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**IMPLEMENTING**  
**STRONG START 2020:**  
A TOOLKIT FOR TEACHING  
AND LEARNING FOR SCHOOLS

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# IMPLEMENTING STRONG START 2020: A TOOLKIT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR SCHOOLS

This toolkit was created by the Louisiana Department of Education to provide systems and schools with resources, examples, and support as they implement their 2020-2021 reopening plan. These are not requirements or endorsements. This toolkit should be used to help systems and schools make decisions that work best in their local context.

## STRONG START OVERVIEW

To support school systems in preparing for the 2020-2021 school year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) released the [Strong Start 2020 plan](#).

School systems must ensure a strong start for every student and have a continuous education plan that is aligned to their current, coherent [school system plan](#) submitted via Super App. The Strong Start Planning Priorities are designed to support school systems as they plan for a strong start to the 2020-2021 academic year. The priorities focus on actions that:

1. Address unfinished learning from the 2019-2020 school year,
2. Set the foundation for continuous learning in 2020-2021, and
3. Prepare for school facility closures and modified operations.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING TOOLKIT OVERVIEW

Since implementation of most of the Strong Start priorities happens at the school level, this toolkit supports school leaders and teachers. It is structured around teaching and learning priorities. Each teaching and learning priority includes:

- **SCHOOL ACTIONS:** High-level actions that principals and teachers take to plan, implement, and communicate the priority
- **RESOURCES:** One document that includes samples, models, and plans for implementing each priority

This toolkit was designed with input from samples and models from school systems and organizations in Louisiana and across the country. The school actions for each priority are a starting point for school leaders and teachers to prepare for the most important actions for the upcoming school year.

# CORE ACADEMICS

## PRIORITY: IMPLEMENTING ASSESSMENT AND INDIVIDUAL PLANS

The school system will assess students' academic needs through the use of high-quality screeners for students in grades K-3 and high-quality ELA and math diagnostics in grades 3 through high school. The school system will create an individual plan for students with the most significant learning gaps.

### SCHOOL ACTIONS

#### PLAN

- Select and set up your assessment in conjunction with your school system leadership.
- Identify which students will take which assessments.
- Build a calendar for administering the assessments.

#### IMPLEMENT

- Administer and score the assessment(s).
- Analyze the data to determine learning gaps.
- Create a plan to address learning gaps for students.

#### COMMUNICATE

- Coordinate with school system leaders for assessment guidance.
- Share the assessment administration plan with faculty and parents.
- Discuss the diagnostic results with parents and students.

### IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE

[Implementing Assessment and Individual Plans](#)

### NOTES AND NEXT STEPS

**PRIORITY: IMPLEMENTING CONTINUOUS CORE INSTRUCTION**

The school system will have a plan for the continuous use of aligned curricular materials during periods of school facility closure or modified operations, exclusive to adaptations produced by instructional materials providers.

**SCHOOL ACTIONS**

**PLAN**

- Determine an instructional approach using your high-quality instructional materials.
- Determine the digital materials needed for interfacing with students, delivering instruction, and collecting and assessing student work.
- Plan how physical learning materials (e.g. manipulatives, printed material) will be distributed to and accessed by students.

**IMPLEMENT**

- Implement the instructional plan and make adjustments as needed based on student needs.
- Develop additional online support structures for English learners and students with disabilities.

**COMMUNICATE**

- Share with students the process to receive and respond to feedback in a timely manner.

**IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE**

[Implementing Continuous Core Instruction](#)

**NOTES AND NEXT STEPS**

**PRIORITY: IMPLEMENTING CONTINUOUS NON-CORE AND CTE INSTRUCTION**

The school system will provide continuous instruction in non-core subjects, including CTE courses, during periods of school facility closure or modified operations.

**SCHOOL ACTIONS**

**PLAN**

- Develop a plan to distribute all materials to all students.
- Establish expectations for in-person and virtual lesson plans and annotations.
- Determine the digital materials needed for interfacing with students, delivering instruction, and collecting and assessing student work.
- Develop additional online support structures for English learners and students with disabilities.

**IMPLEMENT**

- Establish school-wide expectations around distance learning, including teacher observations and reviewing and providing feedback on lesson plans.
- Develop a plan to communicate distance learning access setup to students prior to moving to a virtual classroom.

**COMMUNICATE**

- Create messaging for teachers, students, and families around notification and access of virtual and hybrid learning.

**IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE**

[Implementing Continuous Non-Core and CTE Instruction](#)

**NOTES AND NEXT STEPS**

# STUDENTS WITH DIVERSE NEEDS

## PRIORITY: IMPLEMENTING STUDENT AND STAFF WELL-BEING

The school system will ensure the well-being of all students and educators by providing social and mental health supports, including emotional and behavioral health screening upon return to school.

### SCHOOL ACTIONS

#### PLAN

- Select your screener and create an administration schedule.
- Develop a Well-Being Leadership Team.
- Select a school-wide social emotional learning program, including the staff and structures to support the program.

#### IMPLEMENT

- Assess your students and staff.
- Have the Well-Being Leadership Team analyze data from the screener to create individual learning plans.
- Use the Well-Being Leadership Team to implement school-wide protocols and procedures to address the needs of students.

#### COMMUNICATE

- Notify parents about the screener and permission forms.
- Share the results with teachers, parents, and students.

### IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE

[Implementing Student and Staff Well-Being](#)

### NOTES AND NEXT STEPS

# WORKFORCE TALENT

## PRIORITY: IMPLEMENTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The school system has a comprehensive professional development plan that provides professional learning for staff regardless of facility closures, including training for all teachers on distance learning protocols and methods.

### SCHOOL ACTIONS

#### PLAN

- Identify options your school system is providing for virtual professional development and how it aligns to the needs of your school.
- Identify the needs of teachers regarding curriculum support, addressing unfinished learning, and virtual instruction.
- Connect with professional learning partners (vendors) and/or school system leaders to plan for virtual delivery of professional development.

#### IMPLEMENT

- Develop a comprehensive school professional development plan and calendar including in-person, hybrid, and virtual scenarios.
- Develop a process to leverage common planning time to support your professional development plan.

#### COMMUNICATE

- Share the professional development plan with staff.
- Share the expectations for common planning time in a virtual setting with staff.

### IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE

[Implementing Professional Development](#)

### NOTES AND NEXT STEPS



**PRIORITY: IMPLEMENTING ADAPTIVE AND FLEXIBLE STAFFING PLANS**

The school system will develop an adaptive staffing plan to be used during periods of school facility closure or modified operations.

**SCHOOL SYSTEM AND SCHOOL ACTIONS**

**PLAN**

- Identify parents' plans for their children for the upcoming year, including which students will learn virtually and which will return to school facilities.
- Identify teachers' plans for the upcoming year, including if they plan to return to teaching, return to teaching with a request for accommodations, or take leave.
- Use collected information to develop staffing plans, including a plan for utilizing non-core teachers and staff during periods of virtual or hybrid learning.

**IMPLEMENT**

- Execute staffing plans.
- Establish structures to regularly review and adjust staffing plans, including a protocol for how to pivot when teachers may be out for extended periods of time.

**COMMUNICATE**

- Share staffing plans with all staff and parents.

**IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE**

[Implementing Adaptive and Flexible Staffing Plans](#)

**NOTES AND NEXT STEPS**

# LEA SYSTEMS

## PRIORITY: IMPLEMENTING ADAPTIVE AND FLEXIBLE SCHOOL SCHEDULES

The school system will adopt flexible and opportunistic calendars and school schedules that maximize learning opportunities throughout the year, as well as ensure continuous learning during periods of school facility closures or modified operations.

### SCHOOL ACTIONS

#### PLAN:

- Utilize the school system calendar to create a schedule for your school and for each teacher in your school.

#### IMPLEMENT:

- Establish structures to regularly review and adjust school schedules, including a protocol for how to pivot when teachers may be out for extended periods of time.

#### COMMUNICATE:

- Share school schedules with all staff, parents, and students.

### IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE

[Implementing Adaptive and Flexible School Schedules](#)

### NOTES AND NEXT STEPS

**PRIORITY: IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLANS**

The school system will implement a strategic communications plan to:

- Connect with every student daily;
- Provide feedback on student work weekly; and
- Help families understand their role in supporting their child’s continuous learning.

**SCHOOL ACTIONS**

**PLAN:**

- Plan structures for daily student touchpoints.
- Develop a feedback plan for distance learning for students with and without the internet and how school administration will support them.
- Develop a communication plan for parents about the start of school, distance learning, and how they will receive school information.

**IMPLEMENT:**

- Execute structures for daily student touchpoints.

**COMMUNICATE:**

- Share information with parents about what they need to know concerning the start of school and distance learning (including daily student touchpoints and feedback).
- Share with parents the feedback plan for teachers to use with students who have access to the internet and those without access.

**IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE**

[Implementing Strategic Communications Plans](#)

**NOTES AND NEXT STEPS**

**PRIORITY: IMPLEMENTING 1:1 DEVICE AND ACCESS**

The school system will have a 1:1 student ratio for devices (laptop or tablet) and Internet connectivity for every student, grades preK-12, and a plan to issue these devices to students for use at home, if necessary. If Internet access is unavailable, the school system will ensure students have a reliable phone line.

**SCHOOL ACTIONS**

**PLAN:**

- Identify students' needs for devices and Internet access.
- Create a distribution plan for technology equipment.
- Develop a plan for technology support and training to include the management of log-ins and platforms.
- Plan for privacy and security concerns with distance learning.

**IMPLEMENT:**

- Distribute equipment, technology support documents, and log-in information.
- Train teachers, students, and parents on how to access digital platforms.

**COMMUNICATE:**

- Provide a one-stop shop for self-serve training for teachers, parents, and students.
- Prepare teachers to deliver basic training to their students.
- Communicate training opportunities to parents and students.

**IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE**

[Implementing 1:1 Device and Access](#)

**NOTES AND NEXT STEPS**

Empty space for notes and next steps.

