

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



September 19, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

No Child Left Behind and the LEAP assessment ushered in nearly two decades of strong focus on upper elementary and middle school teaching and learning. Act 3 did the same for infant to pre-K services in Louisiana.

The results in Louisiana have been profound in many ways. No state in the nation showed greater improvement in 4th grade reading on the most recent National Assessment of Education Progress, for example, than did Louisiana.

But there is evidence that we would be even more effective if we were to provide the focus and support to teachers in grades K through 2 that we have given to teachers of both younger and older students. Simply put, many students come into third grade struggling to comprehend texts and struggling to write. Improving in this area would have a profound impact on the future of many young people and on our state's school system.

To that end, the Department recently released a [Pre-K through Third Grade Guidebook](#), detailing specific steps sites and schools can take to provide focus and support teachers from pre-K through third grade. Naturally, the Guidebook includes programs and assessments that will assist schools and teachers to equip students with essential skills, such as identifying letters, sounding out words, and putting words together into complete sentences. The Guidebook also supports teachers in helping students to build knowledge about specific topics and express their thoughts on those subjects through writing and drawing. It is this knowledge of content—the stuff students read—that allows them to comprehend the meaning behind the words they read and write.

To support teachers in achieving this difficult task, the Guidebook makes three essential recommendations for site and school system leaders. First, it recommends [identifying a high-quality curriculum](#) that includes books that will interest and challenge children. Second, the Guidebook recommends that sites and schools use the “check-up” assessments listed on page 6 of the [Guidebook](#) to identify struggling readers while also making sure to assess students' skills in writing and talking about the books they're reading. Finally, the Guidebook suggests that teachers provide books that challenge children, even books above children's grade levels, rather than trying to fit every book to the reading level of each particular child. Books can be grouped by theme to help children develop interest in a particular subject or content topic.

There may be no issue more essential to schooling than literacy, and there are no ages more important than those covered by the primary grades. Teaching reading is an art and a science, and it requires a balance of traditionally taught skills with actual knowledge of facts, events, and places that will help young students to make meaning of all the new words they're learning. What an inspiring mission for our state's elementary schools.

As always, thank you for all you do for our children,

John

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Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events

- [Supervisor and Teacher Leader Collaborations](#): September 20, Baton Rouge
- [Assessment Commission](#): September 21, Claiborne Building at 9:30 a.m.
- [Eureka Remediation Tools for Grades 6 through Algebra I, Part Two](#): September 21 at 3:30 p.m.
- [2017 College Board Fall Counselor Workshop](#): September 22 at 9:00 a.m.
- [Superintendents' Advisory Council](#): September 22 at 9:00 a.m.
- [CLEP® in Louisiana Webinar](#): September 25 at 3:00 p.m.
- [Assessment and Accountability Office Hours](#): September 26 at 1:00 p.m.
- [Special Education Advisory Council](#): September 27 at 9:00 a.m.
- [Charter School Authorizers Workshop](#): September 27 at 10:00 a.m.
- [Eureka Remediation Tools for Grades 4 through 6, Part One](#): September 27 at 3:30 p.m.
- [Eureka Remediation Tools for Grades 4 through 6, Part Two](#): September 28 at 3:30 p.m.
- [CLEP® in Louisiana Webinar](#): September 28 at 9:00 a.m.

Important Deadlines

- Register for [Charter School Authorizers Workshop](#) by September 20.
- Submit proposals for [LEEC 2017 Grants Program](#) by September 25.
- Submit [2017-2018 High Cost Services Grant Round 1 applications](#) by September 28.
- Submit [ACT MOU](#) by September 29.
- Report [KEA and K-3 screening assessment results](#) by September 29.
- Submit [Teacher and Principal of the Year nominations](#) by September 29.

School System Support

Reminder: Download the Session Materials from the September Collaborations

Thank you to everyone who attended the September [Supervisor](#) and [Teacher Leader](#) Collaborations in Ruston, Lafayette, and Harvey. We are looking forward another successful event tomorrow, September 20, in Baton Rouge.

Please visit the [School System Support Library](#) for session materials, or email louisianateacherleaders@la.gov with questions related to this event.

Reminder: Join the Charter School Authorizers Workshop

On September 27, the Department is hosting the second in a series of charter school oversight workshops for districts that have authorized charter schools or are interested in authorizing charter schools in the future. The workshop will take place at the Claiborne Building in Baton Rouge from 10:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. District staff are encouraged to attend. Staff who missed the May workshop may also register for a makeup session that will be held from 8:15 until 9:45 a.m.

The deadline to [register](#) for either workshop is **tomorrow, September 20, 2017**.

For more information please visit the Department's district charter authorization [webpage](#) or email david.shepard@la.gov.

Reminder: Join the Webinars on Eureka Remediation Tools

To support teachers who use the [Eureka curriculum](#), the Department is hosting a two-part series of webinars.

- **Webinar for teachers of grades 4 through 6**
 - Part One: September 27 at 3:30 p.m.
 - Part Two: September 28 at 3:30 p.m.
- **Webinar for teachers of grades 6 through Algebra I**
 - Part One: [\(video coming soon\)](#)
 - Part Two: September 21 at 3:30 p.m.

To join the Webinars on Eureka Remediation Tools

- Go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/academiccontent/>;
- Enter the meeting room as a guest and provide your name;
- Select the "listen only" mode.

Please email louisianastandards@la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Pre-K through Grade 3 Guidebook Released

The Department released the [Pre-K through Third Grade Guidebook](#) for site and school system leaders to help them create strong plans for their schools and centers to ensure quality and continuity of proven practices across pre-K through third grade.

The Department is providing [sessions](#) on the guidebook at the September Collaborations to further support site and school system leaders.

Please email jill.slack@la.gov with questions related to the guide.

Reminder: Social Studies Sample Scope and Sequence Updates

The Department has updated several of the [Social Studies Scope and Sequence documents](#) and is in the process of updating others for the for the 2017-2018 school year. These updated documents provide instructional tasks which build content knowledge and skill with sources, a coherent yearlong frame which makes connections among content ideas, and assessments which measure how well students express informed opinions with evidence and outside knowledge. The complete scope and sequence for grade 7 will be available by the end of September 2017.

Please email classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov for more information.

Reminder: Applications Now Open for Louisiana Green Ribbon Schools

The Louisiana Environmental Education Commission, working together with the Louisiana Department of Education, will nominate up to five pre-K through 12 schools for the 2018 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Award. Selected schools demonstrate achievement reducing resource consumption and costs, supporting student and staff health and wellness, and providing innovative environmental, sustainability, and STEM learning opportunities.

More information and applications can be found on the Green Ribbon Schools [web page](#). Please email BGautreau@wlf.la.gov with any questions.

Reminder: Louisiana Environmental Education Commission Grants Now Available

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' Environmental Education Commission (LEEC) is now accepting proposals for the 2017 grants program.

- Educator Grants: maximum award of \$1,000 for one teacher or \$2,000 for a team
- Green Schools Grants: maximum award of \$5,000
- Professional Development Grants: maximum award of \$2,500

The submission deadline for each of these grants is September 25, 2017. For more information and applications, visit the LEEC Grants Opportunities [web page](#). Please email vortego@wlf.la.gov with questions.

Reminder: Social Studies Resources from the National Humanities Center

The [National Humanities Center](#) has just launched new titles in their [annual webinar series](#). These 90-minute sessions are free and include associated resources and offer opportunities to earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Although the webinars are designed for an adult audience, they may also be used with high school students.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with any questions.

Assessment and Accountability

New: Join the LEAP 2025 High School Practice Test Webinars

The Department is hosting webinars in October to discuss the LEAP 2025 high school practice tests.

- **October 5, 2017**
 - Supervisors: 9:00–10:00 a.m.
 - Teachers: 3:30–4:30 p.m.
- **October 6, 2017**
 - Teachers: 9:00–10:00 a.m.
 - Supervisors: 3:30–4:30 p.m.

To join the LEAP 2025 High School Practice Test Webinar

- Go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/assessment-accountability/>
- Dial access number 1-855-240-2575
- Provide meeting room number 89147656

Please email assessment@la.gov for more information.

Reminder: LEAP 2025 Updates

[LEAP 2025 Assessment Guides](#) for grades 3-8 math, ELA, social studies, Algebra I, Geometry, English I, and English II have been updated and reposted to the Assessment Guidance library. Primary updates include

- ELA: minor test design updates for all grades/courses
- ELA and math: session times updated for all grades/courses
- Social studies: achievement level descriptors for all grades

Please email assessment@la.gov for more information.

New: Reminders for District Testing Coordinators and Accountability Contacts

Assessment Administration Support and Training

Assessment and Accountability Office Hours: Tuesday, September 26, 2017, at 1:00 p.m.

- Webinar link: <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/assessment-accountability/>
- Phone Number: 1-646-307-1380
- Participant PIN code: 89147656

LEAP 2025

- 2017 LEAP 2025 social studies student-level reports were released in eDIRECT on Wednesday, September 13. State, school-system, and school-level results can be found in the [pre-K-8 Performance Library](#).
- Please print the [Parent Guide to the 2017 Social Studies Student Reports](#) and send them home with the student reports. The Guide is available in Spanish, Arabic, and Vietnamese in the [Family Support Library](#).

ACT and WorkKeys

- ACT MOU
 - **September 29:** Deadline to submit the [2017-2018 ACT MOU](#) and [Estimated Number of Testers Worksheet](#). Originals should be mailed to the following address.
Trish Gilbert
Office of Academic Policy and Analytics
Louisiana Department of Education
1201 North Third St.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
- Fall 2017 WorkKeys
 - Accommodated WorkKeys materials are being delivered this week; use PearsonAccessnext or call the WorkKeys helpdesk at 1-800-WORKKEY (967-5539) to track missing orders (Louisiana state testing code: 19).
 - **Securely** check in accommodated test materials within 24 hours of initial shipment arriving at schools from the district; see pages 11-13 of ACT WorkKeys Paper Testing Administration Manual for instructions.
 - Fall 2017 WorkKeys Q&A session: Sept 26; register at <https://act.ilinc.com/register/kfjwycy>.

Technology

- Draft technology footprints will be available to school system technology coordinators in early Fall in the FTP.
- Final technology footprints will be available after the December TRT window closes.

Please email assessment@la.gov with questions.

Student Opportunities

New: 2017 College Board Fall Counselor Workshop

To encourage growth of AP® programs statewide, the Department is inviting school counselors to participate in the 2017 College Board Fall Counselor Workshop. Registration will be available on site.

Date: September 22, 2017

Time: 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Location: University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Student Union, Second Floor

Please contact rcurtis@collegeboard.org with questions related to this event.

New: CTE Leadership Academy for Current and Aspiring CTE Leaders

Please share this information with current, new, and aspiring career and technical education (CTE) leaders.

A team of experienced CTE supervisors has collaborated with the Department to launch the new [Louisiana CTE Leadership Academy](#). On November 6, 7, and 8, CTE Supervisors and Jump Start Leadership Team members will hold nine regional meetings to describe the different features of the CTE Leadership Academy. Topics include

- CTE Leadership Training: elite nine-day program for current and aspiring CTE leaders to earn full leadership certification
- CTE Leadership Academy Badges system: CTE leaders earn mastery badges on critical Jump Start implementation topics

Please visit the [Louisiana CTE Leadership Academy](#) to learn more and to [register](#) for the November regional leadership meeting nearest you.

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with any questions.

Reminder: Register for the Fall 2017 Counselor Collaborations

Statewide Counselor Collaborations for professional school counselors will be held in October. The topics covered will include graduation requirements and pathways, financial aid, and information on special state programs. Counselors are encouraged to [register](#) for a meeting in their region but may attend out of region if needed.

Please email stephanie.marcum@la.gov with any questions.

Reminder: 2017 Louisiana Counseling Association Annual Conference

Please share this information with school counselors and system supervisors.

The Louisiana Counseling Association will hold its annual conference October 1–3, 2017, at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Baton Rouge. This year's theme is Mentoring: Enriching and Empowering Relationships. **Preregistration is closed, but participants may register on site beginning Saturday, September 30.** Counselors are encouraged to attend to get the latest information in the field and earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs). Please visit the [LCA Conference](#) web page for more information.

For more information, please email stephanie.marcum@la.gov.

Reminder: Join the CLEP® in Louisiana Webinar

Please share this information with system and school site administrators and testing coordinators.

The College Board is offering the webinar, “CLEP in Louisiana,” to provide an overview of the [College-Level Examination Program \(CLEP®\)](#) and to share information on the following topics:

- Understanding the benefits of CLEP for students and schools
- Opening a CLEP Test Center
- Promoting the CLEP test
- Using CLEP resources

System and school site administrators and testing coordinators are encouraged to register for one of the following dates and times using access code **CLEP171a**.

- [Monday, September 25 at 3:00 p.m.](#)
- [Friday, September 28 at 9:00 a.m.](#)

For more information, please email highschoolacademics@la.gov.

Talent

Reminder: Nominate Louisiana’s 2019 Teacher and Principal of the Year

Please forward this information to principals and teachers.

The Department, along with [Dream Teachers](#) and the [Louisiana Association of Principals](#), honors the state’s most exceptional educators through the annual Teacher and Principal of the Year program.

Please nominate yourself or someone you know who meets the following criteria:

- Demonstrates excellence in teaching or school leadership;
- Guides students of all backgrounds and abilities to achieve excellence;
- Innovates in and outside of the classroom walls;
- Embodies lifelong learning;
- Collaborates with colleagues, students, and families; and
- Creates a culture of respect and success.

Nominations must be submitted by September 29, 2017, via the [nominations portal](#) or on the [Department’s Awards Program page](#).

For more information, please review the [Teacher and Principal of the Year Nomination Overview](#) or contact excellenteducators@la.gov with questions.

Special Education

Reminder: High Cost Services Grant Round Open Until September 28

The 2017-2018 High Cost Services Grant is now open for Round 1 applications. **The application will close on Thursday, September 28.** For more information about the 2017-2018 application, please refer to the [state plan](#) as well as the [slide deck](#) from August High Cost Services Webinar.

If you have questions about the application, please email ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov.

Federal Programs

New: Protocol for Budgeting Program Balances in eGMS

In order to access funds, all schools systems, including charters, with unbudgeted federal fund balances must submit revised program budgets for any unbudgeted fund balances within 14 days of their being available in eGMS and ensure that their application is in Submitted or Approved status. Please see the [E-Grants Management System](#) for more information.

Please email ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov with questions regarding these protocols.

New: Equitable Services to Private Schools

As a part of the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), each state is required to designate an ombudsman to help ensure equity for private school children, teachers, and other educational personnel. Responsibilities include monitoring and enforcing equitable services provisions involving private school services, as well as assisting school systems in the following areas:

- Preparing for and conducting private school consultation meetings;
- Preparing required communications to private schools regarding program scope of work, funding generated, and evaluation of services; and
- Providing support if there are unresolved issues between local school systems and private school officials.

For assistance with ESSA implementation involving equitable services to private schools, please email Daphne Flentroy, LDOE Ombudsman, at daphne.flentroy@la.gov.

Reminder: Purchasing Pre-K Curriculum Materials with Title I Funds

The U.S. Department of Education recently confirmed that school systems may use Title I funds to purchase pre-K curriculum materials. School systems are therefore encouraged to consider upgrading their current pre-K curriculum materials to meet Tier I criteria.

Please see the [E-Grants Management System](#) for more information about using Title I funds to purchase pre-K curriculum materials, or email questions to ldoe.grantshelpdesk@la.gov.

Statewide Monitoring

New: 2017-2018 First Quarter Coordinated Monitoring Schedule for School Systems

The Division of Statewide Monitoring conducts annual monitoring of local education agencies (LEAs) and nonpublic organizations to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements. Beginning October 15, targeted monitoring of prior year activities will occur for the following federal and/or state programs:

- Education Excellence Funds,
- School Improvement Grant (Cohorts 5 and 6),
- Migrant Education Program,
- English Language Acquisition and Immigrant Set-Aside Programs,
- Rural Education Achievement Program,
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program, and
- Carl Perkins, Career and Technical Education Program.

September 19, 2017

To assist LEAs in thoughtful planning and preparation for a scheduled monitoring event, a statewide monitoring team leader has been assigned to each school system, charter school, and nonpublic entity. The team leader will serve as the facilitator of all processes relative to the monitoring event, and will send a more detailed monitoring notification in a separate email. Any necessary planning documents, monitoring protocols, and instructions for submitting information to the LDOE will be sent directly to the district superintendent, charter school CMO, and/or other authorized individual.

Please refer to the [tentative monitoring schedule](#) and email linda.tindall@la.gov with questions.