

May 2026



LEADS

Louisiana's Educator Advancement and Development System



Dear Colleagues,

LEADS provides a common vision that is taking shape in classrooms, schools, and systems across the state: intentional practice leads to meaningful ownership. Whether through the Louisiana Educator Rubric, the Louisiana Leader Rubric, or the Louisiana Counselor Rubric, the progression is consistent. When educators design purposeful opportunities for exploring ideas, decision-making, and reflection, students, teachers, and school communities take greater ownership of learning and growth.

In this month's newsletter, you will see how learner autonomy serves as a critical bridge between effective instructional practice and student ownership of learning. You will also find practical strategies, reflection tools, and educator perspectives that illustrate how this work comes to life in classrooms and schools across the state.

Sincerely,

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

Success Stories

"Over my years of teaching, I have learned that mastering teacher-directed instruction is only the beginning. The real shift happens when instruction becomes student-driven. For learning to be meaningful, students must understand not just what they are learning, but why it matters. Within the LER indicator Standards and Objectives, the descriptor that resonates most with me is: 'Students are able to articulate what they are learning and why, and explain those to their peers.' This reflects a critical transition in the classroom: from the teacher being the sole communicator of objectives to students taking



ownership of their learning. Ultimately, when students can articulate the purpose behind their learning, they are far more invested in mastering the content.”

Christine Bayard

6th Grade Math/Science Teacher/Interim Master Teacher

Johnston-Hopkins Elementary School
Iberia Parish



“The Louisiana Leader Rubric has shaped my approach to teacher ownership by pushing me to ensure all teachers and instructional leaders have a shared responsibility for student growth. Intentionally leveraging each teacher’s strengths has enhanced their sense of ownership. During professional learning meetings this year, teachers collaborated in creating a common rubric for our schoolwide writing strategy for each subject and grade level. Allowing teachers to contribute to the development of the schoolwide rubric

created a strong sense of ownership and investment. This collaborative approach increased buy-in and led to greater consistency in how the rubric was implemented across the school and subject areas.”

Dana Lancon

Principal

Caneview Elementary School
Iberia Parish

Teacher Toolkit

Teacher Toolkit: Student Progression of Learning Alongside Effective Instruction

The Louisiana Educator Rubric (LER) is all about highly effective instruction that results in deep student learning. Through the LER, highly impactful instruction moves beyond *foundational student engagement* to *student ownership of learning*.

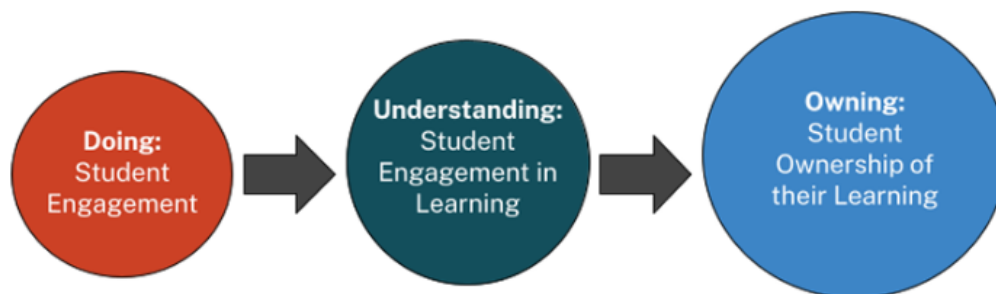
The progression of student learning, from engagement to ownership, is described across the performance levels of the LER. While student engagement is often cited as a goal of instruction, it is only one step toward student learning and ownership. In classrooms, we want to first ensure student engagement (that students are doing the work). But then, we want to progress toward ensuring that students move toward understanding what they are learning and engage with the cognitive dissonance of learning. Student

ownership of their learning is the ultimate goal: growing students who have intrinsic motivation to learn and can make connections between their learning and real-world applications.

Focusing on the Students Supports Deeper Learning

LEADS resources and processes create opportunities for students to engage in deep thinking and learning and help structure instruction in ways that promote student ownership of learning. Each step of the learning progression is important, and none happens without the others.

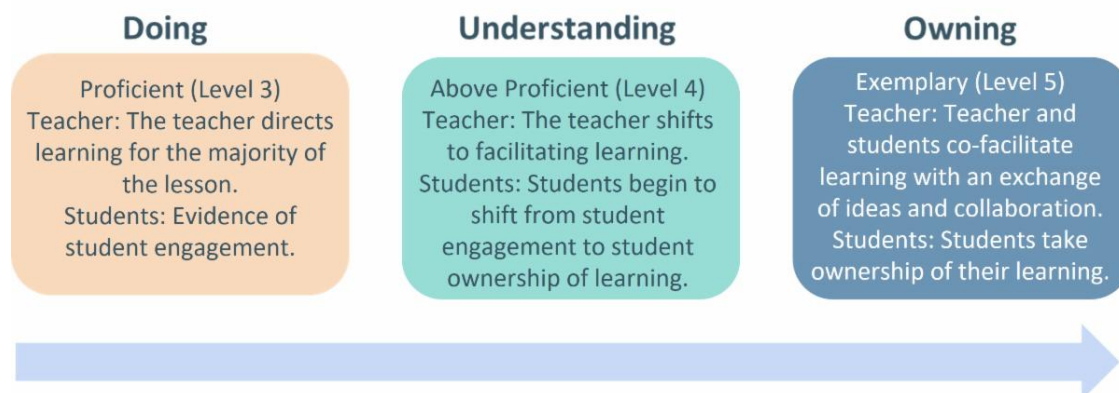
Progressing from Student Engagement to Student Ownership



The LER heightens the focus on students and is designed to support a shift from proficient to exemplary instruction through the student ownership language and expectations, with Level 5 on the rubric reflecting student ownership of learning at its highest level.

Now that you have reviewed the steps of the learning progression, consider how the three steps connect to the rubric and how teacher actions might look different from Level 3 to Level 5.

Defining a Student's Progression of Learning Alongside Effective Instruction



Learner Autonomy Yields Ownership of Learning

Student ownership doesn't suddenly appear at Level 5; it is the result of intentionally increasing learner autonomy through effective instructional practice and intentional use of high-quality instructional materials. Learner autonomy is the bridge between teacher practice and student ownership.

Learner autonomy occurs when students are provided opportunities to actively engage in the learning process by exploring ideas, making choices, and reflecting on what works best for them. What this really means is that autonomy isn't just about independent work or students being 'on their own.' It's about intentionally creating conditions where students think, reason, select strategies, evaluate their progress, and make decisions. It is students doing the cognitive work of learning. While autonomy looks different across grade levels and content areas, one concept will remain consistent: students will be the active agents in the learning process, not passive recipients of directions.

Autonomy doesn't happen by accident. It is intentionally designed and supported through specific teacher moves that show up in daily instruction. As you think through the LER domains and indicators, consider which teacher moves might increase opportunities for students to think, make decisions, and problem-solve independently. For now, let's look into some teacher moves under the Thinking indicator that might strengthen instruction and move students toward learner autonomy.

High-leverage Actions	Teacher Moves	Teacher Questions to Consider
Thinking: Students are provided opportunities to monitor their thinking to ensure they understand what they are learning, are attending to critical information, and are aware of the learning strategies they are using and why.	• Provide tools such as rubrics, success criteria, or checklists to help students evaluate their own work. • Prompt students to compare work to the criteria and identify next steps. • Build reflection routines into each lesson so students pause and assess progress while learning. • Offer timely, specific feedback that reinforces reflection and supports continued improvement. • Model reflective thinking so students see how to analyze their own learning process.	• What tools will help students monitor their learning as they work? • How will I embed moments for students to reflect during the lesson, not just at the end? • What prompts or routines will help students identify strengths and next steps? • How can my feedback reinforce student reflection and self-assessment? • How can I model reflection to help students internalize this practice?

Making a Connection: Shifting Toward Ownership on LLR and LCR

Across LEADS, a common thread connects the LER, the Louisiana Leader Rubric (LLR), and the Louisiana Counselor Rubric (LCR): a purposeful shift toward ownership.

In the LER, instructional practice progresses from student engagement to student ownership of learning. Similarly, the Louisiana Leader Rubric reflects a progression from instructional leadership centered on individual decision-making to distributed leadership, in which school leaders empower teacher leaders and teachers to co-lead, collaborate, and take shared ownership of instructional improvement. Exemplary leadership is evident when school leaders cultivate conditions in which educators work together to drive learning, innovation, and continuous growth across the school community.

The Louisiana Counselor Rubric expands this vision of ownership even further by emphasizing support for the whole student. Counselors foster student ownership by helping learners understand their academic progress, develop social and personal skills, and actively plan for career, military, and college readiness. Through collaboration with school leaders, teachers, families, community partners, higher education institutions, and industry leaders, counselors empower students to take meaningful ownership of their goals and future pathways.

Together, the LER, LLR, and LCR illustrate a shared vision: as educators intentionally build autonomy, whether for students, teachers, or school communities, ownership grows. LEADS collectively reinforces that impactful practice at every level moves beyond compliance toward empowered learners, educators, and schools.

Action Items

1. Review the learning progression and reflect on how your instruction sets students up to do, understand, or own.
2. Consider the high-leverage actions for Thinking outlined in this newsletter and select one teacher move you will intentionally implement this week. Use the guiding questions to plan how the move will increase learner autonomy and support students in taking greater ownership of their learning.

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