

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



December 15, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

This will be the final newsletter of 2020, as most of our systems will soon begin winter break. I know this is a year we will be glad to have behind us. It's been especially trying in Louisiana. Along with the global pandemic, we were at the center of a historically active hurricane season — which included landfall of the most powerful storm on record for our state. Our resiliency was tested in 2020, and we showed why we are Louisiana strong.

Take pride in how we've led through these challenges together. Not only were school systems able to reopen, but [around 65 percent](#) of our students are benefitting from in-person instruction. Our mitigation efforts are strong. Medical experts have praised the work of educators to keep kids healthy and have called our schools among the safest environments for students and teachers. Virtual instruction was a new journey for many teachers and families. Our educators have leaned into that challenge. Over 2,600 teachers and leaders have benefitted from virtual instruction workshops at the state level, and many more have participated in similar professional development efforts at the system and school level.

Thank you for continuing to serve during unprecedented circumstances. Educators always find a way, and this year demonstrated that above all else. The new year will still come with challenges. The pandemic is not over. A vaccine is on the way, but we must remain committed to our mitigation efforts. Having worked alongside you during this crisis, I know we will meet the challenges ahead.

Happy holidays to you and your family. Make the most of what remains in 2020, take time to recharge, and let's be even more intentional in our work for students in 2021.

Dr. Cade Brumley
State Superintendent of Education

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Important Dates for School Systems

Office Hours	
Office Hours Title	Zoom Link
Data Coordinator Office Hours	December 17 at 1 p.m.
Super App Office Hours	December 18 at 10 a.m.
Assessment and Accountability Office Hours	January 5 at 3:45 p.m.
Education Technology Office Hours	January 7 at 9 a.m.
Career and College Readiness Office Hours	January 7 at 3 p.m.
K-2 CLASS Pilot Office Hours	January 12 at 10 a.m.
Educator Development Office Hours	January 19 at 12 p.m.
Monthly Calls*	
Monthly Call Title	Zoom Link
Education Technology Monthly Call	December 17 at 9 a.m.
Federal Programs and Grants Management Monthly Call	December 17 at 10 a.m.
Career and College Readiness Monthly Call	December 17 at 3 p.m.
Data Coordinator Monthly Call	January 7 at 1 p.m.
Legislative and Policy Support Monthly Call	January 11 at 10 a.m.
Charter Authorizers Monthly Call	January 13 at 11 a.m.
BESE Authorized Charter School Monthly Call	January 13 at 3 p.m.
SPED Leader Monthly Call	January 14 at 2 p.m.
System Leaders Monthly Call	January 15 at 9 a.m.
Assessment and Accountability Monthly Call	January 19 at 3:45 p.m.
Nonpublic Monthly Call	January 20 at 2 p.m.
Student Well-Being Monthly Call	January 20 at 3:30 p.m.
Reopening Roundtable for System Leaders	January 22 at 9 a.m.
Academic Content and Educator Development Monthly Call	January 27 at 1 p.m.
<p><i>*Monthly call presentations are available in the School Improvement Library. View the School System Support Calendar to access a complete schedule of events.</i></p>	

Upcoming Events	
Event Title	Zoom Link
Charter Authorizer Monthly Call (2021 Charter School Application)	December 16 at 12 p.m.
Important Deadlines	
Louisiana's Title IV A Waiver Request for Public Comment	January 8
SEAP Vacancy Application	January 8
Newcomer and Beginner English Learner Curriculum RFA	January 29

School System Support

Louisiana's Title IV A Waiver Request

The US Department of Education (ED) is offering flexibility under the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant Program (Title IV, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 [ESEA]) in light of the continued disruption to learning caused by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) during the national emergency declared by President Trump under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

ED is inviting states to request a waiver, on behalf of their local educational agencies (LEAs), of one or more of the following requirements in Title IV, Part A of the ESEA:

- Section 4106(d) of Title IV, Part A of the ESEA, related to LEA needs assessments for the 2020-2021 school year
- Section 4106(e)(2)(C), (D), and (E) of Title IV, Part A of the ESEA, with respect to content-area spending requirements for Federal fiscal year (FY) 2020 Title IV, Part A funds
- Section 4109(b) of Title IV, Part A of the ESEA, with respect to the fifteen percent spending limitation for technology infrastructure for FY 2020 Title IV, Part A funds

Please note that all other requirements in Title IV, Part A of the ESEA would continue to apply.

Louisiana received a waiver of these provisions for the 2019-2020 school year and FYs 2018 and 2019 Title IV, Part A funds. The Department plans to submit its request for all of the flexibilities offered on behalf of LEAs; however, as required prior to submitting the waiver request, the agency must provide the public and interested LEAs notice and a reasonable opportunity to comment. The agency has allotted thirty days to receive comments, therefore please review [Louisiana's Title IV A Waiver Request](#) and provide any comments by **January 8**.

Public feedback can be sent to LDOEcommunications@la.gov.

December Reopening Roundtable for System Leaders Canceled

The Reopening Roundtable for System Leaders scheduled for this **Friday, December 18 has been canceled**. These calls will resume in the new year and will continue to take place on the third Friday of each month. The next call is scheduled for [January 22 at 9 a.m.](#)

Please contact LDOEcommunications@la.gov with questions.

January System Leaders Monthly Call Rescheduled

The January System Leaders Monthly Call date has been rescheduled and will now take place on **January 15 at 9 a.m.**

- **Webinar Date and Time:** January 15 at 9 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97982207566>
- **Passcode:** @Ax4Q3
- **Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 979 8220 7566
- **Dial-in Passcode:** 744001

Please contact LDOEcommunications@la.gov with questions.

Career and College Readiness

Update: BinaxNOW Rapid COVID Testing Kits Survey Extended

Please share with early childhood centers.

The Louisiana Department of Health has BinaxNOW Rapid Testing kits available upon request for **school systems and early childhood centers** to access when a CLIA Waived Certificate Number or community health provider has been identified. In order to access these test kits, school systems will need a designated point of contact to complete a survey.

The survey will request the following information:

- Name of the delivery location
- Point of contact (Need name, email, phone number)
- Delivery address
- CLIA Waived Certificate # or the community provider who will be testing so LDH can obtain all the same information on the number of BINAX tests requested (recommend estimating number based on 20 percent of school system's census)

School systems that would like to request BinaxNOW Rapid Testing kits are encouraged to [complete this survey](#) by the **end of December**.

Please contact LDOECOVID19support@la.gov with questions.

2021 Quest for Success Trainings

Please share with career and technical education leaders and school systems.

Quest for Success is a career exploration course designed to prepare graduates for career and life success. Training opportunities for educators to teach this course will be available throughout the school year. Registration costs for training sessions are paid directly to the provider. Carl Perkins and Career Development Funds are eligible funding sources for registration.

Registration is now open for two training sessions in early 2021.

- [January 11-14, 2021](#) from 5-9 p.m.
- [February 8 -11, 2021](#) from 5-9 p.m.

Additional training sessions will be held as the need arises.

Please contact jumpstart@la.gov with questions.

Virtual Spring 2021 Counselor Institutes

Please share with middle and high school counselors.

Thanks to everyone who joined the first-ever [LDOE Virtual Fall Counselor Institute](#) on October 28 and 29. The Department is in the process of developing another set of institutes, which are slated to take place during National School Counseling Week, **February 1 through 5**. Registration details and a tentative agenda will be forthcoming.

Please contact leslie.gilliland@la.gov with questions.

Equity, Inclusion, and Opportunities

Newcomer and Beginner English Learner Curriculum RFA

The Department recently released a [Request for Applications](#) for inviting local and national organizations to be added to the *Supporting Newcomer and Beginner English Learners Curriculum Guide*. Partners in the guide will collaborate with Louisiana schools to support the complex learning needs of newcomer and beginner English Learners through targeted curriculum. The [application](#) is open until **January 29**.

Please contact alice.garcia@la.gov with questions.

Special Education

Release of ELA Guidebooks Companion Resources for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

This week, the Department released the Companion Resources for the ELA Guidebooks for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SWSCDs). These resources were developed in collaboration with a team of ELA and special education practitioners across the state to support teachers of SWSCDs. They are designed to facilitate the access and success of students with the most significant needs to a high-quality curriculum, improve professional learning partnerships between special education teachers and content-area specialists, and increase opportunities for students with significant cognitive impairments to participate in inclusive, least restrictive environments.

The Companion Resources, case studies, exemplary lesson plans, and unit unpacking overviews can be found in the Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities [Library](#).

Please contact specialeducation@la.gov with questions.

Special Education Advisory Panel Vacancy

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) advises the Department on the provision of free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for children with disabilities and provides guidance on special education programs and services. The panel is now accepting [applications](#) for a parent of a child with a disability to serve until July 2022.

The Department asks school systems to please encourage interested parents to apply. Prospective members should email applications to specialeducation@la.gov by **January 8**.

Legislative Affairs, Policy, and Workforce Support

Practitioner License Policy Reminder

Practitioner Licenses (PL) are issued to candidates admitted to and enrolled in teacher preparation programs. Teacher preparation providers and employing school systems are responsible for applying for practitioner licenses on behalf of candidates enrolled in preparation programs. School systems and preparation providers must apply for candidates' practitioner licenses as soon as they are employed and enrolled in a teacher preparation program. Beginning this year, candidates who have a practitioner license must receive five hours of mentoring to be eligible for a Level 1 certificate. The chart below provides an overview of policy requirements outlined in Chapter 313 of Bulletin 746.

License Type	Description	Application Submission
PL 1	The PL 1 is issued to candidates enrolled in practitioner teacher preparation programs.	Teacher preparation provider

PL 2	The PL 2 is issued to candidates enrolled in certification-only alternative certification programs.	Employing school system
PL 3	The PL 3 is issued to candidates enrolled in master's degree alternative certification programs.	Employing school system

Please contact believeandprepare@la.gov with questions.

Operations

Food and Nutrition

Free/Reduced Price Meal Applications in Non-CEP Schools

School Food Authorities should continue to accept Free and Reduced Price Meal Applications throughout the 2020-2021 school year at all Non-Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) participating schools. Although schools may have transitioned to the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), school meal applications may establish eligibility for Pandemic EBT (P-EBT). School Food Authorities should encourage families, through public outreach, to complete and submit these applications.

Please contact childnutritionprograms@la.gov with questions.

Teaching and Learning

Assessments, Accountability, and Analytics

SIS Special Dropout Correction Period

Please share with data managers.

The SIS Special Dropout Correction Period deadline is **December 18** to correct data for any students identified as potential dropouts and not corrected during the normal 2019-2020 SIS data collection periods. Please refer to the document [Guidance – 2019-20 EOY Dropout Correction](#).

Please contact systemsupport@la.gov with questions.

PEP October 1 CLASS Collection

Please share with data managers.

The October 1 CLASS collection period deadline for submitting Profile of Education Personnel (PEP) staff demographic and class schedule data is **December 18**. PEP data is important for workforce reporting, class size reporting (audit data), and CTE-Career Tech Education and CDF-Career Development Fund counts.

Please contact systemsupport@la.gov with questions.

File Available via FTP – October 2020 Quarterly Home Study Reports

The Quarterly Home Study Report for October 2020 is available via the Data Management FTP (with user names ending in @datamgmt) in zipped files named “LEACode_LEAName_Oct2020HomeStudy” and will remain on the FTP through March 2021. Within the zipped file, there will be the following:

- Statewide enrollment numbers of SBESE-Approved Home Study students
- Detailed list of students from your LEA enrolled in Home Study program
- Statewide enrollment number of Registered Nonpublic Schools, Not Seeking State Approval
- Each student’s home study approval notification letter

Please contact sue.millican@la.gov with questions.

For District Testing Coordinators and Accountability Contacts

English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT)

- A small number of EL students may qualify for an exemption of the listening and/or speaking domains of the ELPT. The Department will not approve exemptions from the reading or writing domains.
- The [ELPT Request for Exemption](#) form may be submitted to assessment@la.gov by **January 4** on behalf of students with a qualifying disability as evidenced by documentation on the IEP.
- The ELPT progress rosters that were distributed during data certification have now been updated with the new goals for students. The roster can be found on the secure FTP with file name LEA Code_LEA Name_ELPT Progress Roster Post DataCert.

LEAP 2025 Fall High School Administration

- December window test voids are due to assessment@la.gov by **December 18**.
- **Important:** It is extremely important that no accountability codes be applied this fall for any reason other than code 81 for EL. An accountability code applied to a student record in December will prevent the student with an opportunity to participate in the January makeup window. Please make sure all test coordinators know that codes should not be applied for **any** students (initial or retester) who do not test during the fall administration.
- The following flexibilities require notification to the LDOE:
 - Use of January 27 and 28 makeup dates (need to send LASIDs)
 - Use of weekend testing (need to send LASIDs)
- The following flexibilities require documentation using the [Permission to Test in Alternate Environments Form](#)
 - Individual testing of students who do not have the accommodation on an IEP or IAP
 - Testing off-site
- Schools that are testing should plan to allow for state monitors. Schools can follow protocols for safety but should not prevent them from observing testing.

LEAP 2025 Spring High School Testing

- The LEAP 2025 spring high school testing window has been extended by one week. The spring window is now April 15-May 21.

ACT

- Please check the [ACT State Testing](#) site for an updated [Schedule of Events](#).
- November 2-January 22, 2021: Verify enrollment, submit the Enroll or Unenroll student files, if needed. January 22 is the deadline to receive barcode labels.
- January 12: ACT will load all eligible 11 and 12 grade students into [PANext](#).
- Now-January 15: Request ACT-authorized accommodations and/or supports for eligible examinees through the [Test Accessibility and Accommodations System](#) (TAA).

NAEP 2021

- Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, NAEP 2021 test administrations have been canceled for the 2020-2021 academic year. Please view the NAEP 2021 Closure document.

- For questions or additional information, please contact Rebecca Frederick at 225-963-8197 or email rebecca.frederick@la.gov.

Birth-Grade 3 Assessment Guidance

- Due February 28: Winter Checkpoint Early Childhood TS GOLD. Visit the [Early Childhood \(pre-K\) Assessment Guidance for Various Learning Environments](#) for additional information.

Assessment Administration Support and Training Office Hours

The next Assessment and Accountability Office Hours will be on **January 5 at 3:45 p.m.** A password will now be required for office hours. Webinar details are listed below.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** January 5 at 3:45 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/202189164>
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 646-876-9923
- **Meeting ID#:** 202 189 164
- **Passcode:** 2020202!

Educator Development

Educator Development December Office Hours Canceled

The [Educator Development Office Hours](#) scheduled for December 15 have been canceled. The Department will resume these office hours after the holidays on **January 19**. As a reminder, attendees can submit topics for office hour calls using this [survey](#).

Please contact believeandprepare@la.gov with questions.

Reminders

- [**Career and College Readiness Reminders**](#)
- [**Operations Reminders**](#)
 - [**Statewide Monitoring Reminders**](#)
- [**Teaching and Learning Reminders**](#)
 - [**Academic Content Reminders**](#)

Career and College Readiness Reminders

2020-2021 Graduate Diploma and Seal Orders

Please share with principals, school counselors, and data coordinators.

The [Diploma and Seal Order Form](#) is now open for school systems to submit orders for 2020-2021 graduates. All diploma requests should be submitted through the electronic form by **February 5**. Only one form should be completed for each school system. The Department will cover the costs for the initial order and distribution.

Please contact megan.thompson2@la.gov with questions.

Operations Reminders

Federal Programs and Grants Management Monthly Call Update

The Federal Programs and Grants Management Monthly Call will continue to take place through the remainder of the year. Additional call dates have been added to the school system support calendar. Please note: The **Zoom link for this monthly call has changed**. Please use the information included below to join the next call on **December 17** and all future Federal Programs and Grants Management Monthly Calls.

- **Webinar Date and Time:** December 17 at 10 a.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/95258128918>
- **Passcode:** \$Y=64D
- **Webinar Phone Number:** 312-626-6799
- **Meeting ID#:** 952 5812 8918

Please contact LDOE.grantshelpdesk@la.gov with questions.

Statewide Monitoring Reminders

Consolidated Monitoring Schedule for 2020-2021SY (2nd Quarter)

The Department conducts annual monitoring of school systems to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements. To assist school systems in thoughtful planning and preparation for a scheduled monitoring event, the Department is releasing the [consolidated monitoring schedule for the 2020-2021 school year](#)*. This schedule is tentative, and the agency reserves the right to make adjustments as necessary.

Quarterly updates will follow this newsletter announcement. Additionally, the assigned program monitoring team leader will send a more detailed monitoring notification reminder, along with any necessary planning documents or instructions, directly to superintendents and federal program directors of each school system appearing on the monitoring schedule. The [second quarter monitoring schedule](#) is now available.

Please contact tasha.anthony@la.gov with questions about the monitoring schedule or program monitoring related to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). For questions related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), please contact cindy.hilton@la.gov.

**School systems that have been severely impacted by a hurricane and are currently listed on the schedule are encouraged to contact tasha.anthony@la.gov.*

Teaching and Learning Reminders

Academic Content Reminders

ELA Guidebooks: Distance Learning Guidebook Companions Release Update

Please share with ELA supervisors, administrators, and ELA teachers for grades 3-8.

At the start of the school year, the Department released [Distance Learning Guidebook Companions](#) for grade 3 through grade 12. The **second and final round** of Distance Learning Guidebook Companions for grades 3-8 are available for download through the [Louisiana Curriculum Hub](#) and [LearnZillion](#). These companions will be made available for download on [Louisiana Believes](#) through updated zip files after December 18. These resources are a **print-only/low-tech solution** for students with limited or no connectivity who are learning remotely.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

ELA Guidebooks: High School Guidebooks (2020) Updates

Please share with ELA supervisors and ELA teachers for grades 9-12.

Teaching Lab and SchoolKit, in partnership with the Department, have created high school **Content Leader** training modules aligned to the new [ELA Guidebooks 9-12 \(2020\)](#). This training consists of seven modules that unpack the design of the program, explore the reading and writing approaches, and model unit and lesson study protocols to support teaching in planning to meet the needs of all students. The first three modules in this series were offered virtually to teachers in July. The entire training series is now final; school system leaders can contact [Teaching Lab or SchoolKit](#) for more information.

A [Lesson Monitoring Tool](#) is now available for [ELA Guidebooks 9-12 \(2020\)](#). This tool allows teachers to track student progress toward the knowledge and skill look fors in each lesson.

The new **Lesson Monitoring Tool**:

- allows teachers to collect data from student responses during the lesson to determine whether or not students have met the lesson look fors,
- provides a snapshot vision of how students are performing to determine high-level trends, and
- supports teachers as they make instructional decisions grounded in observation and experience.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

Louisiana STEM Pathway Teacher Contact List

The Department's STEM team is creating a statewide internal contact list of [Louisiana STEM Pathway](#) teachers. The contact list will be used to invite teachers to pathway-specific opportunities such as networking and professional development events. Teachers of STEM Pathway courses who are interested should complete this [form](#).

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.