

# EDCONNECT

A Publication for Louisiana  
TEACHERS + PRINCIPALS



March 2017

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## EDUCATOR HIGHLIGHTS

In "Write Your Wrongs," Mark Ebarb, 2015 Louisiana Teacher of the Year finalist and English teacher at Dutchtown High School in Ascension Parish, shares his perspective on teaching writing and offers tips to the new teacher.



*"As a new teacher, you will quickly grimace at the challenges and grin at the joys that you always assumed teaching could offer. You will be caught between proving your worth professionally and connecting with students personally. One way that you can bridge this gap is to invest in writing in the classroom."*

Read Mark's blog post on [Tomorrow's Teacher: A Believe and Prepare Educator Blog](#) and be sure to leave a comment.

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## DEPARTMENT NEWS

### **Louisiana's Draft ESSA State Plan**

On February 20, 2017, the Department posted for public comment a draft copy of a [plan](#) to comply with the Every Student Succeeds Act. This draft document, developed through nine months of intensive meetings and public dialogue, will be posted for comment to the Department's [website](#) until the end of March so that the Department can continue to receive public input.

The Department will submit its final plan to the federal government on April 3 to receive feedback prior to the start of the 2017-2018 school year, when the law takes full effect.

Please submit feedback on the draft plan by emailing [essalouisiana@la.gov](mailto:essalouisiana@la.gov).

### **Special Education Community Meetings**

Special education teachers and supervisors are invited to attend one of the following regional community meetings happening in March. These meetings will share information on the opportunities for students with disabilities within Louisiana's ESSA plan. Please email [specialeducation@la.gov](mailto:specialeducation@la.gov) with questions.

Date	Location	Time
March 20	681 Hwy 594, Monroe, LA	4:00-5:30 p.m.
March 21	925 West Edenborne Pkwy, Gonzales, LA	1:00-2:30 p.m. <i>(meeting will be live streamed and posted to the Department's <a href="#">ESSA webpage</a>)</i>
March 22	326 Gauthier Rd, Lafayette, LA	9:00-10:30 a.m.
March 22	2121 Mason Street, Alexandria, LA	4:30-6:00 p.m.

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## INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

### LEAP 2025 Practice Test Tips

The Department has released several resources to support teachers and students in preparing for the 2017 LEAP tests. Please review and share these tools and suggested action steps with the teachers in your school.

- Review the two-page [Spring 2017 Practice Test Quick Start Guide](#). This guide provides teachers with all of the information needed to access the practice tests and practice test guidance documents, score the practice tests, and access the computer-based practice test reports.
- Download the [LEAP 2025 Practice Test Webinar for Teachers presentation](#) for recommendations and general cautions when using the practice tests, guidance for using eDIRECT Educator Scoring for constructed-response questions, and directions for accessing two kinds of reports generated from the Educator Scoring application. Or listen to the recording of the [webinar](#) to hear the question and answer session with teachers who attended the live webinar.
- Schedule time for students to use the updated Online Tools Training (OTT) in INSIGHT before they take the online practice tests. This update includes the addition of technology-enhanced items, described in the [Technology-Enhanced Item Types Available in INSIGHT](#) document.
- Complete one or more of the practice tests. Paper-based social studies practice tests are currently available in the [Practice Test library](#) and in eDIRECT; teachers may view the computer-based practice tests using the Teacher Access link provided in the [Practice Test Quick Start Guide](#). ELA and math practice tests will be available the week of March 13, 2017.

Please email [assessment@la.gov](mailto:assessment@la.gov) with questions about these resources.

### BESE Approves Student Standards for Science

On March 8, 2017, BESE approved the [Louisiana Student Standards for Science](#). These were created by over eighty content experts and educators with input from parents and teachers from across the state. The new standards call for changes in what teachers teach, and to support implementation, school systems, schools, and the Department of Education must work together.

As with the ELA and math standards, implementation will be a strategic, supported effort that is fair to educators and students and includes a focus on quality curriculum, professional development, and assessment.

### **Standards Implementation Timeline:**

#### Instructional Materials Reviews

- Rubric released and call for submissions - Spring 2017
- Hiring and training of Teacher Leader Advisors - May 2017
- First curriculum reviews released - Fall 2017

#### New Standards Tools

- Connections to ELA and math standards - April 2017

- Key shifts and instructional implications - April 2017
- Middle school sample transition plan - June 2017
- Sample scope and sequence documents - Summer 2017

## Professional Development

- Self-paced learning - live and recorded webinars on new standards - May - July 2017
- Teacher Leader Summit - multiple 2-day and 1-day institutes at the Teacher Leader Summit
- Summer Training - multiple vendors offering intensive summer sessions and ongoing coaching opportunities

## Assessments

- Field test administered for grades 3-8 (same platform as ELA and math)- spring of 2018
- Current Biology EOC will be phased out over the next year, and a test that measures student performance on five levels will be phased in.
- EAGLE items will be developed by Teacher Leader Advisors and released throughout the 2017-2018 school year
- Operational test- spring of 2019

Please email [louisianastandards@la.gov](mailto:louisianastandards@la.gov) for more information.

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# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## Jump Start Super Summer Institute

Registration is now open in [Coursewhere](#) for the 2017 Jump Start Super Summer Institute (SSI) to be held July 17-21, 2017 in Lafayette, LA. Registration will close April 7. The Emergency Medical Responder session and prerequisite trainings (Basic Life Support and CPR Instructor) will be offered the week of July 10-15 at the Acadian Ambulance facility. The Department will pay training costs and provide lunch for secondary instructors attending SSI.

Please direct all questions about Super Summer Institute to [jumpstart@la.gov](mailto:jumpstart@la.gov).

## Library of Congress-Teaching with Primary Sources

Please share this entry with social studies teachers.

In June of 2017, the Library of Congress will host a professional development opportunity for social studies teachers entitled, "Teaching with Primary Sources." The four-day training will be held at Southeastern Louisiana University in the Teacher Education Building from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Educators will learn how to use Library of Congress primary sources to enhance instruction in social studies classrooms. Please download and submit the [Agreement to Participate](#) by May 1, 2017. For specific questions about the training, please contact the Library of Congress-Teaching with Primary Sources assistant director at [Stefanie.sorbet@selu.edu](mailto:Stefanie.sorbet@selu.edu).

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# PRINCIPAL SUPPORT

## Principal Support Grant

As the leaders of instruction in their schools, principals take on critical work such as building systems for school-wide collaboration focused on examining student work and making the best use of curriculum. To support principals with this work, the **Department released the [Principal Support Grant](#) application on March 1, 2017.**

The grant will support initiatives that help principals improve their instructional leadership. Examples of how these funds can be used include:

- salaries for TAP teacher leaders

- ongoing, hands-on support for TAP implementation
- funding principal, assistant principal, aspiring teacher leader, and district personnel participation in the Principal Fellowship program.

For more details on this application, see below.

- Grant applications due to [compass@la.gov](mailto:compass@la.gov) by April 7
- School systems notified of grant status by the end of April

If you are interested in having your school or school system apply for this grant, please contact your school system supervisor.

### **2015-2016 Transitional Student Growth Data**

2015-2016 Transitional Student Growth Data has been released and is available to school systems, principals, and teachers in the Compass Information System (CIS). Please email [compass@la.gov](mailto:compass@la.gov) for more information.

### **Requests for Foreign Language Associates**

The Department and CODOFIL partner with the U.S. Department of State's Teacher Exchange program to offer students in K-8 access to high-quality academic enrichment programs in World Languages. **Requests for K-8 French and/or Spanish teachers for the 2017-2018 school year are being accepted until March 22, 2017.** School systems interested in finding out more about hosting a foreign associate teacher should email [michele.braud@la.gov](mailto:michele.braud@la.gov).

### **AP Exam Fee Update**

To ensure that all students have access to early college coursework, the Department will provide an exam fee reimbursement for each 2017 Advanced Placement exam taken by a public school student who qualifies for the AP exam fee reduction.

To be eligible for a low-income test fee reimbursement, school test coordinators must code "option 1" on each qualifying student's AP answer document. The Department will reconcile all eligible exams as validated by the College Board and reimburse school systems in the fall of 2017 via an allocation and grant award notification.

Please email [collegereadiness@la.gov](mailto:collegereadiness@la.gov) with questions.

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