions](#), may be accessed on the [Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance \(LOSFA\) website](#).

Please contact deborah.paul@la.gov with questions.

Mentor Teacher Waivers

Waivers for the 2026-2027 school year opened on June 15 and will close on **October 1, 2026**.

A new waiver application for residents beginning in January 2027 and for PLs with an issue date after October 1, 2026, will open on November 1, 2026, and remain open until March 1, 2027.

It is important to note that for residents and practitioners whose year-long residency spans multiple academic years, a mentor waiver must be obtained for each academic year.

Please contact MentorandContentLeaders@la.gov with any questions.