PREPARATION PROVIDER MONTHLY EMAIL

Dear Believe and Prepare Community,

As part of Louisiana's recruitment and retention strategy, the educator evaluation system is being evaluated to determine what improvements can be made in order to implement a professional learning structure that recruits and retains top talent.

Beginning last summer, over 8,000 educators provided feedback through focus groups and a survey that collected feelings and perceptions toward the current system, including what components are valuable to professional growth and what components might need refinement.

The key findings shared with you during a previous monthly call included:

- Teacher and leader perceptions differed in regards to the current evaluation system. Leaders, more than teachers, felt the system improved their practice, believed it helps retain effective educators and contributes to student achievement, and that they received quality feedback to improve.
- Less experienced teachers felt the system helped them professionally grow through selecting supports aligned to their needs and receiving specific, actionable feedback in areas to improve.
 As teachers' years of experience increased, the less valuable they found the system to improve their practice.
- Teachers and leaders expressed that the evaluation system should be more focused on professional growth instead of compliance, and it should add observation cycles with feedback and coaching.
- Educators want flexibility in the evaluation model that allows for autonomy within the evaluation system to allow for tracking growth in areas specific to the school system or school. There is a desire to see the alignment between teachers' professional growth, the school's goals and improvement plan, and the school system's goals and strategies.

The feedback from educators along with research and best practices will be used as Louisiana develops and implements an improved system over the next couple of years. The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) was selected through an RFP to support LDOE in the improvements, and it will begin with a pilot this coming school year.

We look forward to working with you as we transition to a much needed system that will be fair, valid, and reliable and focused on professional learning, so that student and teacher outcomes improve.

Em Cooper, Deputy Assistant Superintendent of Educator Development

UPCOMING EVENTS

- July 7: 2023-2024 Mentor waiver application opens
- July 17: <u>Certification monthly call</u>

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

• August 1: Deadline to sign up for performance profile debrief sessions

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NEWS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Geaux Teach Scholarship Program

Act 463 of the 2022 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature established the Geaux Teach Program, which provides scholarships to students who are enrolled in teacher preparation programs at the state's postsecondary institutions that are approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Funding is also available to students attending certified alternative teacher preparation programs approved by BESE.

Students may receive up to \$5,000 annually to cover the cost of tuition fees, textbooks, and instructional materials required for enrollment.

Additional information about the Geaux Teach Program, including eligibility requirements, the <u>Geaux Teach Application</u>, and answers to <u>Frequently Asked Questions</u> may be accessed on the <u>LOSFA website</u>.

Please contact <u>louisianaleaders@la.gov</u> with any questions.

Resident and Mentor Spring Data Reporting

The Department is currently conducting a spring data collection for Mentors and residents who began residency in the spring.

All data should be entered in EdLink by **August 1** to give school systems time to verify and check the data. The snapshot will be taken on **August 11**. School systems are responsible for entering this data, but preparation providers will need to make sure that school systems are aware of which residents they have that are spring starts.

For additional details please review the Mentor and Resident Data reporting call deck.

Please contact <u>believeandprepare@la.gov</u> with any questions.

2023-2024 Mentor Waiver Application is Open

Please share with school and system leaders.

At the April BESE meeting, the Board approved a waiver for the Mentor policy for the 2023-2024 school year. Mentor teacher waivers will be granted on a case-by-case basis through the application process established by the LDOE and at no fee to the applicant, school system, or teacher preparation provider. The waiver will be issued by the LDOE for educators highly recommended by the mentor's principal and who possess one or more of the following qualifications:

- 1. Two years of Highly Effective Compass ratings;
- 2. National Board Certification;
- 3. Statewide or national distinction for excellence in teaching;
- 4. Experience as a TAP mentor, master teacher, executive master teacher, or certified TAP evaluator;

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- 5. Content leader experience, as evidenced by participation in Content Leader training or redelivery of professional development; or
- 6. Master's or doctorate in education and exemplary experience hosting student teachers.

The 2023-2024 Mentor Waiver application opened on July 7, 2023.

<u>Mentor Waiver Applications</u> should be created by the system leader responsible for resident placement and/or Mentor recruitment and support. We encourage system leaders leading this work to review the <u>Mentor Credential Waiver Application guide</u> before applying.

Please contact <u>believeandprepare@la.gov</u> with any questions.

Updated Elementary Multiple Subjects Praxis Exam

In 2022, the state legislature passed <u>ACT No. 448</u>, which requires kindergarten through third-grade teachers seeking initial licensure to pass an examination of the teaching of reading that is scientifically researched and evidence-based. This assessment will replace the existing Reading Language Arts exam, which will be a part of the Louisiana Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects Praxis® exam.

Beginning January 1, 2024, an applicant applying for initial certification to teach kindergarten through third-grade must pass the Teaching of Reading: Elementary examination. This assessment will be available as a part of the Louisiana Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects Praxis® exam or as a stand-alone exam. The ETS Standard Setting Study for the subtest of the Elementary Multiple Subjects Praxis® exam is later this month. The exam will be available beginning September 1, 2023.

Policy will be updated to include the following statement: Beginning January 1, 2024, as required per R.S. 17:7.1(A)(1), an applicant applying for initial certification to teach kindergarten through third grade shall pass the BESE-approved Teaching of Reading: Elementary or Teaching of Reading: Elementary Subtest exam in accordance with §303 of this part. Candidates already enrolled in the year-long residency and holding either the PL or R prior to January 1, 2025 are not subject to this provision.

If you have any questions, please contact believeandprepare@la.gov.

Certification Updates

Legislative Updates. Many legislative changes surrounding preparation and certification were passed during the 2023 legislative session. Updates include the following:

- Alignment of literacy requirements to allow for traditionally prepared educators and alternately
 prepared educators to have the same options to meet literacy requirements, affecting both initial
 preparation and add-on requirements;
- Evaluation updates to allow for the crediting of evaluation types appropriate to the setting in which an educator is serving:
- Associate teacher pathway must hold an associate's degree and be enrolled in a teacher preparation program to obtain a bachelor's degree; be at least 25 years of age; cannot teach special education classes; hours spent teaching can count towards residency;
- Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact was substituted with a military/military spouse law;

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- Reorganization of certification and preparation law;
- Provisional admittance using flexible GPA re-established;
- Applicant shall have completed at least 180 hours in actual teaching--and a substantial portion of the 180 hours on an all-day basis;
- Effective 1/1/2024--applicants applying for initial certification to teach K-3 shall pass a rigorous Teaching of Reading exam; policy will allow for a future effective date for currently enrolled teacher candidates:
- Expanded the TEP pathway to include educators with a bachelor's degree with a 2.5 GPA or higher and passing scores on all required content exams;
- Provides for membership to TCAC when an entity named in law dissolves;
- Updates Criminal history requirements and prohibitions;
- Requires a criminal history check for certification for initial applicants beginning January 1, 2025;
- Allows school systems to use the LDOE certification as an indicator of a cleared background check for employment purposes if they so choose;
- Requires educators and school systems report convictions within 2 business days to LDOE;
- Repeals the requirement for issuance of the Teaching Authorization (TA);
- Requires teacher preparation and teacher certification requirements be updated by 12/31/2023 regarding numeracy requirements--policy is expected to have a future effective date.

Policy Updates. Policy for most of these changes will be proposed at August BESE. Even though the GPA flexibility law is effective now, BESE policy must be promulgated to align with it. Candidates could be provisionally enrolled until BESE policy is in place. In addition to the policy updates to align with legislation, other certification policy recommendations will also be made, including the adoption of new exams for special education certification. ETS is revamping the current special education exam structure and phasing out and replacing existing exams. These exams will have the standard one-year overlap where current or new exams will be accepted.

Literacy. In alignment with 2021 legislation, last year, literacy policy updates were approved regarding the science of reading competencies. Those competencies are required for all literacy coursework. Teacher preparation providers have some time to design and restructure teacher preparation literacy coursework. Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, program **completers** are required to have the updated literacy foundations/science of reading-aligned coursework. The changes for both initial and add-on literacy coursework include the requirement for 9 semester hours of literacy coursework for special education areas.

While initially the policy around add-on requirements became effective in January of this year, a **proposal** to update literacy policy specifically around Mild/Moderate certification was approved at **June BESE**.

- The policy has a **future effective date** for the add-on policy to align with program requirements (2024-2025).
- Any applications denied specifically for literacy issues were re-reviewed and processed in alignment with the newly adopted policy.
- Additional policy updates to align with law will be proposed in August.

Initial applications. The Certification Office has recently seen an influx in the number of initial applications being submitted for candidates **not** meeting certification requirements. The office is aware that some programs received an extension during the redesign that allowed additional time for "old" program completion. Additionally, in recent years there have been COVID and hurricane waivers that allowed LDOE to issue certification if a candidate did not meet current program completion requirements. However, all of those waivers **have long expired**. The only additional time provided for completion of an old program is if your 'old' program received an extension of their undergraduate program. In that instance, then completers have until **August 31, 2023** to complete all program requirements. Please

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ensure all students are following your BESE-approved teacher preparation program. To receive initial certification, program requirements should include:

- Year-long residency
- Holding a pre-service certificate
 - Traditional (undergrad) Resident (R) certificate
 - Alt-Cert (post-baccalaureate)
 - MAT R or PL
 - Cert-Only R or PL
 - Practitioner Teacher Program PL
- Mentoring by a certified mentor teacher
- Literacy hours- literacy hours were already required, any updates for alignment to science of reading have a future effective date
- GPA- both program entrance (2.2) GPA (which we should catch at the issuance of a pre-service certificate), and program GPA at the time of graduation/completion (2.5) or mastery of competencies if GPA is not awarded.

Certification Monthly Call

The Certification Office has a monthly call devoted solely to certification. It will generally fall on the third **Monday** of each month at **10:30 a.m.** Any changes due to BESE meetings or holidays will be included on the school system support calendar.

Certification Monthly Call details:

Webinar link: https://ldoe.zoom.us/j/97801045748?pwd=N1JobWIDU1gvNnNYQk40WjI3YmpxUT09

Meeting ID: 978 0104 5748

Passcode: 959091

The next call is Monday, July 17.

If you have any questions, please contact Christy.Bellue@la.gov.

TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM APPROVAL

2023-2024 Program Approval Applications Now Open

The window to submit Notices of Intent for new programs closed on June 1. Applicants may begin the full application process as soon as Notices of Intent receive final approval in Survey Monkey. Applicants will receive an automated email from Survey Monkey indicating that their application has been moved to the next stage. Full applications were due by **July 10**. Applications are now in the Round I evaluation stage.

Applicati Portal Opens E	Intent	Application Submission Deadline	Evaluation Period	Notification of Evaluation Results	BESE Considers (if recommended
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05/01/2023	06/01/2023	07/10/2023	07/17/2023 – 08/01/2023	9/12/2023	10/11/2023

If you have any questions, please contact believeandprepare@la.gov.

Updated Program Approval Assurances

In 2021-2022, several policy changes were approved that impact teacher preparation providers (TPPs). Act 108, approved in 2021, requires training specific to the teaching of reading and literacy. Act 244, approved in 2022, requires that teacher preparation programs require no more than 120 credit hours unless approved by the Board of Regents or for dual certification. Lastly, Act 607, approved in 2022, requires that teacher preparation programs require 3 credit hours, or 45 contact hours, of coursework engaged in coursework specific to teaching students with dyslexia.

Signed assurances were submitted on **June 30** and will be going to BESE in August. These assurances indicate that providers have acknowledged that they will ensure policy and law will be met in their programs.

If you have any questions, please contact believeandprepare@la.gov.

TEACHER PREPARATION QUALITY RATING SYSTEM

<u>Teacher Preparation Quality Rating System Performance Profile Release</u>

2021-2022 TPQRS Performance Profiles will be released in August, and LDOE will hold its annual Performance Profile Debriefing meetings with providers. These debrief sessions are individualized to each provider and will offer insight into 2021-2022 Quality Rating Scores as well as offer support for programs. Debriefing sessions will be held between **August 14 - September 22**. Providers should sign up for a session by **August 1**.

Please contact believeandprepare@la.gov with questions.

Teacher Prep Onsite Review Update

The Teacher Preparation Quality Rating System (TPQRS) includes Preparation Program Experience as one of the domains. An onsite review by a third-party is conducted to understand the <u>quality of the programs</u> once at least every four years. The LDOE will be providing more details about the next cycle of onsite reviews soon.

There will be no onsite reviews this fall. LDOE will work with each provider to determine their onsite review windows this summer.

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Please contact <u>believeandprepare@la.gov</u> with questions.