**Louisiana TAP Initiative**

**Pre-TAP**

**2012-13 Guidelines**

**and**

**Pre-TAP**

**School**

**Application**

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**LOUSIANA TAP INITIATIVE**

**GUIDELINES and APPLICATION for Pre-TAP SCHOOLS**

The TAP™ System is a research-based school reform initiative intended to recruit, motivate, develop, and retain high-quality teachers to increase student achievement. The decision to become a TAP school requires serious commitment at multiple levels. A strong commitment on the part of the school principal and administrators, as well as the school staff, is essential to success as a TAP school. A strong commitment of district leadership adds another layer of support to the implementation of TAP at a school.

The Pre-TAP initiative, instituted during the 2008-2009 school year, provides interested schools an opportunity to learn more about TAP in order to make a judicious decision regarding the implementation of TAP. The Pre-TAP initiative also provides the Louisiana Department of Education with a strategic process for expanding the Louisiana TAP initiative across the state.

Research clearly shows that there must be solid understanding, commitment, and buy-in among the faculty and staff for a comprehensive school reform initiative like TAP to be successful. In order to raise the level of understanding, increase buy-in, and reduce resistance within a school faculty, schools in Louisiana may apply for a Pre-TAP level of participation. Pre-TAP will enable teachers and administrators to learn about TAP through activities such as attending a TAP overview presentation, participating in site visits to TAP schools, and attending the National TAP Conference. Schools participating in the Pre-TAPyear whose faculties vote to become a TAP schoolwill complete an application in the spring to become Year One TAP Schools the following school year.

**TAP™ System: Why and What?**

Research has shown that the single most important school-related factor in determining student performance is the quality of the classroom teacher. However, despite the critical role that good teachers play, more and more skilled educators are leaving the profession, while fewer talented young people are pursuing it, leaving the nation’s schools with a shortage of talented teachers.

In 1999 the Milken Family Foundation introduced the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), an initiative developed to restructure and revitalize the teaching profession. The importance of teacher quality and experience with the implementation of TAP catalyzed the establishment of an independent nonprofit called the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET).

TAP is a bold new strategy aimed at building teacher instructional capacity and raising student achievement. The goal is to draw more talented people to the teaching profession—and keep them there—by making it more attractive and rewarding to be a teacher.

Under TAP, good teachers can earn higher salaries and advance professionally, just as in other careers. They can do it without leaving the classroom, where they often are needed most. At the same time, TAP helps teachers become the best they can be, by giving them opportunities to learn better teaching strategies and holding them accountable for their performance.

The ultimate goal of the TAP System is to strengthen teacher instructional capacity and increase student achievement. TAP is unique in that it is comprehensive in nature, combining four key elements: MultipleCareer Paths; Ongoing, Applied Professional Growth; Instructionally-Focused Accountability; and, Performance-Based Compensation. All four elements, implemented at the same time, provide the right combination of high expectations, opportunity for growth, accountability and support for schools to do what is necessary to improve. When implemented according to the model, TAP counters many of the traditional drawbacks that plague the teaching profession: ineffective professional development, teacher isolation, lack of career advancement, unsupported accountability demands, and low, undifferentiated compensation.

TAP Key Element #1: Multiple Career Paths

TAP enables good teachers to move into a variety of teaching positions—career, mentor, and master teacher—depending upon their interests, abilities, and accomplishments. As they move up the ranks, their qualifications, roles, and responsibilities increase and so does their compensation. Mentor teachers and master teachers play an integral role in TAP by providing critical support and modeling of teaching practices on an ongoing basis. The roles of mentor and master teachers support professional advancement for teachers without the teachers having to “leave the classroom.” Through a competitive hiring process, schools advertise, interview, and hire master and mentor teachers who share instructional leadership with the principal.

*Master teachers* generally do not carry a classroom teaching assignment but spend a large amount of teaching time modeling and team teaching with career teachers. They share in the evaluation/conferencing responsibilities of the school leadership team. Master teachers are also responsible for supporting the principal in guiding the leadership team in the disaggregating of data and outlining the school’s focus for improvement. They specifically locate research-based instructional strategies that target the identified areas of student need, field test those strategies with students within the building, and then model those strategies for career and mentor teachers during weekly grade-alike or subject-alike professional development sessions called “cluster meetings.” The master teachers, along with mentor teachers, provide follow-up and support to classroom teachers in the form of observation with feedback, team teaching, modeling, etc., as the teachers are implementing new instructional strategies. Master teachers also guide career and mentor teachers in the development of an Individual Growth Plan (IGP). The IGP is a record-keeping log to support teachers in their own professional growth and to ensure that growth in classroom practice connects to measurable increases in student achievement. The recommended ratio of master teachers to career teachers is 1:12 - 1:15.

*Mentor teachers* maintain a full class load and are given release time to support the master teachers as they plan and deliver professional growth opportunities for teachers throughout the building. They serve on the school leadership team with the administrators and master teachers and accept evaluation/conferencing responsibilities. Mentor teachers support career teachers with their IGPs. The recommended ratio of mentor to career teachers is 1:6 - 1:8.

Master and mentor positions in a school are not tenured positions. It is important to note that master and mentor positions are advertised within the school, outside the school, within the district, and also across the state. For the most part, mentor positions have generally been filled from within the school staff, and master teacher positions are filled with a combination from within and outside the present school staff. The single most important decision the principal makes in regards to TAP is who s/he hires in the master teacher positions. It is critical that this decision be made on qualifications, experience with professional development, ability to work with people, and proven results as a classroom teacher and not on seniority alone.

Master and mentor teachers sign a contract addendum outlining their roles/responsibilities, additional work days and salary augmentations. Generally, master teachers receive an additional augmentation of $5,000 to $10,000, and mentors receive an additional augmentation of $2,000 to $5,000. [TAP schools that are part of Louisiana’s USDOE Teacher Incentive Fund grant provide a $10,000 master teacher addendum and a $5,000 mentor teacher addendum.]

*Career teachers*are regular classroom teachers. These teachers may be new to teaching or may have taught for many years. Career teachers participate fully in cluster group meetings, are evaluated by the principal, master teacher, and mentor teacher, and are eligible to receive a performance bonus award each year. After two years of successful teaching experience, career teachers may apply to fill open mentor teacher positions and may apply to fill open master teacher positions after five years of successful teaching experience.

TAP Key Element #2: Ongoing Applied Professional Growth

TAP schools re-configure their daily schedule to allow for 60 to 90 minutes of uninterrupted, quality collaborative learning time in grade-alike or subject-alike groups called cluster meetings each week. These cluster meetings provide teachers the collaborative opportunity to identify specific student needs based on data. Once these broad needs are identified, the focus is narrowed to specific student skills that support those broad areas of student need. A school goal is established as well as specific cluster cycle goals outlining a timeline for cluster groups to focus on specific areas. Master teachers then find research-based strategies to target those needs, do field testing with students in the building, and then model the strategies for other teachers. Master and mentor teachers provide follow-up support to classroom teachers as they implement the strategies and collect samples of student work to help frame their next steps. Although master teachers are prepared with numerous researched-based, field-tested strategies, it is the student work that dictates the direction the cluster will take.

The typical protocol for a cluster meeting, *STEPS for Effective Learning,* involves 5 specific steps for master teachers to follow:

1. Career teachers identify the specific student need based on student work.
2. Master/mentor teachers model a researched-based strategy that has been field-tested pointing out critical attributes of the strategy to career teachers to ensure effective transfer.
3. Career teachers develop the new strategy or part of the strategy into their anticipated lessons for the coming week with guidance from the master and mentor teachers.
4. Career teachers make plans to apply the strategy in their classrooms while master and mentor teachers make plans to tailor the support each career teacher will need (team teach, model, observe and provide feedback, etc.).
5. All career teachers bring back student work to the next meeting in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy and make appropriate modifications.

The school also establishes a TAP Leadership Team (TLT), generally comprised of the school administrators as well as the master and mentor teachers. This group meets once per week and has the responsibility to analyze student achievement data, set school-wide and cluster group student achievement goals, review IGPs, and ensure that the cluster groups are properly implementing the *TAP STEPS for Effective Learning.* Other responsibilities of the TLT include becoming certified TAP evaluators using the *TAP Instructional Rubric* ensuring their inter-rater reliability as a leadership team and monitoring for score inflation.

TAP Key Element #3: Instructionally Focused Accountability

Teachers in TAP schools are held accountable for high quality classroom instruction through the use of the *TAP Instructional Rubric* which cites the Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching in its original research. During the first year of implementation in a TAP School, a considerable amount of time in cluster meetings is spent on introducing the teaching staff to the indicators in the instructional rubric. Master teachers continue to embed the instructional rubric into weekly cluster meetings which provide a solid opportunity for them to model what specific indicators look like and sound like in effective classroom teaching.

The *TAP Instructional Rubric* measures teacher effectiveness in four Domains:

* Designing and Planning Instruction which includes three indicators (Instructional Plans, Student Work, and Assessment).
* The Learning Environment which includes four indicators (Expectations, Managing Student Behavior, Environment, and Respectful Culture).
* Instruction which includes twelve indicators (Standards and Objectives, Motivating Students, Presenting Instructional Content, Lesson Structure and Pacing, Learning Activities and Materials, Questioning, Academic Feedback, Grouping Students, Teacher Content Knowledge, Teacher Knowledge of Students, Thinking, and Problem Solving).
* Responsibilities which include seven indicators (Staff Development, Instructional Supervision, School Responsibilities, Mentoring, Community Involvement, Growing and Developing Professionally, and Reflecting on Teaching).

TAP teachers are evaluated four times during the school year (one announced and three unannounced). These evaluations are completed by administrators, master teachers, and mentor teachers, all of whom participate in four days of intensive training on the *TAP Instructional Rubric*, inter-rater reliability, and pre/post-conferencing skills. Periodically the leadership team (administrators, master teachers, and mentor teachers) conduct inter-rater reliability checks within their team by watching, scripting, scoring, and planning post conferences with a video library of teaching episodes provided by the NIET.

After each evaluation, a teacher completes a “self evaluation” of the lesson. During the instructional post-conference held after each evaluation, the teacher is guided through cognitive coaching to self-reflect on the lesson with the focus on a specific area of reinforcement and a specific area of refinement from the *TAP Instructional Rubric*. The scores from a teacher’s four evaluations combine with a “responsibility score” to make up part of his/her opportunity to pull from a bonus pool of money in the performance-based pay element of TAP. Administrators are trained in the Comprehensive Online Data Entry (CODE) system, an online data management system in which principals enter teacher evaluation scores and are able to generate specific reports that identify trends in teacher evaluation reports, so that they can plan support for teachers in specific instructional areas within the school. Administrators also use CODE to monitor for score inflation.

TAP Key Element #4: Performance-Based Compensation

TAP changes the current system by providing additional compensation to teachers according to their roles and responsibilities, their performance in the classroom, and the performance of their students. Although base salaries remain the same, salary addendums are given to master and mentor teachers because these teachers take on more responsibility and share instructional leadership with the principal.

All teachers in a TAP school are eligible for financial awards from a pool of money created by the district specifically to reward teachers for their classroom teaching performance AND student growth. This pool of money ranges from $1,000 to $5,000 per teacher. The amount is determined by the district. [Districts participating in the Louisiana TIF grant provide $2,500 per teacher to the incentive pool.] Teachers are able to draw from this pool of money based on:

* The average scores they earn on the four evaluations of their classroom teaching performance (50%).
* Their students’ classroom level achievement growth using a value-added model (30%).
* School-level achievement growth as measured using a value-added model (20%).

For teachers assigned to grades/subjects not state tested, the opportunity for financial award is based 50% on the four evaluations and 50% on school-wide value-added gains. Louisiana TAP currently uses the SAS EVASS model of value-added growth calculations, developed by statistician William Sanders, to determine value-added gains of students.

Current state assessment data are sufficient to meet the requirements for calculating value-added growth using the Sanders model. All student test data and historical test data are submitted by the State Department of Education. Districts enter into separate service agreements with SAS EVAAS for their value-added reports.

**Participation in the Louisiana TAP System as a Pre-TAP School: How?**

There are three levels of participation in the Louisiana TAP initiative:

* Pre-TAP School
* Year One TAP School
* Year Two and Beyond TAP School

Schools in Louisiana may apply for a Pre-TAP level of participation for one year. Pre-TAP will enable teachers and administrators to learn about TAP through activities such as attending a TAP overview presentation, participating in a site visit to schools fully implementing TAP, and attending the spring National TAP Conference. Schools in the Pre-TAPyear that decide, by vote, to become a TAP schoolcomplete applications in the spring to become Year One TAP Schools the following school year.

Schools desiring to apply for Pre-TAP must:

* Demonstrate a willingness to study the TAP model, including the four critical elements and the role and responsibility of mentor teachers, master teachers, and TAP principals;
* Demonstrate a willingness to make a thoughtful decision regarding future adoption and full implementation of the Louisiana TAP System; and
* Demonstrate readiness and future capacity to implement the TAP model with fidelity as evidenced by a majority of the faculty voting for participation in the TAP model, which obligates all members of the faculty to participate.

Implementation Activities for a Pre-TAP School

Pre-TAP schools will spend a full school year learning about TAP, visiting TAP schools, and preparing to make a decision regarding full implementation of TAP in the following school year. As part of the learning process, Pre-TAP schools will:

* Complete and submit the Pre-TAP School Application and Commitment Forms.
* Participate in a Pre-TAP Schools Orientation meeting (August/September).
* Research and share information on the Louisiana TAP System with faculty/staff (e.g. NIET website, *TAP in the News*, *Understanding TAP* brochure).
* Arrange with state TAP staff to present an overview of TAP to faculty/staff as an introduction to the Louisiana TAP System and its four key elements. Overview presentations should be scheduled by the first of December. It is strongly recommended that overview presentations be completed no later than mid-February.
* Involve key district staff in the TAP learning process (e.g. invite to TAP Overview presentation; include on-site visits to TAP schools; include as part of team to attend TAP training workshop).
* Arrange for key teacher leaders and administrators to participate in a site visit to a school that is currently implementing TAP to observe (cluster meetings, coaching, evaluation process, post-conferencing, data collection, performance payouts, etc.). Site visits should begin in mid-September/early-October and be completed by the end of February.
* Arrange for a small school team, interested teachers/administrators, to attend a state-wide informational workshop, “Roles and Responsibilities of the Master/Mentor Teacher and the TAP Principal” (1/2 day training).
* Arrange for the faculty vote to determine buy-in with a majority vote required to fully implement Year One (October – February).
* If the Pre-TAP school decides to pursue full TAP implementation in the next school year, the Pre-TAP school will:
  + Arrange for administrators and key teacher leaders to attend a Planning/Implementation Workshop (full day training in January or February) designed to assist school representatives to complete the *Year One TAP School Application.*
  + Arrange for the school team to complete the *Year One TAP School Application/Worksheets* (including cluster configurations, budget, and funding sources).
  + If possible, arrange for a school team (administrators and key teacher leaders) to attend the National TAP Conference (March/April).
  + Submit completed *Year One TAP School Application* for full TAP Implementation Application Note: Specific application deadline to be determined in late March or early April 2013.
  + Upon submission of the *Year One TAP School Application* arrange for advertising and recruiting quality master/mentor teachers (in March/April) with hiring of master/mentor teachers (by mid-May) through a competitive hiring process.
  + Arrange for TAP Leadership Team (administrator, master teachers, and mentor teachers) to attend TAP CORE training (5 days in June or July and 2 days in the fall).

Pre-TAP Application Process

The Pre-TAP School Application and Worksheets are found on the next few pages. Mail the completed application no later than **Friday, May 4, 2012** to

**Nicole J. Honoré**

**Louisiana Department of Education**

**Human Capital Office**

**P.O. Box 94064**

**Baton Rouge, LA 70804**

Note: All signatures must be in blue ink. The hard copy of the application, with signatures, must be received in the Department no later than **Friday, May 11, 2012**. The applications will be reviewed by LDE staff to determine the Pre-TAP Schools for 2012-2013.



**Pre-TAP School Application**

**Note: Applications are due to** [**Nicole.Honore@la.gov**](mailto:Nicole.Honore@la.gov) **by Friday, May 4, 2012**

School/District Profile Worksheet

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| School Name: | | | | | | | | Today’s date: |
| **Superintendent Information** | | | | | | | | |
| Mr.  Ms.  Mrs.  Dr. | Name: | | | | | Superintendent Email: | | |
| Phone: | | | | | Fax: | | |
| Address: | | | | | | | | |
| City: | | | | State: | | | ZIP Code: | |
| **District TAP Contact Person Information** | | | | | | | | |
| Mr.  Ms.  Mrs.  Dr. | Name: | | | | | Email: | | |
| Phone: | | | | | Fax: | | |
| **Principal Information** | | | | | | | | |
| Mr.  Ms.  Mrs.  Dr. | | Name: | | | | Email: | | |
| Phone: | | | | Fax: | | |
| School address: | | | | | | District: | | |
| School Phone: | | | School fax: | | | School website: | | |
| City: | | | State: | | | ZIP Code: | | |
| Grade Levels Served (check all that apply):  PK  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10  11  12 | | | | | | | | |
| **Please use numbers from fall of 2011 for the following: SPS: AYP Status:** | | | | | | | | |
| Check appropriate description: ELFA School  Reading First School  Title I School | | | | | | | | |
| Number of Students: | | | | | | | | |
| Number of Administrators: | | | | | Number of non-certified instructional staff (e.g., Teacher Aides): | | | |
| Number of classroom teachers: | | | | | | | | |
| Total Number of Certified Staff(Administrators, media, counselor, teachers, etc.)**:** | | | | | | | | |
| Percentage of students eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch:      **%** | | | | | | | | |
| Percentage of students receiving ESL services:      **%** | | | | | | | | |



**Pre-TAP School Application**

**Note: Applications are due to** [**Nicole.Honore@la.gov**](mailto:Nicole.Honore@la.gov) **by Friday, May 4, 2012**

## Principal Commitment Form

*A major element of success is the commitment of school administrative and instructional staff to the TAP System. As a first step in establishing commitment, principals must agree to lead and participate in a readiness effort (Pre-TAP) to ensure that the faculty and staff have been provided appropriate information regarding all four key elements:* ***Multiple Career Paths, Ongoing Applied Professional Growth, Instructionally Focused Accountability, and Performance-Based Compensation****.*

*As an instructional leader, I agree to* ***lead and participate*** *in the following activities designed to gather information, create an understanding, and to inform a decision regarding the future implementation of the TAP System in our school:*

* Participate in a Pre-TAP Schools Orientation meeting (August/September).
* Research and share information on the Louisiana TAP System with faculty/staff (e.g. NIET website, *TAP in the News*, *Understanding TAP* brochure).
* Arrange with state TAP staff to present an overview presentation to faculty/staff as an introduction to the Louisiana TAP System and its four key elements. Note: Overview presentations should be scheduled by the first of December and completed no later than mid-February.
* Involve key district staff in the TAP learning process (e.g. invite to TAP Overview presentation; include on-site visits to TAP schools; include as part of team to attend TAP training workshop).
* Arrange for key teacher leaders and administrators to participate in a site visit to observe TAP implementation around the state (cluster meetings, coaching, evaluation process, post-conferencing, data collection, performance payouts, etc.). Site visits should begin in mid-September/early-October and be completed before the end of February.
* Arrange for a small school team, interested teachers/administrators, to attend a state-wide informational workshop, “Roles and Responsibilities of the Master/Mentor Teacher and the TAP Principal” (1/2 day training; the date to be determined.)
* Arrange for the faculty vote to determine buy-in with a majority vote required to fully implement Year One (October – February).

In addition, if our school decides to pursue full TAP implementation in the next school year, we will:

* Arrange for administrators and key teacher leaders to attend a Planning/Implementation Workshop (full day training in January or February) to begin the application for full implementation of the Louisiana TAP System. (Administrators and key teacher leaders make decisions concerning cluster configuration, school schedule, master/mentor addendums, ratios, etc.).
* Arrange for the school team to complete the *Year One TAP School Application*
* If possible, arrange for a school team (administrators and key teacher leaders) to attend the National TAP Conference (date to be determined).
* Submit *Year One TAP School Application* for full TAP Implementation by the identified deadline.
* Pending submission of TAP application, arrange for advertising and recruiting of quality master/mentor teachers (in April) with hiring of master/mentor teachers (by mid-May) through a competitive hiring process.
* Arrange for TAP Leadership Team (administrator, master teachers, and mentor teachers) to attend TAP CORE training (5 days in June or July and 2 days in the fall).

Signature of Principal Date



**Pre-TAP School Application**

**Note: Applications are due to** [**Nicole.Honore@la.gov**](mailto:Nicole.Honore@la.gov) **by Friday, May 4, 2012**

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| District Commitment Form |

*A key element of success is the commitment of the district superintendent and the central office support staff to the TAP System. This District Commitment Form shall be submitted to indicate the district’s commitment to the school’s participation in the Louisiana Pre-TAP initiative and the district’s willingness to support the school in developing a readiness to implement TAP in the following school year.*

*Our district/school fully supports building a readiness in the Pre-TAP school applicant identified in this application to implement the Louisiana TAP System in the 2013-2014 school year. In submitting this Commitment Form, the LEA/charter school will:*

* Assist the identified Pre-TAP school(s) in its efforts to explore to establish a readiness, ongoing support for and commitment to all four TAP elements from a significant proportion of the teachers, principals, and the community.
* Agree to research the four key elements for success: Multiple Career Paths, Ongoing Job Embedded Professional Growth, Instructionally Focused Accountability and Performance-Based Compensation.
* Explore and lead efforts to identify potential funding sources to support full implementation of TAP in the targeted schools.
* Support the purpose of TAP through faithful implementation of activities designed to recruit, motivate, develop, and retain high quality teachers in order to increase student achievement.
* Remain dedicated to the overall goal of the TAP System – to increase teacher instructional capacity and raise student achievement.
* Provide adequate release time for the principal and identified teachers to plan and to participate in a site visit(s) to a school currently implementing TAP.
* Identify an individual at the district office to serve as District TAP contact person for purposes of communication regarding this effort and whose responsibilities will include oversight and coordination of Pre-TAP activities, as necessary.

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Signature of Superintendent Date