

December 2025



# LEADS

Louisiana's Educator Advancement and Development System



Dear Colleagues,

Over the last three years, the LDOE has been working to redesign our state evaluation system to respond to feedback from our education community and create a more responsive and effective system that benefits educators and students. The Louisiana Educator Advancement and Development System (LEADS) brings improvements to our system by grounding practices in evidence, strengthening connections between evaluation and professional learning, and providing more individualized coaching.

Strong instruction takes careful planning and reflection, and this month, we take a look at the planning and professionalism domains of LEADS. Effective instructional planning is rooted in meeting student needs. Educators are constantly adjusting instruction to support student engagement and understanding, and planning is critical to success throughout the year. Mid-year is a moment to reflect on student needs and how instructional lessons learned from the first half of the year can inform and strengthen lesson plans during the second half of the year.

This past year, we again saw tremendous growth in student achievement, illustrating the hard work of thousands of educators and students. Our goal is to support educators with clear, detailed, actionable support grounded in research, so that they can continue to make record gains with students.

Sincerely,

Arthur M. Joffrion, Jr., Ed.D.  
Deputy Assistant Superintendent  
Educator Talent and Workforce Development

## Success Stories

## A Roadmap for Every Learner

“The LER greatly assists in the planning of lessons that promote student success. Students learn material in a variety of ways and have varying levels of aptitude. It is my job as an educator to assist my students in reaching their full potential. This rubric provides a roadmap for effective instruction and student learning.”

### Erin Melton

Health/P.E. Teacher and Health  
Science/First Aid/CPR/AED Instructor  
Montgomery High School  
Grant Parish



## Teacher Toolkit

### The Louisiana Educator Rubric: The importance of planning for effective instruction

The [Louisiana Educator Rubric](#) (LER) is a framework for effective teaching and a tool for teacher professional growth that includes four key domains – Instruction, Planning, Environment, and Professionalism – each with interconnected indicators that foster a holistic view of effective teaching and learning.

Effective planning involves making instructional decisions that best support students based on both student needs and a clear understanding of the unit's design. The Planning domain offers three powerful indicators to guide the development of effective lessons: Instructional Plans, Student Work, and Assessment. Planning is also a critically important area of focus as educators continue to deepen their understanding and use of high-quality instructional materials and internalize lesson plans to study units and prepare for lessons.

Internalization of Lesson Plans is the focus of the first descriptor for the Instructional Plans indicator. This preparation process relies on thoughtful planning grounded in what students need and what the lesson requires them to do. Regardless of whether teachers are using a high-quality curriculum or already-created lesson plans that may need refinement, the internalization step is essential. Teachers should use their preparation time to deeply understand the lesson and tailor the plan based on the needs of their specific students. Effective unit and lesson preparation strengthens teachers' content knowledge and ensures that all students have meaningful access to the content they are expected to learn.

The next time you work on internalizing lesson plans, here are three key actions to take. Notice how all three actions encompass the three indicators from the Planning domain.

- **Know the objective/standard(s)/key takeaways for student mastery:** You thoroughly understand the lesson objective, how it aligns to a standard(s), how it connects to the overall focus of the unit, and what the key takeaways will be for student mastery.
- **Know the student work included in the lesson, including the end-of-lesson assessment and any relevant text:** You understand the student work through the lens of a student. For example, you have worked the math problems students will work, or have read and annotated the text students will read and annotate.
- **Anticipate student support(s):** As you complete the work through the student lens, you are better able to anticipate misconceptions and which students will need the most support, where they will need it, and can plan for how students will receive support. This might look like annotating the lesson plan with how you will group students, how you will differentiate, and how you will leverage the differentiated supports the curriculum offers to meet the needs of different students. Or, it might look like noting additional scaffolding questions to the plan.

These are some ideas, but certainly not the only ways you can anticipate and plan for the support students will need. As you strengthen your practice under the Planning domain, you will also likely see progress in how you meet indicators in the Professionalism domain. For example, as you study units and prepare lessons, you might notice that you participate in self-reflection and growth by selecting specific activities, content knowledge, or pedagogical skills to enhance your proficiency – a descriptor of the Growing and Developing Professionally indicator.

The Planning and Professionalism domains are highly complementary. As educators reflect on what they have learned about students and student learning in their classroom from the first part of the school year, they can apply those insights to instruction for the second half of the year.

Tools are now available to support teacher collaboration focused on quality unit and lesson preparation.

ELA	Science
K-2 <a href="#">Skills</a> and <a href="#">Knowledge</a> Unit Tools K-2 <a href="#">Skills</a> and <a href="#">Knowledge</a> Lesson Prep <a href="#">3-12 Lesson Preparation Protocol</a>	<a href="#">Planning Guide for Science Instruction</a>
Math	Social Studies
<a href="#">Unit Study Tool</a> <a href="#">Lesson Preparation Protocol</a>	<a href="#">Unit Study Tool</a> <a href="#">Lesson Preparation Protocol</a>

## Making a Connection: Counselors

In the [Counselor Handbook](#) (on pages 32-36), the Meeting Student Needs indicator is outlined in detail. There are explanations for each descriptor, examples for the indicator as a whole, and example reflection/coaching questions. The explanations and examples illustrate how counselors

intentionally plan with students in mind, using data, needs assessments, strategic support/interventions, and lessons/counseling sessions.

## Action Items

### Reflection and Planning

- What was an adjustment you made in your instructional practice during the first half of the year that supported student needs?
- What can you apply from this experience to your planning for the second half of the year?

## Quick Links

[LEADS Public Collection](#)

[LEADS Library](#)

[Post-Conference Template](#)

[Formal Observation Cycle of Support](#)

[Louisiana Educator Rubric](#)

[Teacher Handbook](#)

[Evaluation Learning Year FAQ](#)

[SLT Reflection Tool](#)

[LES 2024-2025 Timeline](#)

[Bulletin 130](#)

[LEADS Newsletter Sign-Up](#)

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