

LOUISIANA PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

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

September 21, 2023

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PRINCIPAL CORNER



Louisiana is on the move! For two years in a row, Louisiana has shown an academic rise and continues to show consistent progress for schools across the state. That's the momentum we need to take teaching and learning to the next level.

Calling all instructional leaders! Are you ready to take a stand and bring education to the next level ... one school, one teacher, and one student at a time? It is our time to shake things up and become the innovative, creative, problem solvers that we are. The role of a principal is multifaceted, and we are the CEOs of the most important corporation in the country, "School." Similarly to most corporations, we have committed, driven, and intentional staff who will do whatever it takes to protect our investment – our students – and ensure that we get a return

on our investment, the results. In addition, corporations are often competitive and strive to be leaders of their craft or expertise. Likewise, we use data to inform our next steps in making decisions about how to advance closer to our goals.

For the school year, let's vow to change the game and be intentional about moving from good to great. In a world of players, be a game changer. We got **GAMES (Goals And Motivation Equal Success)**. A game-changer is an individual or company that significantly alters the way things are done. Game-changing individuals often use their personality traits and attitudes to spark change. I'm sure there are many ways one can be a game changer.

Here is how my faculty and staff intend to be **game changers** at my school.

- **G**ather your leadership team often to develop goals for both students and staff and make decisions to improve teaching and learning.

- **A**ssign mentors and mentees strategically. Think about personalities, expertise, and time availability. Consider mentor and mentee pairs who are not in the same grade level.
- **M**entor your diversified leadership team. Do walkthroughs together and ask reflective questions. Model the coaching and feedback cycle with them. Give opportunities to lead, and aim to develop your team to be your master teachers, resulting in having a master teacher in every hall.
- **E**ngage your community supporters. Create a consortium of community organizations to help you leverage resources to take your school further. Create a community council that keeps you in tune with the community's needs.
- **C**heer for your school daily, all the time. Exude confidence and speak positive affirmations. Send short encouraging messages to your staff daily and share them with the students.
- **H**ave fun on purpose. Participate in the different events and be visible. Attend skate night and skate. Attend school dances and dance. Cheer and excite students during the pep rallies. Play the games during the school fair and eat the snowball during the snowball sale.
- **A**ddress issues quickly and refocus behaviors to align with your non-negotiables and expectations. Then inspect what you expect.
- **N**urture your staff. Show that you are interested in them. Meet with your teachers to discuss progress and for a wellness check. Meet with your students to set goals. Schedule *Coffee and Conversations* with your parents to get to know them. Be sure to have a focus for each session.
- **G**o first. Be a risk taker on behalf of the greater good and in pursuit of a return for your investment.
- **E**nergize the staff and your mind with a growth mindset. Growth-minded people learn from failures and embrace challenges. They desire to learn, look at the bigger picture, and seek solutions.
- **R**eflect and reset every day with the intent to have a better day than the day before.

My colleagues, in a world full of players, be a Game Changer. Let's change the game in our beloved Louisiana and level up to new heights. I know that the best is yet to come and that our future will be greater than the past.

Monya Criddle, 2024 Louisiana Elementary Principal of the Year
Ralph J. Bunche Elementary, Jefferson Parish

LDOE CORNER



Welcome back to school! This new year brings new social studies standards and curriculum for K-12 teachers and students. To assist teachers in the transition to the new standards, the Department has created a few resources.

Social Studies Course Frameworks provide pacing guidance, suggested questions, and primary and secondary sources and support to teachers in planning high-quality aligned lessons using the [2022 Louisiana Student Standards for Social Studies](#). The frameworks are being updated regularly based on feedback from the field. It is essential that teachers utilize the latest version of the Social Studies Frameworks.

Social Studies [Instructional Strategy Bank](#) offers guidance and protocols for whole-group instruction. These strategies can assist teachers in implementing best practices in social studies classrooms.

Bayou Bridges

The Department, in partnership with Core Knowledge, is creating Bayou Bridges, a new K-8 social studies curriculum. Teachers and administrators can visit the [Bayou Bridges resource page](#) for more information.

Throughout the fall, the Department will be hosting [office hours](#) to answer questions, receive feedback, and generally support teachers using the Bayou Bridge curriculum. These sessions will provide teachers with the opportunity to

- ask questions and provide feedback about particular lessons or strategies;
- get help locating materials; and
- ask questions about timelines.

School system staff office hours are 11 a.m - 12 p.m.; teacher office hours are 3:30 - 4 p.m.

On-demand training [modules](#) are now available for Bayou Bridges for grades 4 and 5. In these modules, teachers are introduced to Bayou Bridges components and design, as well as a unit study tool designed to help them get started. It is recommended that administrators follow up with teachers to ensure that they have completed the modules. A certificate is provided to teachers upon completion of the course.

A detailed Bayou Bridges unit release [schedule](#) is also now available, providing districts, administrators, and teachers with precise release dates for each unit in grades K - 8.

We hope that these new resources help both teachers and school leaders as they work to bring our new social studies standards to life. Thank you so much for all that you do.

Sean Dimond, Social Studies Supervisor, Office of Teaching and Learning

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Principal's Webinar Series

The LDOE hosts a monthly webinar series for current school leaders and principal supervisors on best practices in school leadership aligned to the state's priorities. Each month, the webinar features national and Louisiana experts sharing strategies and tools on a specific topic necessary for being effective in the school leader role. The webinar in September will provide social studies updates and be led by the Department's Social Studies Division. Information on Interests and Opportunities will be presented during October's webinar.

Webinar Date and Time: September 25, 1 pm

Webinar Link:

<https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97054177103?pwd=Vm9DYmZpNXhKSGQrVnJwSjVMb25aZz09>

Webinar Phone Number: 346-248-7799

Meeting ID#: 970 5417 7103

Passcode: 310386

Webinar Date and Time: October 23, 1 pm

Webinar Link:

<https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97054177103?pwd=Vm9DYmZpNXhKSGQrVnJwSjVMb25aZz09>

Webinar Phone Number: 346-248-7799

Meeting ID#: 970 5417 7103

Passcode: 310386

Please contact louisianaleaders@la.gov with questions.

Evaluation Updates

All non-VAM teacher, counselor, and librarian evaluations should be finalized. The 2022-2023 VAM data will be released into CIS on **October 6**. All VAM teacher evaluations should be finalized following this date. The final deadline to enter or [upload](#) 2022-2023 evaluation data is **October 27**. Data cannot be entered or edited after the system closes for the 2022-2023 school year.

The [Compass Information System \(CIS\)](#) will be open for the 2023-2024 school year on **November 3**. Following this date, teachers and evaluators may begin entering SLT and observation data for the current year. Please contact compass@la.gov with questions.

New Teacher Experience-Support Call

The Department will host a series of support calls for [The New Teacher Experience](#) during the 2023-2024 school year. The first call will be held on **September 28** at 1 p.m. The New Teacher Experience is a comprehensive induction program that offers multiple services designed to increase teacher effectiveness, enhance skills, and reduce attrition among beginning teachers.

The support calls are designed to

- give in-depth information on the supports available to your early career educators;
- provide updates on the Professional Learning Modules, Mentoring, and Affinity Groups;
- offer collaboration opportunities for systems engaging in the NTE; and
- answer questions about the NTE.

Webinar Date and Time: September 28 at 1 p.m.

Webinar Link: <https://tinyurl.com/4c74bthm>

Webinar Phone Number: 470-381-2552

Passcode: 235470

Contact laurie.carlton@la.gov with questions.

New Teacher Survey

The Department is collecting feedback from early educators to inform the supports provided by the [New Teacher Experience](#). Please ask all second year teachers to complete this brief [survey](#) by September 29. If you have questions regarding the survey please reach out to laurie.carlton@la.gov.

Pre-Educator Pathway System Lead Call

Offered quarterly, the Pre-Educator Pathway System Lead Professional Learning Community are virtual opportunities for Pre-Educator Pathway/Grow Your Own System Leads to share best practices related to developing and expanding access to the Pre-Educator Pathway. All school systems are encouraged to attend regardless of current pathway status. The first call will be held on September 28 at 10 a.m.

Webinar Date and Time: September 28 at 10 a.m.

Webinar Link: <https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/3455048179>

Webinar Phone Number: 1-346-248-7799

Meeting ID #: 345 504 8179

Please contact believeandprepare@la.gov with any questions.

RESOURCES

DIVERSE LEARNERS

Special Education Playbook Regional Tour

The Division of Diverse Learners will be conducting a regional tour to discuss the [Special Education Playbook for System Leaders](#). During this professional learning, participants will obtain guidance on implementing school system strategies that incorporate the three best instructional practices for students with disabilities aimed at improving outcomes. We encourage each school system/charter to send a three person system leadership team, such as the Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer and Special Education Director. Additionally, there will be a concurrent session for school leaders and special education lead teachers (two person team) for school-level implementation support. Complete the brief [registration form](#) to attend the tour.

Tour Dates and Locations are as follows:

- Rapides: 502 Beauregard St., Alexandria September 25
- Ouachita: 765 Slack Street, West Monroe September 26
- St. Tammany: 2544 Sergeant Alfred St, Slidell September 27
- Lafayette: 2122 N. Parkerson, Crowley September 28
- East Baton Rouge: 1201 N. 3rd, Baton Rouge October 3

Please contact diverselearnersupport@la.gov with questions.

ELA

ELA Back-to-School Professional Learning Series

The first session of the [ELA Back to School Professional Learning Series](#) is now available. This session focuses on using the [Interactive Supports](#) that are now available on [Louisiana Curriculum Hub](#).

This learning series will support teachers and instructional leaders in implementing newly released ELA resources. Additional sessions of the Back to School Professional Learning Series will be released on a rolling basis, with the next session coming in September. Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

LITERACY

Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring Program Is Looking for Tutors

The Steve Carter Literacy Tutoring program is looking for certified teachers who are interested in becoming a tutor. Please share this opportunity with teachers. Interested teachers should complete the [Literacy Tutor Interest Form](#). Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

MATH

Zearn Checkpoint

Now is the time to set expectations and check data for [Zearn Implementation](#) in the classroom. Teachers should reflect on the key factors of planning, behavior management, engagement, and goal setting through the use of the class reports.

Teachers should consider the following:

- Are teachers and students signing in to Zearn regularly?
- Are students getting 90 minutes per week with Zearn?
- Are students completing three grade-level Zearn lessons per week?

Reflecting on this data supports teacher success with the [high-impact tool](#), Zearn. Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

SCIENCE

Updates with inquiryHub Biology

The developers of [inquiryHub Biology \(iHub\)](#), one of Louisiana's identified [high-quality pilots in science](#), have partnered with OpenSciEd to build on their previous work and develop new instructional resources for biology, chemistry, and physics. Full courses will be published on a rolling basis on the [OpenSciEd's website](#). The current iHub materials and [Louisiana Guide to Piloting iHub Biology](#) will remain available; however, all curricular updates and professional learning will shift to the OpenSciEd versions of the materials.

Louisiana guides to piloting OpenSciEd in [biology](#), [chemistry](#), and [physics](#) are available on the [K-12 Science Resources web page](#). Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Social Studies Course Frameworks

The [Social Studies Course Frameworks](#) for grades K - 8 and high school Civics have been updated. All video links are now functional. Additionally, the final unit in grade 8, The Modern Era, is now available. The course frameworks will be continually updated throughout the 2023-2024 school year. Teachers and instructional leaders should look for updates to the suggested primary sources, as well as new scoring notes for written and extended responses using the framing questions as prompts. Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with questions.

CAREER AND COLLEGE READINESS

U.S. Senate Youth Scholarship Opportunity

The LDOE, in partnership with the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, will select two juniors or seniors to serve as delegates for the 62nd Annual Washington Week Program March 2-9, 2024. These two students will each receive a \$10,000 scholarship after attending all sessions scheduled for that week. Please refer to the [LDOE Awards web page](#) for more information.

- Any junior or senior holding an elected or appointed leadership position in the school, community, state, or nation may qualify to apply.
- The [U.S. Youth Senate Scholarship application](#) will trigger the release of the list of essay topics and directions for the proctored writing session from the state coordinator to the school sponsor. These topics are considered test secure by the Hearst Foundation and should be treated as such.
- The deadline for portfolio submission is **October 3** at 11:59 p.m. Applications will not be returned. Finalists will be notified by October 26.
- The national exam and interviews will be held November 8 in Baton Rouge.
- Finalists will be notified by the LDOE in early December of their selections as delegates or alternates.
- The delegates must be able to attend all events in Washington, D.C. to receive the college scholarship.

Please contact marian.johnson@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

New Teacher Experience: Professional Learning Modules

The Department, in partnership with A+PEL, has developed [Professional Learning Modules](#) on topics that are critical for new teacher success. These modules, which are designed to build learning throughout the year, include online asynchronous content followed by an in person learning lab where participants practice and apply these concepts.

- Module 1: Classroom Management/Classroom Environment
- Module 2: Standards and Curriculum
- Module 3: Data Literacy
- Module 4: Literacy for 21st century learners
- Module 5: Parent and Community Engagement

Teachers are expected to complete the entire series of Professional Learning Modules. After completing the [registration](#), participants will receive details on selected training locations.

This learning opportunity is provided at no cost to systems; however, any travel costs should be covered by the school system. Registration is almost full, please have new teachers register ASAP. Contact laurie.carlton@la.gov with questions.

New Teacher Experience: Affinity Group Registration Now Open

The [New Teacher Experience](#) is a comprehensive support program for beginning educators designed to increase teacher effectiveness, enhance skills, and reduce attrition among beginning teachers. The Department is excited to announce that [registration](#) is still open for 2023-2024 Affinity Groups.

Affinity Groups provide support for beginning teachers across Louisiana through monthly virtual meetings. The goals of these groups include:

- Creating a pathway for novice teachers to experience socialization and collaboration with their peers.
- Linking new teachers by a common purpose or interest (teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities, second grade teachers, etc.).
- Ensuring an inclusive environment where new teachers are valued, included, and empowered to succeed.
- Improving their craft through discussion, collaboration, and purposeful materials and leadership in each group.
- Building new teachers' confidence in their abilities to instruct students and manage classrooms.

There is no cost to join affinity groups, but seats are limited. [Registration](#) will be on a first come, first serve basis. Don't let your new teachers miss out on this great opportunity. Registration will close once full. Please contact laurie.carlton@la.gov with questions.

Free Registration for Educators for the LASTEM Annual Summit

[LASTEM](#), Louisiana's Regional STEM Network, is a system of STEM leadership entities strategically positioned across Louisiana whereby communities, parishes, multi-parish regions, and the state can achieve improved access to STEM education, participation, and advancement. The [LASTEM Summit](#) will be held on **October 17** at the Cajundome and Convention Center in Lafayette. [Registration](#) is free for educators; however, those interested in attending should register soon as spaces are limited. For more information please visit the [LASTEM Summit web page](#). Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

PRINCIPAL NEWSLETTER SIGNUP

Do you have a colleague who would benefit from receiving this newsletter? Forward this copy and encourage them to [subscribe](#) to receive our next monthly newsletter.

PRINCIPAL APPRECIATION

If you have an extraordinary building-level leader you would like to recommend to be highlighted in future newsletters, please submit information about the outstanding leader using the [LDOE Principal's Newsletter Leader Spotlight Nomination Form](#). This note of appreciation will be included in our next monthly newsletter.

Christa Leon at Louisiana State University Laboratory School

"Mrs. Leon cares deeply about each of her teachers both professionally and personally. Her theme "Shine Bright Like a Diamond", encourages the faculty to strive to be a GEM (Grateful, Enlightened, and Magnificent) at all times." *Submitted by Ellen Daugherty*

Alexis Long at New Orleans Military & Maritime Academy

“Mrs. Long is dedicated to a student-focused educational system that provides our learners with the tiered academic and behavioral supports needed to make progress. She ensures that regular common planning time is built into the schedules. During this time, teachers are able to collaborate and share information, data, and best practices.” *Submitted by Heather Desrochers*

Becky Warren at J. B. Nachman Elementary, Rapides Parish

“Becky Warren has been such a positive mentor for me over the last two years! As a new principal, she assisted and guided me in all things "principal". She is always uplifting, encouraging, and helps me find new ways to help my students and staff succeed!” *Submitted by Kim Lord*

Danielle Copeland at Jonesboro-Hodge Elementary School, Jackson Parish

“Danielle fosters a positive culture for teachers, students, and families. She is self-reflective and is an exemplar of being a lifelong learner. Danielle is personable and makes it a priority to know every student’s name. She is an absolute joy to work with.” *Submitted by Tristen Bergholtz*

DATES TO CONSIDER FOR BUILDING-LEVEL LEADERS

Important Dates	
Nominations for Excellent Educators due	September 22
Monthly Principal Webinar: Social Studies Updates	September 25 at 1 p.m.
Special Education Playbook Regional Tour - Register for a session near you!	September 25 - October 3
Pre-Educator Pathway System Lead Call	September 28 at 10 a.m.
New Teacher Experience: Support Call	September 28 at 1 p.m.
New Teacher Experience Survey due	September 29
U.S. Youth Senate Scholarship application and portfolio due	October 3
VAM released into Compass Information System (CIS)	October 6
Monthly Principal Webinars – Math and Literacy	October 9 at 1 p.m.
LASTEM Summit	October 17
Monthly Principal Webinar: Interests and Opportunities	October 23 at 1 p.m.
Final date to enter 2022-2023 evaluation data into Compass Information System (CIS)	October 27