

LDOE Weekly Newsletter



October 10, 2017

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, since 2014, BESE has maintained modified requirements for using standardized test scores to determine promotion or retention for students in 4th and 8th grades. This was part of a package of modifications to state policy made in order to accommodate shifts in English and mathematics standards. A law passed by the Legislature in 2016 requires that for the 2017-2018 school year and beyond, the requirement for there to be a promotional standard based on state assessments will return. Thus, at its October meeting, BESE will consider language that reinstates the existence of a promotional standard based on tests.

We all have learned a great deal since the advent of the promotion and retention laws. Research has been published on the subject. We have seen the effects, good and bad, on nearly a generation of students. And the policies and academic instruments that determine much of what happens in schools have changed considerably. It is only reasonable that the manner in which the state and school systems implement the law would change.

We have learned over the time, for example, that there is benefit having a promotional standard, especially to the literacy skills of students in earlier grades. At the same time, we have learned that there can be costs to children of retention, especially among adolescents. Perhaps most important, we have learned that a solid plan for maintaining students' access to on-level material while providing them additional time to learn unlearned content works to address the needs of struggling students.

Given these lessons, the policy BESE will consider next week does not change the current 8th grade promotion model. School systems may place students who do not meet the promotional standard in a transitional 9th grade, where they can study on-level content and earn high school credits while addressing gaps in their learning. In 4th grade, the policy establishes that students whose performance is below basic in at least two subject areas on state tests do not meet the promotional standard. School systems will use that evidence and other evidence to determine whether the student is retained or promoted. Most important, irrespective of whether the student is retained or promoted, schools will identify research-based strategies to assist the student in catching up. The school must use these strategies until the time the student is back on level.

These policies draw on research by continuing the benefit of a promotional standard while allowing schools to customize decisions based on the needs of the child. The one non-negotiable is the use of research-based strategies to support struggling learners. I look forward to discussing it next week and seeing it in action henceforth.

As always, thank you for all you do for our children,
John

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Important Dates for School Systems

Upcoming Events

- [Eureka Principal Institute in Baton Rouge](#): October 11 at 9:00 a.m.
- [Teacher and Principal of the Year Coordinator's Informational Webinar](#): October 11 at 3:00 p.m.
- [TOPS Tech Early Start Webinar](#): October 11 at 3:30 p.m.
- [Teacher and Principal of the Year Coordinator's Informational Webinar](#): October 12 at 11:30 a.m.
- [Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Sub-grant Application Webinar](#): October 12 at 3:15 p.m.
- [TOPS Tech Early Start Webinar](#): October 12 at 3:30 p.m.
- [Teacher and Principal of the Year Coordinator's Informational Webinar](#): October 13 at 9:30 a.m.
- [Superintendents' Conference Call](#): October 16 at 10:30 a.m.
- [Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Sub-grant Application Webinar](#): October 16 at 3:15 p.m.
- [Assessment and Accountability Office Hours](#): October 17 at 1:00 p.m.
- [Mentor Teacher Kickoff Webinar](#): October 19 at 3:30 p.m.
- [AP[®] Course Audit Process Webinar](#): October 19 at 3:30 p.m.
- [Accountability Commission Meeting](#): October 20 at 1:00 p.m.
- [New Principals' Workshop](#): October 23 at 12:30 p.m.

Important Deadlines

- Complete [Louisiana Assessment Commission Survey for School Systems, School Leaders, and Teachers](#) by October 10.
- Submit [Sponsor Site changes](#) by October 11.
- Submit [2017-2018 High Cost Services Grant Round 1](#) applications by October 13 (extended).
- Submit [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program](#) applications by October 16.

School System Support

New: October Superintendents' Call

You are invited to participate in the Superintendents' Conference Call hosted by State Superintendent John White on Monday, October 16, 2017, at 10:30 a.m. You may begin dialing into the call 15 minutes in advance.

To join the Superintendents' October 16 Conference Call

- Go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/suptscall/>;
- Dial into the phone bridge: 877-475-0109;
- When prompted, give meeting ID #95387401.

You will need to identify yourself in order to be placed into the meeting.

New: 2018 Student of Year Guidelines and Documents

Each year, the Department of Education recognizes the outstanding accomplishments of our students through the Louisiana Students of the Year Awards Program. The Department strongly encourages all school systems to play an active role in celebrating the exceptional students in their area. To participate, please review the revised written [guidelines](#) for the program and [logistics memo](#).

To ensure your school system is represented, please

1. Complete the school system [Information Form](#) and email it to [Marian Johnson](#) by November 1.
2. Make the [logistics memo](#) available to the parents of students eligible to participate in the program.

If you have any questions, please contact marian.johnson@la.gov or call 225-219-7372.

New: Join the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Sub-grant Application Webinars

The Department has released a new [Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy \(SRCL\) subgrant application](#). School systems, including charter schools/charter management organizations with independent LEA status, are eligible to apply. **Applications are due November 10, 2017.** The Department will host a **webinar from 3:15 until 4:15 p.m.** on October 12, 2017, to provide guidance on completing the SRCL application and answer specific questions. The webinar will be repeated on October 16.

- To join **October 12 at 3:15 p.m.**, go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/srcl-oct12/>
- To join **October 16 at 3:15 p.m.**, go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/srcl-oct16/>

For both webinars:

- Dial 1-855-240-2575
- Enter participant PIN code 20636171

Please email patsy.palmer@la.gov with questions regarding webinar access. For questions regarding the sub-grant application process, please contact jill.slack@la.gov.

Reminder: Join the New Principals' Workshop

Please share with principals.

New Principals' Workshop: Designed for Principals with 0 to 3 Years of Experience: Monday, October 23 from 12:30 until 4:30 p.m. in Ruston, LA.

This half-day workshop is intended to provide new principals an opportunity to network and share best practices with educators from around the state. The cost is free, and seats are filled on a first-come-first-serve basis. The workshop in Baton Rouge is full, but there are still several seats open in Ruston. Please see the workshop [flyer](#) for registration information and details about the topics and presenter.

Please email debra.schum@laprincipals.org for more information.

Reminder: The Writing Revolution Language Links for ELA

Please share with middle school ELA teachers.

The Department, in partnership with The Writing Revolution, Inc., has developed new resources for ELA teachers in [Grade 6](#), [Grade 7](#), and [Grade 8](#). Language Links are aligned to the ELA Guidebooks 2.0 units, and are located on the [K-12 ELA Planning Resources page](#).

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with any questions.

Reminder: Draft Grade 7 Social Studies Sample Scope and Sequence Units 1–3

Please share with middle school social studies teachers.

The updated version of grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and Civics Scope and Sequence documents have been released on the [K-12 Social Studies Resources page](#) and in each [grade level teacher library](#).

In addition, Grade 7 Sample Scope and Sequence Units 1-3 are now available in draft form. Download the draft [Word version](#) or [PDF version](#) by opening the link and clicking on the download icon in the upper right corner. Downloading allows access to the full content and resource links not available in the preview mode.

Please contact classroomsupporttoolbox@la.gov with any questions.

Assessment and Accountability

Reminder: Louisiana School Finder and Data Review

In accordance with ESSA, the Department is releasing the Louisiana School Finder this fall in conjunction with the release of school performance scores, to provide families with information on student performance and opportunities.

This week, school systems have the opportunity to make Sponsor Site corrections to the information that will display in the School Finder. Common errors include:

- Grade structure includes toddler for schools not enrolling toddler students
- Invalid Facebook and Twitter links (must be a valid URL beginning with www.facebook.com/ or www.twitter.com/ to work in School Finder)
- Principal name not submitted
- Earliest pick-up and latest drop-off formatting is invalid (must be a time of day, e.g. 7:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m.)

Sponsor Site changes must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. tomorrow, October 11, 2017, in order for them to be reflected in the School Finder. Changes should be made directly in Sponsor Site (e.g., principal name, website links) or by emailing a signed [Change Request Form](#) (e.g., grade configuration) to kaylie.loupe@la.gov. Note: The form must be typed and changes will not be made without proper signatures. Changes to grade configuration for charter schools must be within the contract.

For more information, please email systemsupport@la.gov.

Reminder: Distribute and Complete Louisiana Assessment Commission Survey

The legislature has requested the Commission on Assessment Review and Use in Public Schools to study the current use and administration of assessments and make recommendations relative to student assessments.

School System Survey: School system superintendents and district test coordinators have received a survey link directly from the Commission Chair, Superintendent Kevin George. Please assign one lead to complete the survey on behalf of the school system. The assigned lead should complete the survey in partnership with the chief academic officer, district test coordinator, and school system leader.

School Leader/Educator Survey: Please distribute the [Louisiana Assessment Commission Survey for School Leaders and Educators](#) to all school leaders and teachers.

Please complete the survey **by October 10, 2017**. The results will be posted on the [Louisiana Department of Education](#) website by October 15, 2017.

Please email assessment@la.gov with questions.

Reminders for District Testing Coordinators and Accountability Contacts

Assessment Administration Support and Training

Assessment and Accountability Office Hours: Tuesday, October 17, 2017, at 1:00 p.m.

- Webinar link: <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/assessment-accountability/>
- Phone Number: 1-646-307-1380
- Participant PIN code: 89147656

Resources

The [Online Scheduling Guidance](#) has been updated in the Assessment Library. The guidance allows schools and districts to view best practices for reducing testing time. Districts can decide how long they want their computer-based testing window to be based on the following:

- Number of devices
- Internet speeds
- Number of sessions given in a day

The [Technology Requirements for 2017](#) document has been updated to include

- TSM Requirements
- ELPT device specifications
- ELPT headset specifications and discounted pricing information

The updated [Office Hours Questions and Answers document](#) has been added to [the Assessment Library](#).

Test Security

The LDOE has partnered with Caveon Test Security to offer test security services at a reduced cost to LEAs. A complete [list of services](#) and instructions is located in the [Assessment Library](#).

LEAP 360

Teacher Access versions of the Diagnostic and Interim assessments are now available as PDFs in [eDIRECT](#).

ACT and WorkKeys

The window for ACT WorkKeys accommodated testing closes on October 17.

Please email assessment@la.gov with questions.

Student Opportunities

New: TOPS University Diploma AP[®] Physics I and II Update

At its meeting on June 21, 2017, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved changes to the TOPS University Diploma as it pertains to AP[®] Physics I and AP[®] Physics II such that a student can meet high school graduation requirements by taking either course and that each course will be given a full Carnegie Unit of credit.

Please be advised that this change does not apply to TOPS eligibility requirements. Students who choose to use AP[®] Physics I and AP[®] Physics II to fulfill their TOPS Core science requirements for a TOPS Opportunity, Performance, or Honors award must take and earn credit for both AP[®] Physics I and AP[®] Physics II. Students completing and earning credit for both courses will receive two of the required four units of science required for TOPS. If a student only takes one of these courses, he/she will not receive any credit toward the two units of science electives required for TOPS.

Please see the [AP[®] Physics I and II High School Advisory](#) for more information, including options that satisfy science requirements for both the TOPS University diploma and the TOPS Core Curriculum.

Please contact highschoolacademics@la.gov with any questions.

New: College Goal Sunday

Please share the following with students and parents.

College Goal Sunday will take place on November 5, 2017, at 14 different locations around the state. This event helps parents and graduating high school seniors complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is the required application for most federal, state, and institutional financial aid as well as a graduation requirement for public high school students who graduate with the class of 2018.

Financial aid professionals from each postsecondary institution will be on hand to offer free assistance with completing the FAFSA. [Registration](#) is encouraged but not required to attend the event.

Please visit the Louisiana College Goal Sunday[®] [website](#) for more information or email custserv@la.gov for assistance.

Reminder: Join the 2017-2018 TOPS Tech Early Start Training Provider Webinar

The Office of Student Opportunities will host a webinar for training providers interested in applying to become TOPS Tech Early Start (TTES) course providers. Act 737 (SB 126) of the 2014 Legislative Session amended the TTES Legislation and now provides for payment of TTES to students enrolled in an eligible program of study with a training program provider approved by BESE. The webinar will review the TTES program goals and the Request for Application (RFA) process for becoming a provider. A full list of TTES student eligibility requirements is located on the [TTES web page](#).

To join the TOPS Tech Early Start Training Provider Webinar on October 11 or 12, from 3:30 until 4:30 p.m.

- Go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/ttes2018/>
- Dial (855) 240-2575
- Enter meeting room number 38582295

For additional information, please email highschoolacademics@la.gov.

Reminder: Join the AP[®] Course Audit Webinar

Please share with AP teachers

To support Advanced Placement (AP[®]) programs statewide, the Department will host a webinar providing AP[®] teachers and administrators with clear guidelines on building and sustaining an [AP[®] program](#) as well as curricular and resource [requirements](#) that must be in place for AP[®] courses. Teachers of AP[®] courses are invited to participate, whether for the first time or as a refresher.

To join the AP[®] Course Audit Process Webinar on October 19 or November 2 from 3:30 until 4:30 p.m.

- Go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/apcourseauditprocess/>
- Dial 855-240-2575
- Enter meeting room number 38582295

For more information, please email highschoolacademics@la.gov.

Talent

New: Louisiana's 2019 Teacher and Principal of the Year Application Now Open

The application process for this year's Teacher and Principal of the Year is now open. All applications, materials, and timelines are now available on the [Department's Awards Programs website](#).

All school systems are encouraged to select up to three teachers and three principals, one per division (elementary, middle, and high), as their district-level honorees. These candidates will submit their state-level applications in an online application portal. **Applications are due by January 17, 2018.**

To hear what the current State Teacher and Principal of the Year have to say about their participation in the process, read the blog posts of [Kimberly Eckert](#) and [Tommy Byler](#). Please also subscribe to receive future blog entries via email and join in the state-level dialogue by posting a comment.

An informational webinar will be offered three times this week to provide Teacher and Principal of the Year coordinators with information regarding this year's process.

To participate in the Teacher and Principal of the Year Coordinator's Informational Webinar, please use the following instructions.

- To join **Wednesday, October 11** at 3:00 p.m., go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/tpyoct11at3/>
- To join **Thursday, October 12** at 11:30 a.m., go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/tpyoct12at1130/>
- To join **Friday, October 13** at 9:30 a.m., go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/tpyoct13at930/>

For all dates

- Dial 1-855-240-2575
- Enter participant PIN code 91287604

Please contact excellenteducators@la.gov for more information.

Update: Mentor Teacher Training

Thank you for submitting your mentor teacher training nominations. School systems will receive confirmation of the number of seats for this year's Mentor Teacher Training via email this week. **Please encourage your mentor teachers to attend the kickoff webinar on October 19, 2017, from 3:30 until 4:30 p.m.** School system leaders are also welcome to join the webinar. No preregistration is required.

To join the Mentor Teacher Training Kickoff Webinar

- Go to <https://louisianaschools.adobeconnect.com/ldoeprofdev/>;
- Enter the meeting room as a guest and provide your name;
- Dial 1-855-240-2575;
- Enter participant PIN code 89147656.

Mentor Teacher Training will begin in late November, and there will be several cohorts with their own training dates. Exact dates and locations are being finalized.

Please contact believeandprepare@la.gov for more information.

Special Education

New: APR Monitoring Outreach for School Districts and Charter Schools

The Division of Statewide Monitoring conducts annual monitoring activities of local education agencies (LEAs) for the federally required special education annual performance report (APR). We will provide APR outreach packages to school systems and charter schools that are non-compliant or disproportionate to these requirements. The outreach packages will be available via the FTP site on Friday, October 20, 2017.

Please email iris.jones@la.gov for more information.

Data

Reminder: FTP file: 2017 Alternate Assessments

Please forward to all special education directors and FTP coordinators.

The 2017 alternate assessment files are available on the Data Management FTP. FTP coordinators should download the zipped data file with filename *LEACode_LEAName_Alternate Assessment 2017.zip* and provide it to the special education director.

Please email kristijo.preston@la.gov with questions about the contents of the file. For FTP issues, contact systemsupport@la.gov.

Federal Programs

New: Farm to School Conference

Please share with child nutrition program supervisors, principals, and other interested stakeholders.

The Louisiana Farm to School Conference will take place October 24, 2017, at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center (PBRC) in Baton Rouge. The statewide conference is a forum for attendees to become familiar with the three aspects of farm to school: school gardening, education, and local food procurement. Participants

will also have an opportunity to learn from successful programs in the state. Please see the [conference website](#) for event and registration information.

Please email melissa.campbell@la.gov for more information.

Reminder: National School Lunch Week

Please share this information with the child nutrition program director in your district.

This week is National School Lunch Week (NSLW). School systems are invited to submit pictures and descriptions of NSLW activities for recognition on the [Louisiana Fit Kids website](#).

Please email melissa.campbell@la.gov for more information.

Reminder: Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

Please share this information with child nutrition supervisors.

Applications for the 2017-2018 Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program are available for returning sponsors via the [Child Nutrition Program \(CNP\) website](#). **Applications must be completed and submitted by October 16, 2017.**

Please email trandra.scott@la.gov for more information.

Safe and Healthy Schools

New: Distribute Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine Fact Sheet

Per [Revised Statute 17:170.3](#), the Department is requesting that schools including grades 6 through 12 share the [Human Papillomavirus \(HPV\) vaccine fact sheet](#) with each student's parent or legal guardian. This information should accompany a form on which the student's parent or legal guardian may grant written permission for the student to receive the information directly.

Please email michael.comeaux@la.gov for more information.

Other

Louisiana Seafood Student Design Competition

The Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board (LSPMB) is hosting a student design competition for a new Louisiana Seafood logo. All high school-aged students in Louisiana are encouraged to use their creativity, innovation, and love for Louisiana seafood to design and submit a new logo for the program. Submissions will be accepted through December 15, 2017.

Please visit the [LSPMB contest webpage](#) for more information.