

LOUISIANA PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

A Resource to Inform and Celebrate
Louisiana's Building-Level Leaders

February 22, 2024

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Principal Corner



It is hard to believe that we are almost at the finish line for the 2023 – 2024 school year! As school leaders reflect upon the great things happening at our schools, it is necessary for us to continue working through effective best practices around teacher retention. In the ever-evolving landscape of education, teacher retention remains a cornerstone for creating a stable, effective, and nurturing learning environment. As educators face an array of challenges ranging from workload pressures to the pursuit of work-life balance, we stand in a unique position to cultivate a supportive atmosphere that encourages teacher longevity. Drawing on proven strategies and innovative practices, here are a few key approaches that school leaders can implement to foster teacher retention:

Creating a Culture of Support and Professional Growth

At the heart of teacher retention is the creation of a culture that values continuous learning and professional development. Principals can champion this by providing regular opportunities for teachers to engage in professional learning communities, pursue further education, and attend workshops or conferences relevant to their fields. Such initiatives not only enrich teachers' instructional capabilities but also signal a commitment to their career advancement and personal growth.

Recognizing and Valuing Teacher Contributions

Acknowledgment and appreciation of teachers' efforts plays a pivotal role in retention. This can be achieved through formal and informal recognition programs including awards, shout-outs in meetings, or personal notes of thanks. These gestures of appreciation go a long way in making teachers feel valued and understood, thereby increasing their loyalty and satisfaction with their workplace.

Fostering a Collaborative Environment

Collaboration among teachers fosters a sense of community and shared purpose, essential elements for a positive work environment. Principals can facilitate this by promoting team-teaching opportunities, encouraging interdisciplinary projects, and creating spaces for teachers to share resources and teaching strategies. Such an environment not only enhances instructional practices but also builds strong professional relationships among staff.

Encouraging Teacher Autonomy and Leadership

Empowering teachers to take leadership roles in curriculum development, school improvement initiatives, and decision-making processes can enhance their sense of ownership and commitment to the school's mission. By trusting teachers as professionals and valuing their insights, principals can foster a collaborative leadership model that benefits the entire school community.

In conclusion, teacher retention is multifaceted, requiring a thoughtful and comprehensive approach that addresses both the professional and personal needs of educators. By creating a supportive environment, recognizing and valuing contributions, fostering collaboration, and encouraging autonomy and leadership, principals can significantly impact the satisfaction and retention of their teachers. As Dr. Brad Johnson aptly puts it, "If you want to keep the best teachers, treat them like they are the best. Few teachers leave an environment where they feel valued, supported, appreciated, and treated like professionals." This powerful reminder serves as a guiding principle for all educational leaders in their quest to nurture and retain the invaluable educators who shape the future of our society.

Nicole Jones, Principal, Lanier Elementary School – a Redesign School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana

LDOE Corner



Although it is February, school systems and the Louisiana Department of Education have begun making preparations for the 2024-2025 school year. The LDOE has begun to release a statewide platform for professional learning called [Canopy](#) accessible to all K-12 employees at no cost to school systems. Canopy is a learning and development platform for organizations that prioritize interactive learning and strategic analytics. All professional learning will be housed in the [Professional Learning Platform](#) including monthly school system webinars, topic-specific webinars, Teacher Leader Summit Sessions, and any professional learning hosted by LDOE staff and/or professional learning partners.

The exciting part for principals is that you as school level leaders will also be able to create your own professional learning modules in the platform. You will be able to build interactive and in-depth learning experiences using 20+ unique engagement tools. Instructors can create higher-quality learning experiences in less time. It will also allow school-level leaders to assign and enroll teachers in relevant professional learning from a single course catalog and track their progress and certificates across professional learning modules. School-level leaders can easily track individual and cohort progress, review responses to engagement questions, provide feedback, and award certificates upon completion. These features can play a key role in coaching and mentoring your teachers, especially with the implementation of the new Louisiana evaluation system. Each learning

experience can be progress monitored by viewing individual progress, total time engaged, and last login for each learner.

School-level leaders will only be able to access their own school's data and system-level leaders will only be able to access their own school system's data. LDOE has begun working with data managers, LEA security coordinators, and EdTech directors to ensure each employee has access to Canopy through EdLink Security.

Training is crucial for a successful implementation of the PL Platform. After users receive their EdLink Credentials and Canopy permission (Learner, Instructor, or Admin), users will need to complete the online training in Canopy to access the Professional Learning Platform. These trainings will be released in Spring 2024.

LDOE is looking forward to seeing all that can be accomplished using the PL Platform. If you have any questions or need any assistance, please reach out to amanda.slaughter@la.gov.

Amanda Slaughter, Education Consultant
Division of Educator Talent and Workforce Development

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Principal's Webinar Series

The LDOE hosts a monthly webinar series for current school leaders and principal supervisors on best practices in school leadership aligned with the state's priorities. Each month, the webinar features national and Louisiana experts sharing strategies and tools on a specific topic necessary for being effective in the school leader role. February's webinar will feature information on the topic of Principals as Human Capital Leaders.

Webinar Date and Time: February 26 at 1 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97054177103?pwd=Vm9DYmZpNXhKSGQrVnJwSjVMb25aZz09>

Webinar Phone Number: 346-248-7799

Meeting ID#: 970 5417 7103

Passcode: 310386

Please contact louisianaleaders@la.gov with questions.

Teacher Leader Summit

The 12th annual [Teacher Leader Summit](#) will be held May 28-30, in New Orleans at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. This year's Teacher Leader Summit will focus on "Leading the Next Level." [Regular registration](#) opened February 3. Tickets are available on a first come, first served basis. Registration closes on March 15, or at sellout.

Please contact events@emergentmethod.com with questions.

RESOURCES

ACADEMICS

Assessment Literacy Initiative

The LDOE assessment content team and the Center for Assessment will host the March session of the monthly webinar series on March 7. The focus of this session is Local Assessment System Audits: How Do Teachers and Leaders Know if the Collection of Assessments They Administer is Any Good? (Part 1).

Each session in the [Effective Assessment Practices](#) series will provide opportunities for Louisiana educators (both leaders and classroom educators) to learn about and discuss the most important and practical topics related to assessment in school systems and classrooms. An optional question-and-answer session will take place immediately following the webinar. The webinar will be recorded.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** March 7 at 3:30 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82217294500>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646 931 3860
- **Webinar ID#:** 822 1729 4500
- **Passcode:** 959799

Please contact assessment@la.gov with questions.

ELA

ELA Guidebooks Text Availability Update

Due to shifts in text permissions, a text critical to the implementation of the 2018 Grade 6 ELA Guidebooks unit Steve Jobs will no longer be accessible to the [XanEdu](#) unit readers. The [ELA Guidebooks Licensing Updates](#) document provides additional information regarding this update. School systems that have additional copies of the current unit reader may continue to implement the unit; however, new unit readers purchased from XanEdu will not contain all of the texts required for unit implementation.

The ELA Guidebooks 6-8 (2024) units will be released this spring. Additional information regarding these units, including the [overview](#), [writing progression](#), and [introduction webinar](#) is now available.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

MATH

Foundational Lessons to Accelerate Math Education (FLAME)

All units of [FLAME](#) for grades Kindergarten through 5 are now available. FLAME resources for middle school are currently in development and are expected to be released this fall. Sessions will be available at the Teacher Leader Summit for educators to learn more about FLAME.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Bayou Bridges: A K-8 Louisiana Social Studies Curriculum Updates

All grade 6 Bayou Bridges units are now available. Please navigate to the [Bayou Bridges Resource web page](#) to access. Units are aligned to meet the [2022 Louisiana Student Standards for Social Studies](#). All grade 7 units will be published by February 28.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

DIVERSE LEARNERS

Dyslexia Training Opportunity

Through a partnership between the LDOE and the Dyslexia Resource Center, a cohort of 25 educators will be selected to participate in a dyslexia practitioner training program. Certified teachers who are interested should apply to the program by completing the [Dyslexia Training Application](#) by April 15 and attend one of the following informational webinars.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** February 29 at 5 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register>
- **Webinar ID #:** 862 9151 4793
- **Passcode:** 534682
- **Phone Number:** 646 931 3860

- **Webinar Date and Time:** March 19 at 4:30 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register>
- **Webinar ID #:** 861 5999 5540
- **Passcode:** 919998
- **Phone Number:** 309 205 3325

Please contact diverselearnersupport@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

Aspiring Principal Fellowship 2024-2025 Application Available

The Louisiana Department of Education is expanding the Aspiring Principal Fellowship (APF) for the 2024-2025 school year. APF cohort participants will meet throughout the year to explore best practices with regional experts, participate in school visits, and reflect on leadership practices. Participants will exit this fellowship with a robust leadership portfolio, the guidance of Louisiana's most successful principals, and a strong network of lifelong colleagues.

Applicants must hold a current EDL1 certification in Louisiana. School systems need to cover the cost of the \$1,000 tuition for presenters and materials, as well as travel costs. Interested candidates should complete the [Aspiring Principal Fellowship Application](#) no later than March 8. Fellowship applicants will be notified of acceptance by March 28.

Additional information about the Aspiring Principal Fellowship can be found on the [APF overview document](#).

Please contact louisianaleaders@la.gov with questions.

PRINCIPAL NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

Do you have a colleague who would benefit from receiving this newsletter? Forward this copy and encourage them to [subscribe](#) to receive our next monthly newsletter.

PRINCIPAL APPRECIATION

If you have an extraordinary building-level leader you would like to recommend to be highlighted in future newsletters, please submit information about the outstanding leader using the [LDOE Principal's Newsletter Leader Spotlight Nomination Form](#). This note of appreciation will be included in our next monthly newsletter.

Darron Underwood, Ouachita Junior High School in Ouachita Parish

“Mr. Underwood has accomplished great things for the benefit of our students and faculty in a short time. He welcomed challenges and has restored much-needed structures within the school. Mr. Underwood values the well-being of our teachers. We are thankful for Mr. Underwood's leadership!” *submitted by Meredith Brown*

DATES TO CONSIDER FOR BUILDING-LEVEL LEADERS

| Important Dates | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Monthly Principal webinar - Principals as Human Capital Leaders | February 26 at 1 p.m. |
| Effective Assessment Practices webinar | March 7 at 3:30 p.m. |
| Aspiring Principal Fellowship Applications due | March 8 |
| Dyslexia Training Applications due | April 15 |
| Teacher Leader Summit | May 28 - 30 |