



Teacher Leader Newsletter



September 2024



Hello! I am Maggie Acree, Ouachita Parish Schools' 6-12 Math Instructional Coordinator. I served as a classroom teacher for over twenty-one years before entering this role during the 2023-2024 academic year. In addition, I serve as a Teacher Leader Advisor for the LDOE with the Math Content team.

When the news of [Act 260](#) surfaced, I felt a range of emotions from excitement to anxiousness. How would we break the news to the teachers required to complete the course? I learned that the LDOE collaborated with the Dana Center of UT-Austin to create this [unique course](#). That is when I knew, without a doubt, that this would positively impact every teacher and student in Louisiana! After all, the Dana Center was initially

responsible for the incredible professional learning provided for mathematics Content Leaders.

In Ouachita Parish, we enthusiastically rolled out Act 260 to our 4-8 math teachers during the summer. Many of our teachers created their accounts, logged in to the [new professional learning platform](#), and began working through released modules with ease. One of the greatest benefits for math teachers in grades 4-8 is engaging in the learning and best instructional practices of the math content aligning with the [Louisiana Student Standards for Mathematics](#) (LSSM). For example, one fourth-grade teacher excitedly shared she learned how to multiply fractions (a fifth-grade standard) using area models. The teacher expressed concern about moving into middle school content; similarly, middle school teachers had the same worry about lower-grade content. As a result, we are providing office hours to support teachers as they work through the modules.

In my twenty-two years of teaching mathematics and supporting mathematics educators, this is one of the strongest initiatives to move mathematics instruction forward systematically. Most importantly, this will equip teachers with the necessary tools to maximize success for every student in not only Ouachita Parish but in the state of Louisiana!

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LITERACY

DIBELS Resources

The literacy team has released several resources to help with the successful administration of DIBELS, as well as guide teachers through using DIBELS as an instructional driver. [Best Practices for Administering DIBELS Benchmark Assessments](#) is a guide that walks users through best practices when administering benchmarks, as well as a library of videos to assist with administration. The [DIBELS Professional Development Series for K-3 Literacy Educators](#) takes teachers and leaders from administering the benchmarks, all the way through using DIBELS as an instructional lever with training on grouping, progress monitoring, and intervening with integrity. This document includes a comprehensive suite of training videos. For users on Canopy, the DIBELS professional learning series offers an interactive series with connections between the screener, core, and the science of reading, as well as instructional best practices around the screener. The course code is 29B1F143.

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

Decoding Multisyllabic Words in Grades 3-12

The literacy team has recently released [Decoding Multisyllabic Words in Grades 3-12](#). This resource includes front matter that explains the concepts of word analysis and structural analysis. The resource also includes several activities to engage students in multisyllabic word reading, as well as videos to assist with implementation.

Please contact louisianaliteracy@la.gov with questions.

SUPPORT FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Webinar Series - Developing Strong Literacy Skills in Grades 4-8

The LDOE has partnered with Public Consulting Group to offer a free, four-part webinar series. The first webinar will discuss foundational research supporting the science of reading, provide an overview of five progressive, online modules, and provide time for questions.

Initial webinar:

- **Webinar Date and Time:** September 18 at 3 p.m.
- **Webinar Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82349718798>

Please contact diverselearnersupport@la.gov with questions.

ELA RESOURCES

ELA Guidebooks 3-5 (2022) Fluency Utilized to Engage Learners (FUEL) Now Available

The [FUEL resources](#) aligned to the ELA Guidebooks 3-5 (2022) units are now available on the [Louisiana Curriculum Hub](#). Each unit's materials are located in the Supports folder on the unit homepage. The FUEL materials are aligned resources for students to build their fluency by providing opportunities for practice while keeping students engaged with texts from their current unit.

Please contact elaguidebooks@la.gov with questions.

MATH RESOURCES

Act 260 Numeracy Training

At this time, all teachers should have access to the system-specific required grades 4-8 [Act 260 Numeracy Course](#) in Canopy. The introduction, which includes the Pre-Assessment and the first Framing Dispositions module, should be completed along with content Modules 1-2 to stay at the [suggested pace](#).

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

Accelerate: Tutoring Guidance for High Schools

[Guidance for high school math tutoring](#) is available on the [Louisiana Math](#) page to support unfinished learning in Algebra I and Geometry. The guidance includes Accelerate Math tutoring materials, detailing both the student selection process and the implementation of the materials with alignment to the most widely implemented high-quality instructional materials.

Please contact stem@la.gov with questions.

Zearn Checkpoint

Now is the time to set expectations and check data for [Zearn implementation](#) in the classroom. Reflect on the key factors of planning, behavior management, engagement, and goal setting using the Zearn Class Reports. Reflecting on this data supports teacher success with the [high-impact tool](#), Zearn.

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?

Also, [Zearn/Louisiana Leader Collaboration](#) is scheduled monthly on Tuesdays throughout the school year to discuss implementation with leaders from systems across the state. The next meeting is [September 17 at 9 am](#).

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

SCIENCE RESOURCES

New Science Resources Available

Updated science resources are available to assist with school system planning and implementation of high-quality science curricula for the 2024-2025 school year. These resources can be found on the [K-12 Science Resources](#) web page:

- [High-Quality Science Curriculum](#)
- [OpenSciEd Purchasing and Professional Learning](#)
- OpenSciEd pilot guides for [Biology](#), [Chemistry](#), and [Physics](#)
- Grade 8 OpenSciEd implementation guides for the [original](#) and [Activate Certified](#) versions

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

COMPUTER SCIENCE AND STEM RESOURCES

Public Comment Open for K-12 Louisiana Student Standards for Computer Science

The [K-12 Computer Science Standards Writing Committee](#) has successfully completed the development of Louisiana's new computer science standards. Educators are encouraged to review the [Draft of the K-12 Louisiana Student Standards for Computer Science](#) and [provide feedback](#). Public comment on the standards will be open throughout September and will close **September 27, at 4 p.m.**

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

School System STEM Seal Honorees

At the August Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) Meeting, the top three school system earners of STEM Diploma Seals in the 2023-2024 school year were honored. 573 Silver and 367 Gold STEM Seals were awarded statewide in 2023-2024. Congratulations to East Baton Rouge Parish Schools, Lafayette Parish School System, and Caddo Parish Public Schools for being the three districts with the most STEM Diploma Seals earned.

For more information about STEM Pathways and STEM Diploma Seals please visit the [Louisiana STEM Initiative](#) web page.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

Louisiana STEM Pathways Renaissance

All freshmen students beginning with the 2024-2025 school year should follow the new [STEM Renaissance Pathways](#). A [training webinar](#) is hosted on the [Louisiana STEM Initiative](#) web page. All current students in grades 10, 11, and 12 will follow the STEM Pathway guidance under the archived section of the [Louisiana STEM Initiative](#) web page.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

Louisiana Transportation Research Center STEM Grant Opportunity

The Louisiana Transportation Research Center STEM Grant program will award up to \$500 grants to full-time Louisiana K-12 classroom teachers to purchase STEM classroom activities and consumable materials for STEM lessons. Any STEM-discipline teacher may apply for this grant using the [online application](#). The application portal is open from September 23 until October 18, 2024.

Please contact LTRCOutreach@la.gov with questions.

EDTECH

AI Guidance

The LDOE has released new [AI Guidance](#) designed to support educators in understanding and utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) tools within their classrooms. This resource explores the benefits and challenges associated with AI and provides practical tips for using AI safely and effectively. It also showcases examples of how AI can be leveraged to enhance student learning.

Visit the [LDOE Digital Learning](#) page for resources on AI in education.

Please contact digitallearning@la.gov with questions.

Kami Webinars

The LDOE is excited to offer a series of [webinars](#) this fall designed to help educators leverage Kami in their classrooms.

Webinar Topics and Dates:

- Kami Updates: Join us to explore Kami's transformative updates! Discover its redesigned, more accessible interface, intuitive icons, Questions AI integration, and enhanced Class View for educators.
 - [September 24 at 3 p.m.](#)
 - [September 25 at 4 p.m.](#)
- Kami for Diverse Learners: Ensure inclusive learning for all! Learn how Kami's built-in accessibility features empower all students to participate and succeed in your classroom.
 - [October 29 at 3 p.m.](#)
 - [October 30 at 4 p.m.](#)
- Feedback Strategies with Kami: Join us to discover how Kami supports effective feedback in your high-quality instructional materials! Learn research-based strategies for providing clear, actionable, and engaging feedback that fosters growth and empowers learners to develop an awareness of their learning. We'll explore Kami's tools for real-time collaboration, multimedia annotations, and personalized feedback loops.
 - [December 3 at 3 p.m.](#)
 - [December 4 at 4 p.m.](#)

Sessions will be recorded and posted on the [LDOE Digital Learning](#) website.

Please contact digitallearning@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR OPPORTUNITIES

Green Ribbon Schools Application Available in September

The LDOE is excited to announce that the application to be recognized as a [U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School](#) for the 2024-2025 school year will be available on the [Environmental Education](#) web page in September. Eligibility requirements include that schools, systems, and early learning centers show progress in

- reducing environmental impacts and costs;
- improving health and wellness; and
- providing effective environmental and sustainability education.

To assist interested applicants, the LDOE will host a series of webinars to help potential applicants understand the three pillars of the application and the application process. The [first application support](#)

[webinar](#) is scheduled for September 23 at 4:30 p.m. Final applications are due on December 16 by 5 p.m.

Additional information is available on the [Environmental Education](#) web page.

Please contact environmentaleducation@la.gov with questions.

LSTA/NSTA Joint Conference

The Louisiana Science Teachers Association (LSTA) is co-hosting the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) fall [conference in New Orleans](#) on November 6-9! There is a [Louisiana-specific pathway](#) featuring sessions from LSTA and LDOE in addition to other exciting sessions. [Registration](#) is open now, but the rates increase after September 27. LSTA members receive a discounted registration price. Interested educators can apply for assistance with registration and travel with [LSTA Travel Grants](#) and [NSTA scholarships](#) before the mid-September deadlines.

Please contact STEM@la.gov with questions.

EDUCATOR RECOGNITION

Seeking Nominations for Excellent Educators

The LDOE is currently seeking nominations for Teacher and Principal of the Year, Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year, and New Teacher of the Year. (Candidates for the New Teacher of the Year program must have less than one year of teaching experience.)

By September 30, please submit nominations via the [nominations portal](#). Multiple nominations and self-nominations are accepted. Upon portal closure, the nomination information will be shared with school systems for their consideration.

Please share the information for the [nominations portal](#) with stakeholders and encourage everyone to nominate outstanding teachers and leaders.

Please contact the following with questions.

- Teacher/Principal of the Year- excellenteducators@la.gov
- New Teacher of the Year- laurie.carlton@la.gov
- Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year- shallan.jones@la.gov

Seeking Nominations for Outstanding School Support Employee of the Year, School Health Service Provider of the Year, and School Physical Activity Awards

The LDOE is currently seeking nominations for the following awards initiatives - Outstanding School Support Employee of the Year, School Health Service Provider of the Year, and the School Physical Activity Awards. The nomination portal is now open and will close on September 30.

By September 30, please submit nominations via the [nominations portal](#). Multiple nominations and self-nominations are accepted. Upon portal closure, the nomination information will be shared with school systems for their consideration.

Please share the information for the [nominations portal](#) with stakeholders and encourage everyone to nominate outstanding health providers, employees, or schools.

See more information on the [Awards](#) page.

Please contact the following with questions.

- Outstanding School Support Employee of the Year - excellenteducators@la.gov
- School Health Service Provider - elizabeth.duncan@la.gov
- School Physical Activity Award - healthyschools@la.gov

STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

New: U.S. Senate Youth Scholarship Opportunity

The Louisiana Department of Education and the [William Randolph Hearst Foundation](#) are pleased to announce the launch of the 2025 United States Senate Youth Program. Two outstanding students from Louisiana will be selected to participate, in person, in a series of meetings from **March 1-8, 2025**. Upon participation in all of the required meetings, each delegate will receive a \$10,000 college scholarship from the Hearst Foundation. The LDOE requests your assistance in selecting these students.

Please encourage juniors or seniors who hold elected or appointed offices in school or community groups listed in the [national program brochure](#) to submit a Louisiana [application packet](#) which can be found on the [LDOE website](#). Please ensure that students understand the rules and regulations governing this competition. For test security reasons, the test secure essay topics will only be released to school systems and will not be available on our website. High school personnel should contact suzette.rabalais@la.gov as soon as a student request is made for the essay topics.

The names of the students selected by each high school and their application portfolios must be submitted through the [application](#) portal no later than **October 4, at 11:59 p.m.** Finalists will be notified by **October 25**, for the final phase of the selection process on **November 8**.

Applications are currently open.

If you need further assistance, please contact suzette.rabalais@la.gov.

READER SURVEY

We want to hear from you!

In an effort to ensure that the LDOE is providing you with the best and most useful information in our newsletter, we are conducting a brief survey to learn more about how you read and use the Teacher Leader Newsletter. Please take a moment to complete the [survey](#) by **September 13**. Thank you for your time!

CONTACT US

For questions related to...	Contact:
AP Courses and Exams Contact	collegereadiness@la.gov
Assessments and Related Supports	assessment@la.gov
Collaborations	districtsupport@la.gov
Content Leaders and Mentor Teachers	believeandprepare@la.gov
Educational Leader Licensure Policy Update	believeandprepare@la.gov

ELA Guidebooks	elaguidebooks@la.gov
Environmental Education	environmentaleducation@la.gov
Financial Aid Assistance	ldefinancial@la.gov
Graduation Requirements	highschoolacademics@la.gov
Instructional Support and Resources	classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov
Jump Start	jumpstart@la.gov
LEADS	leads@la.gov
Literacy	louisianaliteracy@la.gov
PD Vendor Guide	louisianacurriculumreview@la.gov
Pupil Progressions	ppp@la.gov
Science, Math & STEM	STEM@la.gov
Teacher Certification	certification@la.gov
Teacher Leaders and Teacher Leader Advisors	classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov