

Louisiana Believes

**Believe and Succeed:
Louisiana's Initiative to
Transform Failing Schools**

Overview: Believe and Succeed

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What is Believe and Succeed?

In Louisiana, almost 200,000 students attend a school with a D or F letter grade.

To achieve our goal of ensuring that each of these students has access to multiple high-quality options, the Department is launching Believe and Succeed: Louisiana's Initiative to Transform Failing Schools.

Believe and Succeed will provide matching grants to local educational agencies, nonprofits, and individuals seeking to:

- turnaround existing D and F schools; or
- create new high quality autonomous schools for students who would otherwise attend underperforming schools.

In August 2013, BESE awarded over \$5.7m in the first round of Believe and Succeed grants to support the launch of new, autonomous schools, school turnaround efforts, and leadership development initiatives across the state.

The Department now seeks applications for the second round of Believe and Succeed grants.

What is Believe and Succeed? (Cont.)

Those interested may apply for one or more of the following grants:

- **New School Development Grants** will fund the training of school leaders who will turnaround struggling schools or start new schools to serve at-risk students who would otherwise attend D or F schools.
- **Expanding Excellence Grants** will fund the expansion of high-performing schools and school networks to serve at-risk students who would otherwise attend D or F schools.
- **School Improvement Sustainability Grants** will fund school districts to immediately begin planning how they will sustain school improvement efforts at 2011-2012 focus schools over the remainder of the current school year and into the next school year.

What are School Development Grants?

New School Development Grants will provide funding for applicants to prepare one or more individuals to launch and lead one or more new autonomous schools and/or full school turnaround efforts.

All applications must include the following:

- One or more proposed school leadership candidates;
 - Applicants may propose one individual per school or small leadership teams.
- One or more proposed leadership development programs;
 - Applicants must provide evidence of a coherent plan and partnership.
- A commitment to ensuring the identified candidates will successfully launch new autonomous schools or lead whole school turnaround efforts beginning no later than 2014-15.

In addition to the leadership development programs listed in the Believe and Succeed application, applicants may propose alternative programs including programs built internally or developed in partnership with other entities such as universities, district offices, and charter management organizations.

Who Can Apply?

The Department will award development grants to:

- Local Education Agencies (LEAs); and
- Local non-profits that apply with a qualified school leader candidate; and
- Individual prospective school leaders.

All applicants must present a high-quality plan for leading a new autonomous school or turning around an existing failing school.

All applicants are encouraged to secure or contribute some level of matching funding to demonstrate commitment

Example Applications – Local District

Goal

Turnaround failing district schools that have declined or been stagnant over past years.

Plan

1. District develops turnaround model for selected schools that empowers school leaders
2. District looks at various leadership development providers and selects one aligned to their goals or develops an internal program
3. District identifies school leader candidates through a rigorous selection process of individuals who are not currently in leadership positions in the district.
4. District places leadership candidates in mid-level positions at proposed turnaround schools during 2013-2014 transition year.
5. School leader takes over school in Fall 2014 with significant autonomy when it comes to budget, operations, and staffing.

Proposed Partnership

Local district + leadership development program + individual educators

Cost

District and Department share the cost of the program

Example Applications – Local District/Individual

Goal

Launch a new high-quality autonomous school within the district.

Plan

1. Identify school leader candidate from internal pool of high-quality individuals
2. Identify skills and capabilities that need to be developed in individual
3. Identify program that will effectively train the selected individual
4. Incubate the individual to launch a new school for fall 2014

Proposed Partnership

Local district + LDE + leadership development program + individual

Cost

District and Department share the cost of the program

Example Applications – Individual/ Nonprofit

Goal

Start a new Type 1 charter school to better serve students who are currently attending D or F schools in their local district

Plan

1. Individual self-identifies or nonprofit identifies a candidate to lead a new school in an area with significant number of students in D or F schools.
2. Individual and nonprofit work together to create a plan for transition the individual into the new role including mentoring and a plan for the start-up of the new school.
3. Individual and nonprofit identify the leadership development program that will prepare the individual for the new role and applies to participate
4. Submit a Type 1 charter application to the district in the Fall of 2013 while in training.
5. Open school in Fall 2014

Proposed Partnership

Individual Applicant + Non-Profit Partner + Leadership Development Program

Cost

LDOE covers entire cost of program

Potential Partners

- Columbia Summer Principals Academy
- New Leaders for New Schools
- Leading Educators
- Building Excellent Schools
- The New Teacher Project
- University Based Program
- LEA/Individually developed program

What are Expanding Excellence Grants?

Through Expanding Excellence Grants, the Department will provide funding to support the replication and expansion of high-quality charter school organizations.

All applications must include the following:

- A proven school organization committed to launching high-quality schools in Louisiana
- Some level of matching funding from an LEA or nonprofit partner

Who can apply?

The Department will award development grants to:

- Local Education Agencies (LEAs); and
- Local non-profits

All applicants are encouraged to secure or contribute some level of matching funding to demonstrate commitment

Example Applications - District

Goal

Turnaround struggling district schools who have declined or been stagnant over past years.

Plan

1. District identifies schools that have failed to make academic progress
2. District identifies quality school operator who has a demonstrated track record raising student achievement with a similar demographic of students that they propose to serve in the community
3. District works with charter operator to determine funding required for expansion
4. District determines amount needed as a match by LDOE
5. Charter operator opens new schools beginning in Fall 2014.

Proposed Partnership

Local district + charter management organization

Cost

The LDOE matches the nonprofit's funding for the school operator up to \$250,000.

Example Applications - Nonprofit

Goal

Turnaround failing district schools eligible for entry into the state's Recovery School District.

Plan

1. Nonprofit identifies specific need for new schools in their community based on current and future eligibility of schools entering the Recovery School District
2. Nonprofit identifies quality school operator who has a demonstrated track record raising student achievement with a similar demographic of students that they propose to serve in Louisiana
3. Nonprofit works with charter operator to determine funding required for expansion
4. Nonprofit determines amount needed as a match by LDOE
5. Charter operator opens new schools beginning in Fall 2014.

Proposed Partnership

Local non-profit + charter management organization

Cost

The LDOE matches the nonprofit's funding for the school operator up to \$250,000.

What are School Improvement Sustainability Grants?

School Improvement Sustainability Grants fund school districts to begin assessing and adjusting school improvement efforts at 2011-2012 Focus Schools over the remainder of the current school year and into the next school year.

The Department expects to award grants in the range of \$25,000 to \$50,000 to multiple districts. Districts should use the funds to reflect on progress made under current turnaround plans and make adjustments.

Criteria:

- 1) The Department will prioritize funding the sustainability of school turnaround efforts that align with the Department priorities to invest in talented leaders, grant leaders autonomy to run their schools, and provide families with choices.
- 2) District proposals must demonstrate that the district will install frequent and consistent data-driven reflection and adjustment cycles as a permanent component of their focus school turnaround efforts. In successful proposals, districts will demonstrate that staff members will collect appropriate data, have the skills to interpret and reflect on data, and are invested in using data frequently and without bias to make course corrections where necessary.
- 3) Districts may propose submitting an application for Believe and Succeed 2014 in order to demonstrate alignment with the Department's priorities.

Who Can Apply?

The Department will award School Sustainability Improvement Grants to:

- School Districts with schools on the 2011-12 Focus List.

Application Timeline

Release of Grant Application

– Monday, October 21

Applications Due

– Friday, November 15

Announcement of grant winners

- January 2014

Questions?

- Please email david.shepard@la.gov with any questions you may have.
- Applications are due Friday, November 15.