

# LOUISIANA PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER



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



**April 22, 2021**

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## Principal Corner

### **Social-Emotional Learning: The Principals and Teachers Need It as Well**



As a principal, I have worked in some of the most challenging communities in the country. The trauma that students dealt with before coming to school was unimaginable. Our superintendent recognized this and invested in a social-emotional curriculum and professional development for all schools. The teachers were elated to finally have the tools to serve their students who were dealing with trauma. However, during one of the professional development sessions, a light bulb went off, and I said to myself, "teachers need this training for their mental wellness as opposed to just learning strategies to help their students." Therefore, we began every monthly meeting with social-emotional learning professional development for teachers and staff. SEL was an excellent investment as teachers' and students' attendance was above 94%, discipline referrals were down, and test scores increased in every content area. From that point on, my teachers' and

students' mental wellness became my top priority as a principal.

Currently, I'm the Zone Director of Calcasieu Parish Schools, where I support 14 schools. When asked by the school board members and superintendent what would be my top priority? I responded with social-emotional learning professional development for principals and teachers and an SEL curriculum for students. The room became quiet as everyone was puzzled. However, the superintendent trusted my plan and gave me the approval for the professional development for principals and teachers and curriculum for schools (Second Step).

I contacted Dr. Earl Suttle, the Founder and Chairman of Leadership Success International, LLC, an international training and consulting company based in Atlanta. Dr. Suttle is a former teacher and counselor who specializes in working with businesses, schools, and organizations to increase their productivity, staff, boost morale, and improve mental health. Dr. Suttle provided professional development for principals using strategies that both he and Dr. John Hubbard coach in their work.

Dr. Suttle provided professional development for principals. The principals were in awe as the sessions focused on their mental and physical well-being instead of the principalship duties. There was no mention of strategic planning, data analysis, or professional learning communities. We only focused on developing a wellness and growth plan, ways to manage stress, dealing with grief, piloting through turbulent times, recognizing the alarm signals of stress, and the importance of positive affirmations. Little did we know how valuable these sessions would be two years later.

This past year has thrown both educators and students for a loop. The COVID-19 pandemic, two devastating hurricanes, and an ice storm have shuttered schools here in Calcasieu Parish. However, when it was time to return to school, principals were prepared to pilot through these turbulent times. The first half of this challenging school year showed only a seven percent failure rate for students, and teachers' attendance rates are 92% and above at most schools. I believe that a focus on our principals' mental well-being has played a significant role in our teachers' excitement and our student's academic success that we are experiencing.

Despite a global crisis, two hurricanes, and an ice storm, our principals are not only surviving but thriving.

Marcus Jackson, Ed.D.  
Zone Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Calcasieu Parish Schools



For more information on trauma-informed practices, join us at the Virtual Teacher Summit on June 8 for “**Trauma Informed + Healing Centered Practices: Research and Implications for Districts, Schools, and Classrooms.**”

Hosted by:

- **Dr. Kristen Pearson, PhD, NCSP**, *Center for Resilience + Tulane University School of Medicine*
- **Dr. Monica Stevens, PhD**, *Center for Resilience + Tulane University School of Medicine*
- **Dr. Liz Marcell Williams, EdD**, *Center for Resilience*

This webinar will address the essential aspects of trauma-informed practices and will:

- Cover the impacts of trauma on child development, relationships, health and learning
- Discuss the principles of trauma-informed practices at the school and classroom level
- Provide concrete strategies for developing more trauma-informed, healing-focused educational environments at the building and individual level

## Announcements and Resources

### **Department Names the 2022 Teacher and Principal of the Year Semifinalists**

On March 30, the Department announced the [2022 Teacher and Principal of the Year Semifinalists](#). These educators are making exceptional gains with students. Their commitment to student success exemplifies Louisiana's teaching profession.

All Teacher and Principal of the Year Semifinalists will be honored at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Excellent Educators Awards Gala that will be held virtually on the evening of July 16, 2021.

Congratulations to these outstanding educators!

### **Staffing and Scheduling Guidance**

The [Staffing and Scheduling Best Practices Guidance](#) and kick-off webinar were released last month. This guidance provides systems and school leaders:

- best practices,
- staffing and scheduling models,
- cautions and tips for implementation,
- and information on ongoing implementation support available.

As part of the release of the [Staffing and Scheduling Best Practices](#) initiative, school systems will be offered a variety of implementation supports this spring, summer, and fall at no cost. A detailed list of supports is located in the [guidance document](#).

System leaders and school leaders that oversee academics, human resources, diverse learners, principal support, and counseling should attend these upcoming trainings. Participants must register using the links below.

Date and Time	Webinar Title and Registration Link
May 5 at 1 p.m.	<a href="#">Staffing and Scheduling Best Practices Webinar</a>
May 12 at 11 a.m.	<a href="#">Job Alike Session: Counselors and Counselor Leadership</a>
May 12 at 1 p.m.	<a href="#">Spring Job Alike Session: School Leadership</a>

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

## **Summer Learning Program Updates**

The [Summer Learning Program Guidance](#) has been updated to include a matrix to show the enrichment connections among sample activities and links to one-pagers in these enrichment areas:

- Arts
- PE and Health, Outside Activities
- STEM
- Literacy
- Career and College Exploration

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

## **Harbor Freight Tools for Schools**

[Harbor Freight Tools for Schools](#) is a program established by Harbor Freight Tools to advance excellent skilled trades education in public high schools across America. In 2021, Harbor Freight will award over \$1 million in prizes for tools and equipment.

The [application](#) is open now and it is due **May 21**. Three grand prize winners will receive \$100,000, with \$70,000 going to the public high school skilled trades program and \$30,000 going to the eligible individual skilled trades teacher or teacher team. Fifteen prize winners will each be awarded \$50,000, with \$35,000 going to the public high school program and \$15,000 going to the eligible teacher or teacher team.

Eligible applicants are those who teach:

- Agriculture Mechanics Carpentry
- Construction Electrical
- HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning)
- Manufacturing
- Plumbing
- Transportation
- Mechanics and repair
- Welding

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

## **ELA Guidebooks Digital Text Access**

Digital versions of the ELA Guidebooks Unit Readers are now available through the [XanEdu](#) portal. Schools that are interested in purchasing digital or digital+print hybrid Unit Readers to support implementation of ELA Guidebooks should access the portal for pricing and purchasing information.

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

## **STEM Teacher Micro-Credentialing Opportunity for High School Educators**

The Department has received an Education Innovation and Research grant from the U.S. Department of Education to research and develop a new mechanism to provide high-quality professional support and one of the nation's first credentialing systems to recognize the expertise of STEM teachers.

The Department is currently recruiting Louisiana high school teachers to be a part of this development and study. This opportunity is open to teachers who are currently teaching or plan to teach coursework within the Pre-Engineering or Digital Design and Emergent Media high school [STEM Pathways](#). In addition to a stipend for participation, teachers selected to participate in the study will:

- receive additional support on the execution of best practices for facilitating project-based STEM learning;
- create a virtual portfolio to reflect on their practices, analyze and critique lessons they have taught, examine and try new teaching practices, and use data driven instruction to maximize student outcomes; and
- have opportunities to strengthen expertise through collaborative online cohorts and individual feedback from experienced STEM educators.

Interested educators should complete [this brief survey](#).

Please visit the [research project information page](#) for additional information or contact [STEM@la.gov](mailto:STEM@la.gov) with questions.

## **Accelerate Summer: ELA K-2**

The Department will be releasing K-2 ELA resources for **Accelerate Summer**. These ELA resources will contain both K-2 Foundations lessons and K-2 Knowledge-Building Lessons that focus on the following ELA Guidebooks 1.0 units:

- **Grade K: Chrysanthemum**
- **Grade 1: Frogs**
- **Grade 2: Cinderella**

Schools should access the [text portal](#) as well as the [unit reader portal](#) and order texts for these units to ensure delivery of materials prior to summer instruction.

Additional information about these resources will be released soon. For more information, please contact [elaguidebooks@la.gov](mailto:elaguidebooks@la.gov).

## **Accelerate Summer: ELA 3-8**

For **Accelerate Summer** in ELA grades 3-8, schools should plan instruction using the [ELA Guidebook](#) unit that was not implemented during the 2020-2021 school year.

Schools should access the [text portal](#) as well as the [unit reader portal](#) and order texts for these units to ensure delivery of materials prior to summer instruction. Information about accessing additional materials for the units can be found on the [ELA Guidebooks landing page](#).

Additional information about these resources will be released soon. For more information, please contact [elaguidebooks@la.gov](mailto:elaguidebooks@la.gov).

## **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.

### **Shout Outs:**

**Michell Stone from North Live Oak Elementary in Livingston Parish :** “Mrs Stone is a first rate principal. She puts her students first and goes out of her way to communicate with families, faculty, and staff. She considers what’s in the best interest of the students. Her students, faculty, and staff LOVE her.” *Nominated by Karen K Parrino.*

**Taya Loupe from Brusly Middle School in West Baton Rouge Parish:** “Mrs. Loupe makes decisions that keep the best interest of both the teachers and students at our school.” *Nominated by Christy Fabre*

**Angie Dulaney from Delhi Charter School in Delhi, Louisiana:** “A huge shout out to this lady who works super long hours to make sure DCS is running efficiently and effectively. Her knowledge, dedication, and love of the school and students amazes me everyday!! She has been a joy and inspiration to work with!!!” *Nominated by Nikki Jane Roark*

**Richard Dewees from J. I. Barron Elementary in Rapides Parish:** “Richard Dewees has always gone above and beyond to build leadership capacity within our school. His leadership has developed a culture of collaboration throughout our school.” *Nominated by Kim Lord*

**Nicolas Cunningham from North Caddo Elementary Middle School in Caddo Parish:** “Mr Cunningham has been a great first year principal. He truly wants the best for everyone at our school and works to make it a place where students succeed.” *Nominated by Kathy Garner*

## **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
<a href="#">Career and College Readiness Office Hours</a>	<a href="#">April 22 at 3 p.m.</a>
<i>Achieve!</i> Office Hours	<a href="#">April 23 at 10 a.m.</a>
Early Childhood Lead Agencies Office Hours	<a href="#">April 27 at 3 p.m.</a>
<a href="#">Assessment and Accountability Office Hours</a>	<a href="#">April 27 at 3:45 p.m.</a>
K-2 CLASS® Pilot Office Hours	<a href="#">May 4 at 12 p.m.</a>
Teacher Leader Summit Office Hours	<a href="#">May 4 at 3 p.m.</a>
SRCL TA Office Hours	<a href="#">May 10 at 1 p.m.</a>
Educator Development Office Hours	<a href="#">May 18 at 12 p.m.</a>
Upcoming Events	
Event Title	Zoom Link
<a href="#">Understanding Childhood Obesity Webinar</a>	<a href="#">April 21 at 1:30 p.m.</a>
Staffing and Scheduling Best Practices Webinar	<a href="#">May 5 at 1 p.m.</a>
Real-time Early Access to Literacy (REAL) Informational Webinar	<a href="#">May 6 at 2 p.m.</a>
Job Alike Session: District Academic Leadership	<a href="#">May 11 at 11 a.m.</a>
Job Alike Session: Diverse Learners Leadership	<a href="#">May 11 at 1 p.m.</a>
Spring Job Alike Session: School Leadership	<a href="#">May 12 at 1 p.m.</a>
Important Deadlines	
Deadline to Submit <a href="#">Emergency Preparedness and Recovery Contact</a>	May 1
<a href="#">LDOE/DMGroup Regional Technical Support Series</a>	May 4
2020 IDEA MOE Confirmation (Compliance)	May 14