

LOUISIANA PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER



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



March 21, 2024

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Principal Corner



Jill Jackson said it best when she said, “In education, if you’re not talking about how to improve the quality and impact of instruction then you’re not talking about much.” Cue the addition of the coaching plan to the evaluation process. Everything about this new evaluation cycle has you consider coaching individuals through the lens of how it will impact students, and shouldn’t that be how we measure everything in education?

As the instructional leader of my school, it is necessary that I remain a part of the coaching process as much as the instructional coaches. Developing a coaching plan after an evaluation has made my feedback more actionable and attainable to my staff. They have come to realize that I am supporting them through collaboration and coaching in order for them to have the greatest impact on student achievement. Evaluations no longer feel like they are being done for compliance, or that they are only done to “catch” poor instruction; rather, all teachers now expect to receive quality feedback and coaching support through a process and not a one-time evaluation event.

A good coach doesn’t simply tell their players what they did wrong; they model how to improve. Telling an athlete how they can improve does not lead to their improvement, but showing them does everything. Teaching is much the same. Identifying an area of reinforcement and refinement is not enough. We must also articulate the recommended actions needed to improve in this area and model when necessary.

I truly believe teaching is one of the most intricate and critical professions. We must support our teachers in this difficult work. Without coaching, teachers will be left with knowing areas to grow but may not have all the tools or resources to make this happen on their own. Our coaching should ensure teachers grow.

Coaching is all about building trust. Reflective educators want open and transparent conversations centered on student impact. I have found that teachers are less likely to resist the process when they know this is less about them and more about how to move the needle on their students. Of all the things

that coaching does well, one of the most beneficial aspects of this process is its ability to strengthen the relationship between the administration and the staff. This cycle allows the administration to build a positive rapport through the lens of support. The gradual release over the course of the cycle will communicate confidence in the teacher's ability to hone their craft. Trust brings receptiveness and receptiveness prompts action. The ultimate goal of the coaching cycle is for it to result in the necessary actions that will create a long-lasting impact on our students.

Brittney Rosenbach, Principal, Bains Elementary, West Feliciana Parish

LDOE Corner



As educators, we all strive to provide the best possible education for students. We spend hours planning lessons, analyzing assessment data and collaborating with peers in order to positively impact students. How can we be supported as we continuously seek to sharpen our skills in order to meet the needs of all learners?

The Louisiana Educator Advancement and Development System (LEADS) is an improved evaluation system that is designed to assist in improving instructional and leadership skills. Rather than focusing solely on performance and ratings, this evaluation system is centered around coaching and support. The evaluation process will allow educators to focus on their specific areas of improvement and receive differentiated support for success.

LEADS evaluations will:

- Provide high-quality feedback to teachers and leaders that is actionable, detailed, and timely;
- Use research-based teaching and leadership standards that provide clear descriptions of practice across a range of indicators;
- Support the continuous improvement of teaching and learning using materials teachers use every day in classrooms;
- Offer opportunities for teamwork and collaboration that help educators to develop their practice;
- Use multiple, trained evaluators to build more accurate assessments of a teacher's instructional performance and leaders' leadership practices (optional);
- Provide differentiated follow-up coaching and support based on refinement areas; and
- Enable educators to reflect on their practice and share their views as part of the evaluation process.

During the 2024-2025 LEADS Evaluation Learning Year, systems have the [option](#) to transition to LEADS or continue using legacy systems such as COMPASS. Final adjustments will be made following the Learning Year and full implementation will take place during 2025-2026. Those systems that opt to transition to LEADS during the 2024-2025 school year will use the Louisiana Leader, Educator, and Counselor Rubrics. [Training](#) for evaluators and designated observers will occur this summer across the state. [Registration](#) is now available.

Additional information about LEADS will be released during webinars this spring. Overview sessions will also be available at the [Teacher Leader Summit](#). Teacher training will be available in the [Professional Learning Platform](#) in August. We are excited to launch this improved evaluation system that will empower educators to reach their full potential and, ultimately, provide the best possible education for students.

Lori Pennison, 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 to 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. March's webinar will feature information on the Louisiana Educator Advancement and Development System (LEADS).

Webinar Date and Time: March 25 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.

Announcing State-Level Honorees for Principal of the Year

The Department is excited to announce the [2025 Teacher and Principal of the Year Semifinalists](#), the [2025 New Teacher of the Year Finalists](#) and the [2025 Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Finalists](#). These educators are making exceptional gains with students. Their commitment to student success exemplifies Louisiana's teaching profession.

2025 PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR SEMIFINALISTS

Beauregard Parish	S. Chad Schulz
Caddo Parish	Robert Middleton
Calcasieu Parish	Dr. Shonna Anderson
Central Community School District	Brandon LaGroue
DeSoto Parish	Amanda LaFollette
East Baton Rouge Parish	Dr. Tongelia McCray-Rowan
FirstLine Schools	Glenda Welch Baylis
Franklin Parish	Anna Tarver
Grant Parish	Jennifer Winslett
Iberville Parish	Dr. Amanda Austin
Lafourche Parish	Dr. Decina Rodriguez
Lincoln Parish	Tiffany Curry

Livingston Parish	Anne “Beth” Jones
Natchitoches Parish	Micah Coleman
Plaquemines Parish	Holly Eiswirth
Rapides Parish	Rebecca Warren
Red River Parish	Michael Beck
Sabine Parish	Donya Tatum
St. John the Baptist Parish	Dr. Kara Lawson
St. Landry Parish	Casey Comeaux
St. Martin Parish	Tiedra Hawkins
Vernon Parish	Jennifer Wilbanks
West Baton Rouge Parish	Kelley Stein
West Feliciana Parish	Brittney Rosenbach

All of these state-level honorees will be honored at the *18th Annual Cecil J. Picard Educator Excellence Awards Gala*, which will be held at the World War II Museum on the evening of July 27, 2024. This exciting event is co-sponsored by [Dream Teachers](#).

Congratulations to these outstanding educators!

Please contact excellenteducators@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.” Registration for this event is currently SOLD OUT! Please use the [registration link](#) to be added to the waitlist. The waitlisted attendees will be notified of acceptance as space becomes available, on a first-come, first-served basis.

Please contact events@emergentmethod.com with questions.

RESOURCES

EDUCATOR TALENT AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

LDOE Out-of-Field Certification Support

LDOE is making [funding available to reduce barriers for certified teachers](#) teaching out of their field. Through this funding, the LDOE will be covering both the Praxis exam costs as well as the cost

associated with updating teaching certificates. School Site Leaders should send the [Out-of-Field Praxis Support Application](#) to those teachers currently teaching on an out-of-field (OFAT) certificate. Educators should complete the application before July 19th. Post-application emails to the teachers will explain the next steps in greater detail.

Please contact LouisianaLeaders@la.gov with questions.

System Lead Professional Learning Community

Offered quarterly, the Pre-Educator Pathway System Lead Professional Learning Community are virtual opportunities for Pre-Educator Pathway/Grow Your Own System Leads to share best practices related to developing and expanding access to the Pre-Educator Pathway. All school systems are encouraged to attend regardless of current pathway status. Please use the following information to attend:

Webinar Dates and Time: April 11 at 10 a.m..

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/3455048179>

Webinar Phone Number: 346-248-7799

Meeting ID#: 345 504 8179

Please contact believeandprepare@la.gov with questions.

ACADEMICS

Middle Grades (7-8) Robotics Lab Pilot Application NOW AVAILABLE

The LDOE will offer a unique opportunity to engage students in an innovative Robotics Lab Pilot (Grades 7 and 8) for the 2024-2025 school year. This pilot will be blending mathematics and technology to provide exposure to beginning concepts in robotics and computational thinking through hands-on learning. Students will utilize block based coding to accomplish mathematics tasks within a context which fosters a strong connection between abstract concepts and real world applications. Review the [Robotics Lab Pilot Overview](#) to learn more about program details and commitments involved. A two-day in person teacher training will be held at the end of June for participating schools. Interested leaders are invited to complete the [Robotics Lab Pilot Application](#) no later than April 10.

Please contact us at STEM@la.gov with any questions.

ELA

ELA Guidebooks 6-8 (2024)

Additional units for [ELA Guidebooks 6-8 \(2024\)](#) are now available on [Louisiana Curriculum Hub](#). All development 1-5 and application units will be available this spring, and the development 6 units will be available this fall.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

MATH

Financial Literacy Implementation

The LDOE has posted Financial Literacy [Frequently Asked Questions](#) to the Math Refresh page to better support educators with the new Financial Literacy requirements. The FAQ includes information about the policy, course content, and graduation requirements.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

Act 260 Numeracy Professional Learning

[Act 260 \(2023\)](#) requires every grade 4-8 math teacher to engage in numeracy professional learning. LDOE has released [guidance](#) to support leaders in planning for implementation and compliance. Additional information will be released at the Teacher Leader Summit.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

SOCIAL STUDIES

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

All grade 7 Bayou Bridges units are now available on the [Bayou Bridges Resource page](#). Units are aligned to meet the [2022 Louisiana Student Standards for Social Studies](#). All grade 8 units will be published by **April 12**.

The LDOE has published a new [curriculum guide](#) to support teachers and instructional leaders as they implement Bayou Bridges materials. The guide provides in-depth information on the program's guiding principles, design, key components and resources, unit and lesson study tools, along with sample lesson annotations.

Teachers and leaders should use this resource to help navigate the curriculum, to better understand its key components, and to effectively plan and implement Bayou Bridges lessons. This guide will continue to be updated as additional units are published.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

SCIENCE

Rolling Updates to Implementation Guides

To better support educators with science planning, the LDOE is updating science implementation guides on the [K-12 Science Planning Page](#). The first round of updates will include more specific information to assist with pacing. The revised [Grade 7 Louisiana Guide to Implementing OpenSciEd](#) is available now, with Grades 6 and 8 coming soon. Louisiana guides for implementing all high-quality science instructional materials will be released on a rolling basis ahead of the 2024-2025 school year.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

DIVERSE LEARNERS

Timeline for Act 266

[ACT 266](#) requires teachers to screen all kindergarten students for dyslexia during the second half of the year or upon request of a parent/guardian or teacher.

Timeline for Next Steps:

February:

- Department will finalize the procurement process for a statewide kindergarten administration of the Shaywitz DyslexiaScreen.

March:

- Department will send rosters to special education directors.
- Special education directors will share rosters with site leaders.
- Site leaders will set-up screenings at the class level.
- Department will provide a live one hour training for kindergarten teachers with general information on dyslexia and the administration of the screener.

April:

- Kindergarten teachers will screen all kindergarten students.
- All screening to be completed by the end of April.

May:

- At-risk results are reported to parents or guardians within 30 days.

Monitor the weekly newsletter for updates.

Please contact diverselearnersupport@la.gov with questions.

LITERACY

Individual Reading Plans

Students who scored below benchmark on the MOY DIBELS 8th Literacy Screener need an individual reading plan. Those students who are still below benchmark from the BOY window should continue with their reading plan as well. Parents should be notified within 30 days of screening to review their child's plan. Interventions, as well as progress monitoring, should continue through the next screening window which begins April 1 for EOY.

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

K-3 EOY (End-of-Year) Literacy Screening

The K-2 end-of-year (EOY) literacy screener is a secure administration. All test security measures outlined in Bulletin 118 apply.

- Every K-3 student needs to be screened. Accountability codes will be required for grades K-2 EOY. The codes will be similar to those used for LEAP and will be in the Test Coordinator Manual (TCM).
- The screening window is April 1-30. No extensions will be allowed per state law [RS 17:24.9 B.\(5\)](#).
- The K-2 EOY is a secure test administration, there will be no paper or remote screening option. Any attempt to duplicate, save, or memorize items will be considered a serious test security violation. Scoring will be in the Louisiana Amplify platform in real-time and will require the TA's device to have a microphone.

- The grade 3 EOY screener is not a secure form but the screener should still be administered in a secure setting. Paper copies are allowed. Data must be entered into the Louisiana Amplify platform. No file uploads will be allowed.
- The grade 3 end-of-year screener can be administered remotely. The Grade 3 EOY Remote Administration PowerPoint and Remote Scoring Booklet can be found on the [LDOE Literacy Screener page](#).
- School test coordinators (STC) must provide training to test administrators. STC needs to collect signed oaths verifying that the test administrator has been trained and fully complies with the TCM. Test administrators must have completed the required Amplify training and scored at least 80% before screening any student.

All screening invalidations or incomplete screenings must be reported to assessment@la.gov as a testing irregularity.

Please contact assessment@la.gov with questions.

EDTECH

Kami Mania Sweeps the State

Thirty-seven school systems (and counting) are gearing up for a fantastic year with upgraded [Kami](#) licenses. Don't miss out!

The LDOE will be hosting multiple professional learning options throughout the summer to support teachers and leaders in sharpening their Kami skills.

- Teacher Leader Summit (May 28-30): Dive deep into Kami implementation and best practices.
- Summer Webinar Series (June 4-July 18): Weekly online sessions for content-specific support.
- Face-to-Face Trainings (July 22-26): Regional in-person workshops for hands-on learning.

Stay tuned for registration info through LDOE communication channels. Next school year will be a Kami-tastic adventure!

Please contact digitallearning@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

Louisiana History Professional Development Opportunity

The Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities (LEH) will host the second annual Institute for Louisiana Culture and History (ILCH) intensive workshop for Louisiana social studies K-12 educators June 24-26, in New Orleans. This workshop will focus on Louisiana's Reconstruction-era history.

The summer intensive workshop will provide Louisiana public school social studies educators the opportunity to build their content knowledge by engaging with nationally known scholars, taking field trips promoting experiential learning, and participating in working sessions exploring standards-aligned resources from [64 Parishes](#).

Social studies educators, teacher coaches, and curriculum specialists employed by public schools in Louisiana can [apply](#) to participate in the summer intensive workshop. Preference will be given to those working with grade 7 social studies content. Applications close April 1.

Please contact shelburne@leh.org with questions.

Assessment Literacy Initiative

The LDOE assessment content team and the Center for Assessment will host the final session of the monthly webinar series on April 11. 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 2)

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. For your convenience, the webinar will be recorded.

Webinar Date and Time: April 11 at 3:30 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87904855592>

Webinar Phone Number: 646-931-3860

Webinar ID#: 879 0485 5592

Passcode: 418123

Please contact assessment@la.gov with questions.

LEADS Informational Webinars

The LDOE will host a series of informational webinars for targeted audiences. The webinars will provide an overview of the Louisiana Educator Advancement and Development System (LEADS). Topics include policy updates, evaluation components, and the evaluation process.

LEADS Webinar for School-Level Leaders

Webinar Date and Time: April 17 at 11:30 a.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/99264390680>

Webinar Phone Number: 312-626-6799

Meeting ID#: 992 6439 0680

LEADS Webinar for Counselors

Webinar Date and Time: April 22 at 12 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/96506543098>

Webinar Phone Number: 312-626-6799

Meeting ID#: 965 0654 3098

LEADS Webinar for Teachers

Webinar Date and Time: April 22 at 3:30 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/91593299793>

Webinar Phone Number: 312-626-6799

Meeting ID#: 915 9329 9793

LEADS Webinar for Teachers

Webinar Date and Time: April 24 at 4 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/96895644525>

Webinar Phone Number: 312-626-6799

Meeting ID#: 968 9564 4525

Please contact leads@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.

Erikka Wishom, Port Allen Elementary, West Baton Rouge Parish

"Mrs. Wishom builds a positive culture of excellence where she goes above and beyond to show how much she values EACH person that enters the school building. Her welcoming smile, energetic voice, coaching spirit, and positive attitude are daily attributes that are witnessed by all around her!"

submitted by Dereka Duncan

Dr. Sharon Clark, Sophie B. Wright High School, Institute for Academic Excellence

"Dr. Clark leads by example for her staff and our school community. She is on the frontline all the time!"

submitted by Jeremy Gold

DATES TO CONSIDER FOR BUILDING-LEVEL LEADERS

Important Dates	
Monthly Principal webinar - Louisiana Educator Advancement and Development System (LEADS)	March 25 at 1 p.m.
EOY Literacy Screening	April 1 - 30
Robotics Lab Pilot Application due	April 10
Effective Assessment Practices webinar	April 11 at 3:30 p.m.
LEADS webinar for School Leaders	April 17 at 11:30 a.m.
Teacher Leader Summit	May 28 - 30