

# LOUISIANA PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

A Resource to Inform and Celebrate  
Louisiana's Building-Level Leaders

**January 28, 2021**

Dear School Leaders,

Thank you for investing time into this new support resource from the Louisiana Department of Education. As a former teacher, coach and principal, I know how valuable your time is — especially during this most unusual school year. Our LDOE team understands this as well. We are committed to connecting you with resources that can have a true impact on your work. We also know that “school leader” extends beyond the principalship. This content will pertain to all building-level leaders.



As a school leader, you play a critical role in the success of your school. You set the tone for the culture. You're a lead learner in your building. You help educators become their best, so they can help children reach their potential.

When this school year started there were those who doubted whether in-person instruction could happen. You understood that our kids needed us more than ever. Educators find a way. Adhering to mitigation efforts and in concert with medical professionals, the pandemic could not prevent us from safely educating Louisiana's 800,000 students.

Now, over 60 percent of our children are benefitting from in-person instruction, and medical experts have called our schools some of the safest environments in the state. This is only possible with professionals like you leading the way. I know how difficult this has been to accomplish. Thank you for always going the extra mile to serve your school family. I'm excited to connect with you through this regular newsletter and hope we can help you support your team.

Dr. Cade Brumley  
State Superintendent of Education

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## Principal Corner



Each edition of the Louisiana Principals Newsletter will offer thoughts and wisdom from the field in an effort to highlight the amazing work happening in our state.

In this edition, Alnata Dione Bradford — principal of Parkway Elementary School in Vernon District and Louisiana Principal of the Year — offers insight on school leadership during the 2020-2021 school year. With an emphasis on strategic planning and continuous learning, Bradford successfully led her staff through a challenging start to this school year. She continues to learn and build on these practices through reflective leadership.

“In order to provide continuous learning for students, it is critical that our teachers accept the challenge of being strong learners. This is paramount to provide quality education to our students,” said Bradford. “We started by ensuring all of our teachers were Google Classroom Level I trained and/or certified. Eighty percent of our faculty earned their Level I Certification by August 1, 2020. Teachers then established their own Google Classroom, Google Site, and one form of electronic communication with parents. Our plan was to make sure instructional resources and support would be readily available, learning would continue, and families would stay abreast of instructional practices and expectations.”

As with many schools in Louisiana and across the country, Bradford’s virtual-choice students continue to receive both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

“We accomplished this by ensuring that one teacher per grade level remained consistent in providing virtual instruction,” said Bradford. “This allows our virtual learners to have strong consistency in Tier 1 instruction, have interaction with their peers by meeting in small groups, and receive timely and targeted feedback.”

Bradford attributes this success to a reflective leadership approach and shared the following:

“Reflective leaders are effective leaders. As a daily practice, I journal what I hear, what I see, and what I learn throughout the day,” Bradford shared. “Reflection journals allow me to think about the learning both within my school and within myself. Additionally, reflective practices help me to not only engage critically with challenges but also celebrate and repeat successes. I have found this practice to be a useful tool in my leadership planning and growth.”

Thanks again to Ms. Alnata Dione Bradford for her continued dedication to her staff, her students, and her community.

## Announcements and Resources

### **CLASS Evaluations**

In December BESE, a one-time emergency rule was approved for Bulletin 140 allowing early childhood classrooms that score a 4.50 or higher in CLASS for the fall (based on local and third party observations) to be excused from a local observation in the spring. The Department will share a list of classrooms that may be excused from a spring observation based on this Emergency Rule with community network lead agencies by **January 25**. Principals & other site administrators should anticipate coordinating with local lead agencies about eligible classrooms.

Please contact [michael.bock@la.gov](mailto:michael.bock@la.gov) with questions.

### **The School Support Institutes: Addressing Unfinished Learning Series**

The School Support Institutes: Addressing Unfinished Learning Series will launch in February. The focus of the Addressing Unfinished Learning Series is to ensure educators:

- have the resources and training necessary to continue instruction with high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials for all learners, including students with unfinished learning, across all instructional delivery methods (virtual, hybrid, and in-person);
- identify academic gaps using high-quality screeners and curriculum connected assessments; and
- use the high-quality instructional supports within the curriculum, including the Diverse Learners Cycle, to support students' needs.

All identified CIR schools for the 2020-2021 school year will send three members from the Instructional Leadership team to attend each of the four two-hour virtual trainings in this series. Attendees should include the principal (or other administrator), the team member who leads common planning time in ELA, and the team member who leads common planning time in math. Registration information, including [dates and times](#), was sent to the school system's point of contact the week of January 18. Principals of CIR schools will receive this information from their school system's point of contact.

Please contact [delaina.larocque@la.gov](mailto:delaina.larocque@la.gov) with questions.

### **Fast Forward Planning Grant**

The Louisiana Department of Education released an RFA on January 6 for the [Fast Forward Planning Grant](#). The purpose of this grant is to expand student access to meaningful dual enrollment opportunities, enable students to leave high school prepared for career or continue advanced postsecondary pursuits, and allow students to receive funded college experiences or employment in high wage/high demand occupations. Planning grants up to \$50,000 will be awarded to a lead regional secondary school system and its higher education partner in each Regional Labor Market Area. Access the [Fast Forward landing page](#) for more information and resources.

Please contact [stephanie.marcum@la.gov](mailto:stephanie.marcum@la.gov) with questions.

## **Teacher and Principal of the Year Applications**

State-level Teacher and Principal of the Year (TPOY) applications are due **February 4**. By that time:

- Candidates are to submit applications in the [Teacher and Principal of the Year Candidate's Online Application Portal](#).
- School systems are to enter state-level honoree information in the [Teacher and Principal of the Year Coordinator's Online Portal](#).

All applications and materials are posted in the [Resources Library](#). Candidates submitting a state-level application and TPOY coordinators should join an [informational webinar](#).

Please contact [excellenteducators@la.gov](mailto:excellenteducators@la.gov) with questions.

## **Early Childhood- Early Learning And Development Standards Survey**

The LDOE is eliciting feedback from early childhood professionals, site leaders, and stakeholders regarding the [Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards](#), including the usability and the application of these standards. If you are an Early Childhood site leader or a parent of a child enrolled in an early childhood program, please complete this brief survey by **February 12**. In addition, please share with early childhood teachers as well as Special Education Related Service providers. Responses from this survey will be used to guide conversations for a review of the current standards.

Contact [leslie.doyle@la.gov](mailto:leslie.doyle@la.gov) with questions or concerns.

## **Accelerate Launches February 1**

[Accelerate](#), Louisiana's Pre-K-12 Tutoring Strategy, is designed for school systems to implement equal-access tutoring at scale in order to achieve significant results for all students. Grounded in the most impactful research-based practices, Accelerate is a just-in-time, pre-teaching model that addresses unfinished learning by building knowledge and connecting it to skills in current lessons. In addition to guidance on implementation, LDOE will release Pre-K-12 ELA and math tutoring materials in phases during 2021. Recorded webinars will be also located on the Accelerate [landing page](#).

School systems can use funds from their General Fund, Title I, CARES, and Direct Student Services allocations. In addition, school systems will receive a Strong Start Tutoring allocation February 1, 2021 to support the launch of Accelerate this spring. For more details on funding sources, reference the [Federal Funding Guide](#).

Contact [em.cooper@la.gov](mailto:em.cooper@la.gov) with questions.

## **Sessions Still Available: Virtual Instruction Trainings for Teachers and Leaders**

LDOE partnered with NIET to help equip teachers and school leaders to plan for and strengthen virtual instruction. Louisiana educators have free access to three, 90- minute professional learning sessions that model effective virtual teaching. These sessions are taught live (synchronously) and offered several times a week this semester.

There are different options for teachers and principals to receive more tailored support based on their role. Sessions for principals and administrators will focus on remote observation and coaching practices, while teacher sessions will provide more content teachers can directly use in their virtual instruction.

Registration is still open, but seats are limited for each district or school system. Educators should connect with their immediate supervisor to see if seats are available to attend. More details and registration information can be accessed via [NIET's website](#).

Louisiana educators now have [free, asynchronous access](#) to these training sessions. The three, 60-minute self-study modules showcase different aspects of effective virtual teaching. Through the asynchronous sessions, which are similar to the live training, educators will learn about tips, templates, and strategies to use immediately in their virtual classrooms.

Please contact [systemrelations@la.gov](mailto:systemrelations@la.gov) with questions.

## **Principal Appreciation**

Please take a minute to send a shout out of appreciation to a colleague who is a building-level leader using this [survey link](#). We will include this note of appreciation in our next monthly newsletter.

## **Principal Newsletter Signup**

Do you have a colleague who would benefit from receiving this newsletter? Please forward this copy along with [this link](#) and they will receive our next monthly newsletter.

## Dates to Consider for Building-Level Leaders

Office Hours	
Office Hours Title	Zoom Link
AE Leadership Community of Practice	<a href="#">January 27 at 10 a.m.</a>
Data Coordinator Office Hours	<a href="#">January 28 at 1 p.m.</a>
<a href="#">Career and College Readiness Office Hours</a>	<a href="#">January 28 at 3 p.m.</a>
Super App Office Hours	<a href="#">January 29 at 10 a.m.</a>
Education Technology Office Hours	<a href="#">February 1 at 9 a.m.</a>
<a href="#">Assessment and Accountability Office Hours</a>	<a href="#">February 2 at 3:45 p.m.</a>
Literacy Office Hours	<a href="#">February 4 at 10 a.m.</a>
K-2 CLASS® Pilot Office Hours	<a href="#">February 9 at 12 p.m.</a>
Educator Development Office Hours	<a href="#">February 23 at 12 p.m.</a>
Upcoming Events	
Event Title	Zoom Link
Real-time Early Access to Literacy (REAL) Informational Webinar	<a href="#">January 28 at 1 p.m.</a>
Important Deadlines	
<a href="#">School Health Survey</a>	January 29
<a href="#">Literacy Screening Survey</a>	January 29
<a href="#">State-Level Teacher and Principal of the Year (TPOY) Application</a>	February 4
<a href="#">2021 Teacher Leader Summit T-Shirt Design</a>	February 5
<a href="#">Diploma and Seal Order Form</a>	February 5
<a href="#">Super App Submission</a>	February 12