



Teacher Leader Newsletter



January 2026



Hello everyone! I am Ashlee Bell, and I teach AP Literature and Composition and Dual Enrollment English at Ruston High School, where I also serve as the ELA Department Chair and site-based ELA instructional coach. Whether I am working with students in my classroom, supporting practicum and resident teachers, or collaborating with educators as an instructional coach, my work is grounded in keeping the “big ideas” at the center of our daily practice. Chief among those are the standards that guide our instructional goals and help ensure coherence, rigor, and meaningful learning for all students.

That shared commitment to strong, well-aligned standards was at the heart of the recent statewide work that began in the spring of last year.

In April 2025, educators and parents from across Louisiana came together to [review the K-12 Louisiana Student Standards](#) for both math and English language arts (ELA).

As a member of the ELA work group, I collaborated with fellow educators to review the ELA standards, ensuring that expectations for student learning across Louisiana are clear, rigorous, and grounded in the actual texts students are expected to read, understand, and express understanding of in our classrooms and beyond. At their core, these standards represent our shared commitment to giving students a strong foundation so they are prepared — not just to meet standards — but to navigate an increasingly complex academic and professional world.

The [public comment](#) period for the proposed updates to the K-12 Louisiana Student Standards for both math and ELA is now open and closes on **January 31**. Our work is not finished until educators, families, and students have had the opportunity to review the proposed updates and share how they align with the realities of teaching and learning across our state.

No matter our role or content area, we are all part of the same shared work: helping students make sense of the world and find their place in it. The standards we teach, the feedback we offer, and the instructional choices we make each day matter because they shape students’ access to meaningful, challenging learning experiences. As we reflect, revise, and collaborate, I urge you to keep who we serve at the center of every decision, ensuring that our work remains focused on students, grounded in strong instruction, and responsive to the varied paths they will take beyond our classrooms.

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NUMERACY RESOURCES

Zearn Math Challenge

The LDOE is excited to invite math educators to participate in [Zearn's Louisiana Math Challenge](#). This challenge provides a collection of kits filled with resources designed to motivate students and celebrate their achievement as they complete at least three grade-level Zearn lessons each week. Visit [Zearn's Louisiana Math Challenge](#) web page to see how schools across the state are celebrating student success and to download challenge materials to use in the classroom.

Please contact math@la.gov with questions.

Math Leader Community of Practice

LDOE, in partnership with the Charles A. Dana Center, is launching a [Community of Practice for Math Leaders](#) to strengthen math teaching and coaching across Louisiana. Through this initiative, participants will connect and collaborate with math leaders from across the state, share best practices and coaching strategies for implementing High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) more effectively in their work.

Beginning in January 2026, participants will meet virtually for two hours each month and will conclude their experience with a special session at the [2026 Teacher Leader Summit](#). For more information, including access to the interest form, review the [Community of Practice for Math Leaders](#) document.

Please contact math@la.gov with questions.

Louisiana Achievement in Numeracy Act (LANE)

Per [Act 260 \(2023\)](#) and [Act 353 of 2025 \(LANE\)](#), all K–8 math teachers must complete an LDOE-approved numeracy course. School and system leaders must collect proof of completion from all new hires teaching these grades. An optional numeracy course for high school math teachers is also available.

School systems contacts received the course codes, so teachers can access courses through the 2025–2026 school year. For more information, see the [Guidance and Framing](#) document on the [Louisiana Math web page](#). Systems should actively support teachers in meeting these requirements.

Please contact math@la.gov with questions.

LITERACY

K-2 Knowledge and Skills Unit and Lesson Preparation Protocols

New K–2 Knowledge and Skills Preparation Protocols are now available to support high-quality literacy instruction. When planning for an upcoming unit of instruction, teachers should use both the [Knowledge](#) and [Skills](#) Unit preparation protocols. Then, before implementing the lessons within a unit, teachers

should use the [Knowledge](#) and [Skills](#) Lesson Preparation Protocols to prepare for effective lesson implementation.

These protocols provide a clear, consistent process for preparing units and lessons using high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) and feature a two-phase lesson preparation structure designed to build readiness and deepen teacher expertise over time. Together, the tools support intentional, text-based instruction that strengthens vocabulary, language development, and comprehension, while also ensuring systematic, explicit foundational skills instruction aligned to student needs.

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

Grade 3 Instructional Preparation and Tiered Support Course

The LDOE has released a new Grade 3 Instructional Preparation and Tiered Support Course to strengthen planning and instructional decision-making in grade 3 ELA. A total of six modules are available within this self-paced course, guiding teachers through lesson preparation, assessment data analysis, and intervention to ensure instruction meets the needs of all learners. The course is available on the [Louisiana Professional Learning Platform](#) with the course code 15E4719D.

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

Grades 3-12 Literacy Extension in ELA

[Literacy Extension Guidance](#) for grades 3–12 is now available. This resource supports teachers in planning intentional extensions during core instruction and intervention blocks for students who have already met proficiency. This guidance provides practical ways to deepen learning within existing HQIM lessons while keeping the lesson learning objectives constant.

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

SUPPORT FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Dyslexia Core Assessment Program

[Act 517](#) (2024) established a statewide pathway for identifying and supporting students flagged as “at risk” for dyslexia. Applicants interested in becoming a certified [Dyslexia Core Assessment provider](#) should complete the [Dyslexia Core Assessment Vendor Application](#). School systems are encouraged to apply.

Please contact diverselearnersupport@la.gov with questions.

ELA RESOURCES

ELA Guidebooks 3-5 (2022) Unit Update

The publisher of *The Birchbark House* made updates to the text, including character names and some words in the text written in the Ojibwe language. The LDOE is aware of these updates and is developing a version of the unit that aligns with the updated text. After the new unit content is posted, both the current and updated versions of the unit will remain on the [Louisiana Curriculum Hub](#), ensuring teachers can access the version of the unit that aligns with their text.

Future LDOE communications will include additional information regarding unit access and materials for the updated version of the unit.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

Librarian Updates

The [Louisiana Association of School Librarians \(LASL\)](#) is hosting its annual LASL Professional Development Day on January 10, 2026, at Captain Shreve High School in Shreveport, Louisiana. School librarians from all grade levels are invited to attend. [Additional information](#), including registration details and event logistics, is now available.

Please contact geauxlasl@gmail.com with questions.

SOCIAL STUDIES RESOURCES

Social Studies Office Hours

The LDOE will hold office hours on February 4 at 3:15 p.m. At this session, the LDOE will provide new learning regarding the results of the 2025 social studies assessment and preparation for the 2026 assessment. Participants will internalize this new learning through an application activity and discussion. For access to past office hours slides and information on upcoming sessions, please refer to the [Social Studies Office Hours flyer](#) on the [K-12 Social Studies Planning web page](#).

- **Webinar Date and Time:** February 4 at 3:15 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97436075546>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 1 346 248 7799
- **Meeting ID#:** 974 3607 5546
- **Meeting Passcode:** 280838

Please contact socialstudies@la.gov with questions.

Bayou Bridges Alternate Pacing Guides

The LDOE has released detailed alternate pacing guides for [Bayou Bridges: A K-8 Social Studies Curriculum](#). Developed by social studies educators, these pacing guides offer standards-aligned pacing options that are coherent, flexible, and designed to support student needs. Teachers should use these pacing guides to adjust instruction and better meet the needs of students. All units for grades 3-8 are now available on the [Bayou Bridges web page](#).

Please contact socialstudies@la.gov with questions.

COMPUTER SCIENCE AND STEM RESOURCES

Ignite Initiative: Computer Science for K-5 Teachers

The Ignite Initiative offers 24 hours of no-cost teacher training in computational thinking, block programming, and cyber safety. The training prepares K-5 teachers to integrate computer science education experiences into existing instruction. Cohorts are currently enrolling and are available in virtual, in-person, and hybrid formats. Interested teachers may register using the [Ignite Initiative website](#).

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

CONTACT US

For questions related to...	Contact:
AP Courses and Exams Contact	highschoolacademics@la.gov
Assessments and Related Supports	assessment@la.gov
Collaborations	districtsupport@la.gov
Compass	compass@la.gov
Content Leaders and Mentor Teachers	believeandprepare@la.gov
EdTech/Digital Learning	digitallearning@la.gov
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Teacher Leaders and Teacher Leader Advisors	classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov