



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

LOUISIANA'S PLAN FOR ENSURING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO EXCELLENT TEACHERS FOR ALL STUDENTS

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is pleased to submit to the U.S. Department of Education the following plan that has been developed to address the long-term needs for improving equitable access to great teachers and school leaders in Louisiana. This plan responds to Education Secretary Arne Duncan's July 7, 2014, letter to State Education Agencies (SEAs), as augmented with additional guidance published on November 10, 2014. Louisiana's plan complies with (1) the requirement in Section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that each state's Title I, Part A plan include information on the specific steps that the SEA will take to ensure that students from low-income families and students who belong to racial minority groups are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers, and the measures that the agency will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the agency with respect to such steps; and (2) the requirement in ESEA Section 1111(e)(2) that a state's plan be revised by the SEA if necessary.

Louisiana is committed to improving student outcomes across the state by expanding access to excellent teachers for all students. This includes students who are economically disadvantaged¹ and/or who are a racial minority. In Louisiana, these students constitute the majority of the state's public school student population. As such, this plan does not provide for a redistribution of high-quality educators from low-need to high-need local education agencies (LEAs), schools, or classrooms. Rather, this plan provides for a comprehensive approach to teacher recruitment, certification, and improvement across the state, with an emphasis on schools and classrooms with the greatest need. The plan builds on practices of "high-poverty" and "high-minority" LEAs with rich concentrations of excellent educators and addresses challenges in "high-poverty" and "high-minority" LEAs where students have more limited access to excellent educators.

This approach is built on the belief that Louisiana students are just as smart and capable as any in America. Recognizing this, Louisiana has committed to preparing its students to read, write, and perform math tasks on par with students nationwide. Specifically, Louisiana will steadily raise expectations for student achievement over the next ten years, so that all students are prepared for college or a career of their choice upon graduation from high school. By the year 2025, A-rated schools will average "mastery" or "level four" performance. Today, schools rated "A" at a minimum average "basic" or "level three." A "level four" or "mastery" is the standard for college and career readiness. To guide this transition, the LDOE produces [annual reports](#) with detailed student performance data at the district and school levels.

Louisiana educators are integral to this plan: they make this commitment a reality in classrooms across the state through engaging lessons and a commitment to growth for all students. Teaching to high standards is complex work and requires supportive school leadership and a collaborative work environment in which teachers come together to focus on the technical challenges of their craft. To support teachers, the LDOE has released a comprehensive suite of curricular tools and supports, including the [ELA](#) and [Math](#) Guidebooks, and [the Instructional Materials Review Process](#). [Louisiana Teacher Leaders](#), a group of over 5,000 outstanding educators, receive and deliver professional development to teachers in every public school in Louisiana. Finally, Louisiana educators have been held to higher standards and received more frequent feedback through the State's educator evaluation and support system, [Compass](#), legislated by Act 54 of 2010.

¹ Students eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Medicaid, awaiting foster care, migrant, and incarcerated children.

Louisiana Believes

LEA and school leaders play an important role in teacher success, too. These school leaders have the ability to create productive work environments in which teachers have time to collaborate with peers, and the ability to make critical workforce decisions, such as whom to recruit and hire. In Louisiana, school and LEA administrators have been granted broad authority to make workforce decisions around hiring, termination, reductions in force, and tenure, legislated through Act 1 of 2012. To support LEA and school leaders, the LDOE published the [Louisiana Principals' Teaching and Leadership Guidebook](#), the [High School Planning Guidebook](#), and the [Early Childhood Guidebook](#).

LEA and school leaders have begun to work more closely with teacher preparation programs, too, to collaboratively ensure that teachers are ready for day one in Louisiana's classrooms. Through [Believe and Prepare](#), the LDOE, in partnership with the Board of Regents (BOR), has provided opportunities for LEA and preparation programs to establish or strengthen partnerships that ensure that new teachers are meeting district workforce needs and are ready for the challenges of today's classrooms. Further, BOR has worked with teacher preparation programs over the past several years to ensure that teacher preparation curricula address Louisiana's standards for students and for educators.

The LDOE has dedicated staff and funding to support LEAs and schools in these endeavors. Network Support teams have provided direct support to LEAs on a range of instructional issues. Additionally, these teams assist LEAs in yearlong planning process, guided by the [District Planning Guide](#), to ensure that fiscal decisions support student achievement and educator growth. Through [Believe and Succeed](#), the LDOE has provided grants to empower LEAs, nonprofits, and individuals to turn around existing "D" and "F" schools and to create new, high-quality schools for students who would otherwise attend underperforming schools.

Despite these tools and supports, students' access to excellent teachers varies from parish to parish. This is true for parishes with high concentrations of students who are economically disadvantaged or who belong to a racial minority group. Some parishes that are "high-poverty" and "high-minority" are struggling to attract, develop, and retain excellent educators. In 14 "high-minority" and "high-poverty" parishes, student outcomes² are below the state average (ranging from 37 percent to 64 percent of students scoring "Basic" and above in 2013-14; the state average was 68 percent).

When considering teacher effectiveness, student growth data is used in this report. Specifically, transitional student growth data, which is calculated using the LDOE's value-added methodology, is used. Student growth data is used because it is the only teacher effectiveness measure that is consistent across all schools and LEAs; it is calculated using the same methodology for all teachers with state assessment data and, therefore, enables comparison across the state.

Students' access to teachers with effective or higher student growth data varies, as well. In 14 "high-minority" and "high-poverty" parishes, ten had a greater portion of struggling teachers³ than the state average (ranging from 11 percent to 29 percent of their teachers⁴, compared to 9 percent across the state). These teachers' students are falling below academic growth expectations.

However, teachers in other "high-poverty" and "high-minority" parishes are producing extraordinary achievement gains. This is particularly evident in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. In 2013-2014, schools in Orleans Parish, a "high-poverty" and "high-minority" LEA, employed the greatest portion of *Highly Effective*⁵ teachers of any parish in the state (35 percent of teachers in Orleans Parish were *Highly Effective*, compared to 18 percent statewide). Teachers in East Baton

² Measured by percent of students scoring Basic or above in 2013-2014.

³ As defined by an *Ineffective* transitional student growth data rating.

⁴ This calculation accounts for teachers with transitional student growth data.

⁵ *Highly Effective* is defined as receiving a highly effective transitional student growth data.

Rouge, a “high-minority” parish, also earned *Highly Effective* ratings at a greater rate than teachers in the rest of the state⁶ (23 percent in East Baton Rouge Parish, compared to 18 percent statewide). A substantially higher-than-average proportion of these teachers’ students consistently and substantially exceed academic growth expectations. Certain rural parishes that are “high-poverty” or “high-minority” also have high concentrations of excellent teachers. Students in St. John the Baptist Parish, East Feliciana Parish, and Iberville Parish all achieved growth in student performance at “Basic” and above from 2012-13 to 2013-14 and have a greater portion of *Highly Effective* teachers than the state average (27 percent, 22 percent, and 19 percent respectively, compared to 18 percent statewide).

Louisiana’s state equity plan is built on the successes of these “high-poverty” and “high-minority” parishes that are recruiting, supporting, and retaining excellent educators. To create this plan, the LDOE’s state equity plan workgroup, led by the Office of Talent, took the following steps:

1. Defined key terms and data metrics for plan.
2. Reviewed data from state databases to identify equity gaps
3. Discussed root causes for equity gaps based on data and conversations with stakeholders
4. Identified key strategies to target equity gaps
5. Set measurable targets and created a plan for measuring and reporting progress and continuously improving this plan

Scan of State-Level Policies, Initiatives, and Currently Available Data

To begin, the LDOE performed a scan of current policies and initiatives that Louisiana has been implementing in recent years, as noted above, as well as a review of relevant and available data. This scan was conducted in collaboration with multiple teams within the LDOE. Specifically, LDOE staff reviewed:

- Current licensure standards, requirements and barriers
- Implementation and data related to Compass, Louisiana’s teacher evaluation and support tool, including transitional student growth data
- Implementation and data related to the Recovery School District and Believe and Succeed, Louisiana’s school turnaround models
- Available data identified as relevant to the development and implementation of Louisiana’s equitable access plan

SECTION 2. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The LDOE believes that a successful state plan for teacher and leader equity in Louisiana could not be developed in isolation or solely in cooperation with LEA leaders. Rather, the plan’s success will depend in large part on the long-term involvement of other stakeholders, including teachers, school and LEA leaders, institutions of higher education, civic school leaders and education advocates. As described below, the LDOE has involved stakeholders from the beginning and will continue to do so through public engagement opportunities and smaller workgroups. To ensure that the LDOE develops a comprehensive plan for better preparing teachers for the workforce so that all students can learn, the Department solicited feedback from stakeholders – in over 50 engagement opportunities including public forums and

⁶ Evaluation ratings of teachers in all parishes are available in the Compass Annual Report, available at <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/teaching/compass-final-report>.

focus groups, workgroup meetings and conversations with education leaders. (See Appendices A–C for details about the stakeholder engagement process.)

Prior to starting its work on the state equity plan, the LDOE knew that there was a great need for engaging LEA and school leaders in supporting teacher preparation and certification in Louisiana. To learn more about teacher recruitment, certification, and preparation needs and opportunities, the Department in July 2014, in partnership with the Board of Regents (BOR), [surveyed teachers statewide](#) about their own experiences with preparation and in the classroom. Principals and personnel directors shared their experience hiring and supporting new teachers, and preparation program faculty shared their collaborations with partner schools and LEAs. Over 6,000 educators participated in the survey.

Those results have been released in the LDOE's [Partners in Preparation: A Survey of Educators & Education Preparation Programs](#) report. This report shares ideas from educators, including the Believe and Prepare pilots, as to how LEAs and preparation programs can collaborate to improve teacher recruitment, preparation, and certification practices.

The LDOE then led several engagement opportunities with educators across the state to gather their feedback on teacher preparation and certification practices and how they can be strengthened. These public events have not only informed LDOE-led grant opportunities, they have also informed the strategies to address student equity in this plan.

These engagement opportunities are detailed below:

- In October 2014, the LDOE in partnership with Keystone Consulting Group, held 32 focus groups with teachers, LEA and teacher preparation program leaders in eight major cities across the state to share with them the findings of the survey and discuss challenges and potential solutions. Over 200 stakeholders attended these meetings over a four-week period. Each meeting was facilitated by Keystone with no involvement of the LDOE so as to not stifle stakeholder feedback. Keystone shared a synthesis of the results from these focus groups with the LDOE in November.
- On December 3, 2014, over 60 legislators, educators, K-12 and higher education leaders, and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) members met to discuss the specific challenges and opportunities in recruiting and preparing the state's next generation of educators identified in the statewide focus groups. This event was the first in a series of policy forums⁷ where the Department provided stakeholders with the opportunity to review and discuss teacher certification and preparation policy proposals that will be developed over the course of the next year.
- A second policy forum was held in March 2015.
- Regional policy forums were conducted across the state in April 2015.
- Finally, the Department conducted a workforce survey with all LEA human resource personnel to poll them on the barriers to hiring certified and qualified teachers. A total of 22 LEAs responded to the survey with a total of 37 suggestions for removing hiring barriers.

In addition to the above mentioned public engagement opportunities, the LDOE formed a workforce committee consisting of human resource directors from various LEAs across the state to advise the Department on teacher and leader recruitment, hiring and retention issues. Since its inception in February of 2015, the workgroup has reviewed the

⁷ All policy forums were facilitated by the LDOE and were open meetings to the public.

suggestions collected in the workforce survey and has been working with the LDOE to implement new recruitment and hiring practices, as well as advise on potential changes to certification policy.

The LDOE has also engaged key leaders of various educator groups throughout the development of the equity plan. Initially, the Department has met with the leadership of the Louisiana Association of State Superintendents, Louisiana Association of Principals, the Louisiana School Board Association, and the president of the Louisiana PTA, in addition to many others. The LDOE gathered feedback on the equity gaps, root causes and strategies for reducing gaps.

The Department will continue to involve stakeholders in activities going forward through additional meetings, policy forums, and through the support of the workforce committee. These key stakeholders will play a vital role in not only the final policy development for teacher preparation and certification, but also in the implementation of these new policies in the field.

SECTION 3. EQUITY GAP EXPLORATION AND ANALYSIS

In 2014-2015, 712,556 students enrolled in Louisiana's public schools, of which 54 percent were minority and 68 percent were economically disadvantaged.⁸ The state has 1,303 public schools, including 104 charter schools. Under the Louisiana Scholarship Program, parents can also apply for a state-funded scholarship to attend the school of their choice, including private and religious schools. Additionally, students with disabilities may be eligible for a state subsidy for tuition to a private school that best meets their needs.

To ensure that Louisiana's equitable access work is data-driven, the LDOE has relied on multiple data sources to identify gaps in the equitable access of all students to high quality teachers. Discussions with stakeholders have provided context for the data and informed the LDOE's analysis of the root causes of the equity gaps and strategies to address them.

Definitions and Metrics

Louisiana's 2006 educator equity plan focused primarily on Highly Qualified Teacher status. In contrast, the current plan focuses on ensuring that all classrooms are led by excellent teachers. Recognizing that there are multiple dimensions of educator effectiveness (e.g., qualifications, expertise, performance and effectiveness in improving student academic achievement), Louisiana has defined excellent educators as follows:

- An **excellent** teacher is able to effectively teach in his or her assigned content area, is able to demonstrate strong instructional practices and significant contributions to growth in student learning, and consistently demonstrates professionalism and a dedication to the profession both within and outside of the classroom.

For the purposes of this plan, the LDOE has elected to consider equitable access in terms of the following characteristics of teachers:

- **Effective Teachers:** An effective teacher is any teacher that has received a growth data score of *Effective: Proficient or Highly Effective*.⁹

⁸ Students eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Medicaid, awaiting foster care, migrant, and incarcerated children.

⁹ Student growth data using the value-added methodology is only generated for teachers in grades or subjects with statewide assessments.

- **Inexperienced Teachers:** An inexperienced teacher is any teacher in their first year of teaching in the classroom.
- **Out-of-Field Teachers:** An out-of-field teacher does not hold a license in their current teaching assignment.
 - Teachers who work in charter schools (Type 2 and 5) are not included in this category because charter schools are not required to hire certified teachers.
- **Unqualified Teachers:** An unqualified teacher does not hold a standard certificate.
 - Standard certificates include: A, B, C; Level 1, 2, 3; Practitioner Licenses (PL 1-3) and Out-of-State Licenses (OS).
 - Teachers who work in charter schools (Type 2 and 5) are not included in this category because charter schools are not required to hire certified teachers.

The LDOE identified equity gaps in student populations using the following definitions:

- **Poverty Students:** This group of students is identified as “economically disadvantaged,” which includes students eligible for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Medicaid, awaiting foster care, migrant, and incarcerated children.
- **Minority Students:** This group of students is identified as a member of a minority race or ethnicity (African American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander/Alaskan Native).

Exploration of the Data

Methodology

The LDOE explored equity gaps for two groups specified in ESEA: poverty and minority students. To start its analysis, the LDOE determined the percentage of poverty and minority students in each parish. Using those percentages, parishes were divided into quartiles for each category of students. The parishes that had the highest proportion of minority students were categorized as “high-minority” and the parishes that had the highest proportion of poverty students were categorized as “high-poverty.” For each group, the LDOE focused on four measures of teacher efficacy – results with students, out-of-field assignments, qualifications, and experience – across parishes in the state.

The out-of-field rate was calculated at the course level since it is possible that a teacher could be in-field for some course(s) and out-of-field for other course(s). An in-field teacher is an individual with a valid certificate and the correct area of certification for the course they are teaching. Since not all teachers have course data, this measure has a different denominator.

Charter schools are not required to hire certified teachers (per Louisiana Revised Statute 17:3996). Therefore, the LDOE separated charter schools from all other public schools in the analysis related to out-of-field and unqualified teachers. Although charter school data has been separated from traditional public school data in the analysis, all strategies included in this plan address all schools and parishes in Louisiana. Table 1, on the next page, depicts the equity gaps in Louisiana.

Table 1. Louisiana Equity Gaps in School Year 2014–2015

School Type	Teacher Data				
	Percentage of Highly Effective Teachers ¹⁰	Percentage of Effective Teachers ¹¹	Percentage of Out-of-Field Teachers ¹²	Percentage of Unqualified Teachers ¹³	Percentage of Inexperienced Teachers ¹⁴
All Schools Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 13,858 Out-of-Field Calculation: 38,712 Unqualified Calculation: 42,570 For Inexperienced Calculation: 47,148	18.3 percent N=2,542	50.6 percent N=7,011	10.8 percent N=4,176	5.4 percent N=2,283	8.9 percent N=4,195
Charter Schools Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 1,144 Out-of-Field Calculation: 2,916 Unqualified Calculation: 4,190 For Inexperienced Calculation: 4,190	28.1 percent N=322	56.9 percent N=651	28.3 percent N=825	34.9 percent N=1,462	23.5 percent N=983
High Poverty Parishes Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 2,021 Out-of-Field Calculation: 2,670 Unqualified Calculation: 3,160 For Inexperienced Calculation: 6,719	23.2 percent N=468	50.8 percent N=1,027	15.8 percent N=422	8.8 percent N=277	15.0 percent N=1,005
Non-High Poverty Parishes Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 11,837 Out-of-Field Calculation: 36,042 Unqualified Calculation: 39,410 For Inexperienced Calculation: 40,429	17.5 percent N=2,074	50.6 percent N=5,984	10.4 percent N=3,754	5.1 percent N=2,006	7.9 percent N=3,190

¹⁰ Using 2013-14 transitional student growth data.¹¹ Using 2013-14 transitional student growth data.¹² Charter schools are not required to hire teachers with valid teaching certificates so the Out-of-Field or Unqualified calculations exclude charter schools. The charter school percentages in these categories are included for informational purposes only.¹³ See footnote 2.

Income equity gap¹⁵	5.7 percent	0.2 percent	5.4 percent	3.7 percent	7.1 percent
High Minority Parishes Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 4,018 Out-of-Field Calculation: 9,624 Unqualified Calculation: 10,871 For Inexperienced Calculation: 14,721	23.1 percent N=930	53.5 percent N=2,150	12.7 percent N=1,220	6.1 percent N=661	12.6 percent N=1,856
Non-High Minority Parishes Teachers: Highly Effective and Effective Calculation: 9,840 Out-of-Field Calculation: 29,088 Unqualified Calculation: 31,699 For Inexperienced Calculation: 32,427	16.4 percent N=1,612	49.4 percent N=4,861	10.2 percent N=2,956	5.1 percent N=1,622	7.2 percent N=2,339
Minority equity gap¹⁶	6.7 percent	4.1 percent	2.5 percent	1.0 percent	5.4 percent

Source: Louisiana’s Profile of Educational Personnel (PEP), LEADS Reporting System (LRS), and Teacher Certification Management System (TCMS).

Equity Gap Analysis

When aggregated, this data reveals gaps in the rate at which teachers are “out-of-field,” “inexperienced,” and “unqualified” when comparing teachers in “high-poverty” or “high-minority” parishes to all other parishes. The size (in absolute value) of the gaps varies, from 3.7 percentage points for unqualified teachers in “high-poverty” parishes versus the rest of the parishes, to 7.1 percentage points for inexperienced teachers in “high-poverty” parishes versus the rest of the state. It also reveals that the rate at which teachers are effective in “high-poverty” or “high-minority” parishes is overall higher than in all other parishes.

Parish by parish, however, teacher qualifications vary, as does teacher effectiveness. Students in some “high-poverty” or “high-minority” parishes have higher-than-average access to qualified, in-field teachers whereas some “high-poverty” and “high-minority” parishes have a great deal of difficulty recruiting enough teachers and/or enough teachers of certain certification areas and, therefore, have lower rates of qualified, in-field teachers. Likewise, some “high-poverty” or “high-minority” parishes have strong programs of instruction support and, therefore, have high concentrations of effective teachers, whereas others do not.

¹⁵ The difference in percentages of teachers in each category between “high poverty” parishes and non-“high poverty” parishes.

¹⁶ The difference in percentages of teachers in each category between “high minority” parishes and non-“high minority” parishes.

Understanding the recruitment and placement challenges that many “high-poverty” and “high-minority” parishes face, and based on discussions with stakeholders, the LDOE determined that the highest priority equity gaps for Louisiana are:

- **Equity Gap 1:** “High-poverty” parishes have a higher rate of out-of-field teachers compared to the rest of the state’s parishes (15.8 percent and 10.4 percent respectively).
- **Equity Gap 2:** “High-minority” parishes have a higher rate of out-of-field teachers compared to the rest of the state’s parishes (12.7 percent and 10.2 percent respectively).

SECTION 4. STRATEGIES FOR ELIMINATING EQUITY GAPS

The LDOE will build on the successes of LEAs that are ensuring access to excellent teachers. Specifically, the LDOE’s strategies will center on innovative approaches to teacher recruitment and partnerships between LEAs and teacher preparation programs.

Root Cause Analysis

In order to understand why the gaps identified exist, the LDOE conducted a root cause analysis in conjunction with key stakeholders. The root cause analysis consisted of four steps:

1. **Identifying Relevant and Available Data:** Through the LDOE workgroup, the LDOE determined what data and data sources are available and relevant to identifying equity gaps and then conducted its analysis.
2. **Analyzing Data and Identifying Equity Gaps:** The LDOE then identified the equity gaps resulting from the analysis in preparation for the root-cause analysis.
3. **Analyzing Root Causes:** The workgroup and stakeholders brainstormed a complete list of root causes behind the equity gaps.
4. **Mapping Strategies to Root Causes:** The workgroup, based on feedback from stakeholders, identified practical strategies to address the root causes.

Key Strategies

To achieve the state’s teacher equity objectives, the LDOE intends to initially pursue strategies that correspond to the root causes behind issues relative to teacher qualifications:

- Expansion of the Believe and Prepare pilot program’s most promising teacher preparation practices
- Encourage more and stronger partnerships between LEAs and preparation programs
- Support innovative teacher recruitment and hiring practices

These strategies were identified not at random, but rather through a root cause analysis, described above, and through study of LEAs that are “high-poverty” or “high-minority” and ensuring access to excellent educators. The root cause analysis was conducted both internally and externally, with the stakeholder groups described above and in Appendix A.

The strategies and other actions described in this plan will not always be sufficient. Particularly in the most challenging schools, recruiting and retaining more (rather than equitable) excellent teachers and leaders might be necessary and might require restructuring the whole school—including bringing in new leadership, changing the instructional program,

and taking a range of innovative actions to improve teaching and learning conditions. Although these actions are not fully described in this plan, this is and will continue to be accomplished through use of the Compass tool, the Recovery School District and the Believe and Succeed initiative.

Table 6. Details of Key Strategies

<p>Priority: Encourage Partnerships between LEAs and Preparation Programs When LEAs and teacher preparation programs partner, teacher candidates will have more time in the classroom, under the guidance of a highly effective mentor, in order to prepare students for college and a career. Also, preparation programs will be more aware of and able to respond to LEAs’ hiring needs.</p>
<p>Root-Cause Analysis Findings</p>
<p>More Time to Practice in the Classroom. Aspiring teachers need more practice and strong mentors to master essential knowledge and skills. Based on feedback received in the LDOE’s survey and focus groups, stakeholders believe that clinical experiences improve when LEAs and preparation programs partner to provide more time to practice.</p>
<p>Teacher Shortages. Due to teacher shortages in high-needs schools and subject areas, LEAs are placing teachers in assignments out of their certification area. This outcome is supported by both quantitative data from the LDOE’s human resource database and qualitative data collected in the district workforce survey collected in January 2015.</p>
<p>Teacher Supply not Meeting Demand. LEAs experience shortages of teachers in specific subject areas but typically do not coordinate with preparation programs on recruitment into these subject areas. Sixty-three percent of LEA leaders surveyed reported their partnerships with preparation programs do not produce enough teachers to meet demand in all subjects and grade levels, while 48 percent of preparation program faculty members say they do not get enough information about LEAs’ staffing needs to inform recruiting and selection.</p>
<p>Current Certification Policies Place Hiring Barriers on LEAs. School leaders have indicated that certain certification policies and statutes currently place barriers on a LEA’s ability to hire and place quality teachers.</p>
<p>Rural Parishes Have Difficulty Recruiting Teachers. Louisiana’s rural LEAs have difficulty recruiting teachers to their parishes.</p>
<p>Relevant Metrics</p>
<p>Qualitative Data Collected During Teacher Preparation Engagement Opportunities. The LDOE collected qualitative data during the teacher preparation focus groups in October of 2014, policy forums in December 2014 and March 2015, and regional policy forums in April of 2015.</p>
<p>The Results of the Partners in Preparation Survey. The survey found an overwhelming need for more collaboration between LEAs and teacher preparation programs to identify the future employment needs of schools and to determine whether individual graduating candidates are ready for the job.</p>
<p>The Results of a Survey of School District Human Resource Personnel on the Barriers to Hiring Qualified and Certified Teachers. Survey results revealed that there are changes that can be made to current certification policy that would remove some of the current hiring barriers LEAs are experiencing.</p>
<p>The Results of Conversations with District Administrators and the LDOE’s Workforce Committee on the increasing shortage of certified teachers to fill core and high-need subject areas.</p>
<p>Stakeholder Feedback</p>
<p>Louisiana’s LEAs and teacher preparation programs have cited a need for stronger partnership that will enable a stronger connection between preparation experiences and district expectations (e.g., implementing curriculum, classroom management, assessment of standards, using data to inform instruction).</p>

Schools system leaders have reported that current licensure requirements place barriers on LEAs' hiring practices.

Participants in the *Partners in Preparation* survey and teacher preparation policy forums and focus groups, expressed agreement that there is a strong need for increased collaboration between LEAs and preparation programs to ensure that the teacher pipeline is meeting workforce needs.

Strategies

Strategy 1: Expansion of Believe and Prepare Pilot Programs' Most Promising Teacher Preparation Practices.

[Believe and Prepare](#), launched in April 2014, provides grants to empower schools and LEAs to design innovative, classroom and school-based preparation experiences for aspiring educators. Experiences give educators the opportunity to practice their developing skills with real students and draw on the expertise of Louisiana's best educators. Twenty-seven school districts, ten charter schools/systems and 20 teacher preparation programs are part of the Believe and Prepare community.

Believe and Prepare LEAs are working with their partner preparation program partners to identify skill gaps, enhance and provide more skill-based courses, and create more opportunities for clinical experience. Believe and Prepare pilots are also piloting full-year residencies and internships for teacher candidates alongside highly effective mentors. This experience allows teacher candidates the ability to experience teaching in its full continuum, giving them a more realistic view of school policies, procedure and culture and the opportunity to practice their craft alongside a high-performing teacher before entering the profession.

These promising practices are being vetted through key stakeholders in LDOE-hosted policy forums that began in December of 2014 and will continue through October of 2016. These shifts in program design are meant to better prepare teachers for the practical realities of the classroom and will form the basis for policy proposals to Louisiana's state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Strategy 2: Encourage More and Stronger Partnerships Between LEAs and Preparation Programs.

Believe and Prepare pilots have demonstrated that increased LEA partnerships with preparation programs can help meet staffing needs in hard-to-staff schools and high-demand subject areas, such as special education, STEM and career and technical courses. Through the Believe and Prepare program, LEAs have been engaged in dialogue with preparation programs on their short-term and long-term hiring needs. As a result, these teacher pipelines that will more likely ensure that the new teachers hold the certifications they need to fill LEAs' most critical shortage areas.

An example of this is in Lafourche Parish, in which the district worked with Nicholls State University during the 2014-2015 school year in order to fill multiple special education vacancies. Lafourche worked with Nicholls to offer current teachers the ability to earn a certification endorsement in special education through the University's master's degree program while serving as a full-time special education teacher in the district. As a result, the district will have seven new certified special education teachers to start the 2015-2016 school year.

Promising recruitment practices that result from the Believe and Prepare program will be included in the Teacher Preparation Toolkit. Moreover, the Believe and Prepare community will continue to grow over the coming years.

Strategy 3: Support District Recruitment and Hiring Practices.

Strong recruitment and hiring starts with a clear understanding workforce needs. To support LEAs' assessment of short- and long-term teacher hiring needs, the LDOE has enlisted the support of the South Central Comprehensive Center (SC3). SC3 is working with the LDOE to build a workforce projection tool that enables LEAs to project short-

and long-term workforce needs. The goal is to share this tool with LEAs in the 2015-16 school year. (See Appendix D)

The LDOE will also promote the use of its Talent Recruitment System, an online database that matches teachers with the schools and LEAs interested in hiring them. This system is currently used by 91 percent of LEAs. The LDOE’s Talent Office promotes the use of this system with human resource personnel during their bi-annual meetings, and with teacher candidates during college site visits held throughout the year.

LEAs in the Believe and Prepare program, such as Algiers Charter School Association in New Orleans and in St. Landry and Caddo Parishes, are also modeling innovative recruitment strategies such as recruiting future teachers from within their own communities, starting with high school seniors interested in making a difference in their own neighborhoods. These practices will also be included in the Teacher Preparation Toolkit, and serve as a resource to LEAs, especially those in rural parishes, which face significant hiring and recruitment challenges.

Through the LDOE workforce committee, the LDOE is also providing LEAs with tools and resources for PRAXIS exam preparation to help them move teachers from non-standard certifications to full, standard certifications, thus reducing the number of unqualified and out-of-field teachers in the state.

Finally, the LDOE will continue to provide LEA leaders with workforce support through the use of the [District Planning Guide](#), a how-to framework for making critical policy and financial decisions. It contains a section on workforce talent, in which it provides LEA leaders with strategies for staffing all schools to maximize student achievement and planning for future workforce needs.

Performance Objectives

By 2018, 50 percent of LEAs in Louisiana will have conducted a workforce analysis with the support of the LDOE that projects short and long-term hiring needs, thus enabling LEAs to improve recruitment and placement practices.

By 2018, 50 percent of LEAs in Louisiana will have a formalized partnership with a teacher preparation program that addresses LEA hiring needs as identified through workforce analysis.

SECTION 5. ONGOING MONITORING AND SUPPORT

Louisiana is committed to ensuring that students in “high-poverty” and “high-minority” parishes have equal access to effective teachers.

For each strategy above, there is a plan in place to assess implementation. The LDOE has identified the following areas where it will begin collecting information, and is prepared to build on these efforts with further data collection and reviews as they emerge:

- Extended workforce management support through the LDOE workforce committee, District Planning Guide, and Talent Recruitment System; this includes support around workforce analyses
- New and deepened partnerships between LEAs and teacher preparation programs supported through the Believe and Prepare program
- Ongoing engagement with stakeholder groups for feedback and refinement of the implementation process

The LDOE has established a detailed timeline (see Table 7) to guide the short-term and long-term implementation of this plan. Through the LDOE workforce committee, the Department will conduct an annual review of the state's progress toward addressing root causes to eliminate equity gaps, and make adjustments to its strategic approaches as necessary. Every two years the LDOE will formally update this plan based on new data, new analyses of root causes, and new strategies.

Table 7. Louisiana Implementation Timeline

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Time Frame	
			Start	Frequency
District workforce meetings	Participating LEA human resource personnel	LDOE Director of Educator Communications	February 2015	Monthly through December 2015, and then every other month starting in 2016
LDOE workforce management and planning support through the use of the District Planning Guidebook	All LEAs	LDOE Offices of Academic Content and Academic Policy and Accountability	Summer 2015	Ongoing
LDOE budget support through the use of the District Planning Guidebook	All LEAs	LDOE Offices of Academic Content and Academic Policy and Accountability	Summer 2015	Ongoing
SC3-developed workforce analysis tool published	SC3, all LEAs	LDOE Office of Talent, SC3	Winter 2015	
Publishing of district reports cards including student and teacher performance data and achievement gap data	LDOE and all LEAs	LDOE Offices of Academic Policy and Accountability and Talent	Winter 2015	Annually
Expansion of the Believe and Prepare pilot program, including consideration of revised teacher licensure and preparation policies	LDOE, BESE, all LEAs and teacher preparation programs	LDOE Talent Office Policy Director	Winter 2015	Ongoing

SECTION 6. CONCLUSION

The LDOE supports the U.S. Department of Education's goal of ensuring that every student has equitable access to excellent educators and welcomes this opportunity to present a plan for advancing this mission in Louisiana. This plan reflects outreach to education school leaders and thoughtful deliberation about actions that most likely will enable Louisiana's schools and LEAs to attain this important objective. Although the plan will evolve over time, the LDOE believes that the targeted strategies that are included in the plan embody a solid approach to improving all students' access to effective educators. The LDOE looks forward to proceeding with this plan.

APPENDIX A. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT GROUPS**Louisiana Department of Education Equity Plan Workgroup**

OFFICE	NAME	TITLE
Academic Policy and Analytics	Jessica Baghian	Assistant Superintendent
Academic Policy and Analytics	Kim Nesmith	Data Quality and Management Director
Academic Policy and Analytics	Laura Boudreaux	Director of Strategic Research and Analysis
Operations	Bernell Cook	Director of Federal Reporting
Policy	Erin Bendily	Assistant Superintendent
Talent	Hannah Dietsch	Assistant Superintendent
Talent	Annie Morrison	Director of Communications
Talent	Alanna Rosenberg	Data Analyst
Talent	Julie Stephenson	Policy Director

Key Stakeholder Groups

ORGANIZATION	KEY CONTACT	TITLE
Louisiana Association of School Superintendents (LASS)	Doris Voitier	President and Superintendent, St. Bernard Parish Public Schools
Louisiana School Boards Association (LSBA)	Scott Richard	Executive Director
Louisiana State PTA	Gary Fayard	President
Louisiana Association of School Personnel and Administrators (LSASPA)	Ricky Armelin	President
LaTEACH-Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council	Ashley McReynolds	Region 2 Leader

Many more stakeholders participated in the LDOE's teacher preparation focus groups, policy forums and regional forums in northern, central, and southern areas of Louisiana.

Stakeholder Group	Focus Groups (October 2014)	Policy Forum (March 6, 2015)	Regional Forums (April 2015)
Teachers	123	1 (Louisiana State Teacher of the Year)	N/A
Principals	50	1 (Louisiana High School Principal of the Year)	N/A
LEA Administrators	67	50	86
Institution of Higher Education Leaders	45	32	60
Education Advocates	N/A	7	N/A
State Legislators/Board of Elementary and Secondary Education/Board of Regents	N/A	8	2

APPENDIX B. LOUISIANA STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS TIMELINE

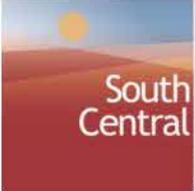
Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
LDOE conducts <i>Partners in Preparation</i> survey	6,000 educators	Office of Talent	September 2014
Educator preparation focus groups (30 meetings statewide)	District and preparation program school leaders	Office of Talent and Keystone Consulting Group	October 2014
Formation of internal state equity plan workgroup	Offices of: Talent, Assessment, Data Governance and Federal Programs	Director of Communications, Talent Office	November 3, 2015
LDOE hosts first policy forum on teacher preparation	All key stakeholder groups: LEAs, IHEs, legislators, BESE/BOR	Office of Talent	December 3, 2015
LDOE conducts workforce survey	All district and charter human resource personnel	Office of Talent and Louisiana Association of School Personnel and Administrators	January 2015
Initial discussions with key stakeholders	Office of Talent, and Louisiana Superintendents, and School Boards Associations	Assistant Superintendent of Talent	January 26, 2015
Formation of Workforce Committee	District and charter human resource personnel	Office of Talent and LSASPA	February 11, 2015
Define key terms and data parameters	State Equity Plan Workgroup	Director of Communications, Talent Office	February 11, 2015
LDOE hosts second policy forum on teacher preparation	All key stakeholder groups: LEAs, IHEs, legislators, BESE/BOR	Office of Talent	March 6, 2015
Identify key stakeholder engagement groups	Offices of Talent and Policy	Assistant Superintendent of Talent	March 6, 2015
Identify broader stakeholder engagement groups	Offices of Talent and Policy	Assistant Superintendent of Talent	April 2, 2015
Teacher preparation regional forums (eight meetings statewide)	District and teacher preparation program leaders	Office of Talent and Keystone Consulting Group	April 13-16, 2015
Confirmation of equity gaps, root causes and theory of action	State Equity Plan Workgroup	Director of Communications, Talent Office	April 27, 2015
Workforce committee meeting to review final equity plan gaps and strategies	Workforce Committee	Office of Talent	May 6, 2015
Meet with remaining stakeholder groups to review equity gaps and	Louisiana PTA, LATeach	Office of Policy and Talent	May 2015

Major Activities	Parties Involved	Organizer	Dates
strategy development			
Finalize strategies for addressing gaps and assessment metrics	State Equity Plan Workgroup	Talent Office	May 19, 2015
Submit equity plan	Office of Talent	Director of Communications, Talent Office	June 1, 2015

APPENDIX C. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MEETING AGENDAS AND MEETING TRACKER***Stakeholder Engagement Tracker***

Engagement Opportunity	Date	Goal	Stakeholder Groups Participating	Facilitator
Teacher Preparation focus groups (32 meetings)	October 2014	Identify teacher preparation challenges in Louisiana	Over 200 teachers, principals, district administrators and teacher preparation school leaders	LDOE and Keystone Consulting Group
Call to kick-off equity plan development work	January 26, 2015	Notification of LDOE's intent to submit plan and its purpose	Louisiana Associations of School Superintendents, Principals and School Boards	Hannah Dietsch, Assistant Superintendent of Office of Talent
Workforce Committee meeting	February 19, 2015	Review results of workforce survey and identify key barriers to hiring qualified and certified teachers	Workforce Committee: 16 district human resource directors	Annie Morrison, Director of Communications, Office of Talent
Teacher preparation policy forum	March 6, 2015	Share and gather feedback on proposed policy shifts for teacher preparation and certification	Legislators, district and teacher preparation program school leaders, Board of Elementary and Secondary Education members	LDOE: State Superintendent John White, Hannah Dietsch and Julie Stephenson
Regional teacher preparation forums	April 13-16, 2015	Share and gather feedback on revised policy shifts for teacher preparation and certification	District and teacher preparation program school leaders	LDOE and Keystone Consulting Group
Workforce Committee: review final equity gaps and strategies	May 6, 2015	Review identified equity gaps, root causes and identified strategies for plan	Workforce Committee: 16 district human resource directors	Annie Morrison, Director of Communications, Office of Talent
Calls with key stakeholder groups	May 15-20	Review final equity gaps and strategies	Louisiana PTA and LATeach	Erin Bendily, Office of Policy; Julie Stephenson, Office of Talent

APPENDIX D: LOUISIANA EDUCATOR SHORTAGE PREDICTOR MODEL PROPOSAL

 <p>South Central Comprehensive Center at the University of Oklahoma</p>	<h2>Project Overview</h2>
<p>Louisiana Educator Shortage Predictor Model and Resource Tools</p> <p>South Central Comprehensive Center (SC3)/Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)/ Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center)/ Augenblick, Palaich, and Associates Consulting (APA Consulting)</p>	
<p>Background/ LDOE Need to be Addressed</p>	<p>LDOE is currently undertaking a multi-year process to revise educator preparation policies with the input of stakeholders. Potential policy revisions include accountability for educator preparation programs to meet the staffing targets established by local education agencies (LEAs). To support LEAs in development of these targets, LDOE would like to predict future education workforce needs and provide LEAs with tools and resources that will assist them in predicting their own staffing needs in the upcoming years.</p>
<p>Purposes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist LDOE in the development of the Louisiana Educator Shortage Predictor Model. • Assist LDOE in the development of tools and resources for LEAs when predicting their staffing needs and creating staffing targets for partnering educator preparation programs.
<p>Expected Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge of educator workforce dynamics in Louisiana • Increased ability to interpret educator workforce data • Improved stakeholder engagement in addressing the issues of educator workforce dynamics in Louisiana • Enhanced educator preparation policies designed to meet LEA staffing needs • Redesigned educator preparation programs that meet the staffing targets of LEAs • Creation of opportunities for SC3 to provide deeper technical assistance (TA) to build greater capacity for LDOE to implement Educator Effectiveness goals
<p>Process</p>	<p>LDOE will partner with SC3, the GTL Center, and APA Consulting to engage Louisiana stakeholders in the development and use of tools and resources required to predict educator workforce supply, demand, and shortages. LDOE and its partners will provide training to stakeholders on how to use the tools and how to interpret the data produced.</p>
<p>Timeline</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer 2015 – Determine which data elements will produce the best predictions for the Louisiana model through data analysis and stakeholder participation. • Early Fall 2015 – Provide training to stakeholders on the data produced by the model and how to use the tools and resources. • Fall 2015 – Provide prototypes of tools and resources to LEAs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter 2015/2016 – Gather feedback on prototypes. • Spring 2016 – Refine model, tools, and resources. • Summer 2016 – Train stakeholders on interpreting information produced through the model, tools, and resources.
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDOE Office of Talent will collaborate with other offices and divisions of LDOE to determine the best course of action for moving forward. • SC3, GTL Center, and APA Consulting will prepare initial documents. • When LDOE is ready to begin, SC3 will schedule a face-to-face meeting to launch the project.

Partnership List

Augenblick, Palaich, and Associates Consulting (APA Consulting)

<p>Robert Reichardt Senior Associate rer@apaconsulting.net 303.803.4412</p>

Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center)

<p>Alex Berg-Jacobson Technical Assistance Support aberg-jacobson@air.org 202.403.6639</p>	<p>Laura Goe Senior Research and Technical Assistance Expert lgoe@ets.org 609.734.1076</p>
<p>Ellen Sherratt Co-Deputy Director esherratt@air.com 312.288.7623</p>	

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