



**STATE OF LOUISIANA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**POST OFFICE BOX 94064, BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804-9064**  
Toll Free #: 1-877-453-2721  
<http://www.louisianaschools.net>

**D.D. Council Quarterly Report**  
**July 2008**  
**Division of Educational Improvement and Assistance**

**1. Literacy Initiatives**

The Louisiana Department of Education will implement a literacy initiative for grades PK-4 entitled *Ensuring Literacy for All*. Forty-three schools will be selected to receive state funding, as well as support via a literacy coach and professional development.

The current **Literacy Pilot schools** (located in St. Bernard, West Baton Rouge, Recovery School District in New Orleans, Assumption, Avoyelles, Sabine, East Feliciana, Tangipahoa, and Lafourche) will continue into 2008-09. These schools will each pilot an assessment instrument to be used for students with significant cognitive disabilities.

The **Literacy Access: Low Incidence Disabilities Committee** has been established to make recommendations on strategies to include students with low incidence disabilities in local education agency literacy/reading programs. The work of this group will support alignment of strategies across literacy related initiatives/issues (e.g., Reading First, literacy pilot sites, alternate instructional materials, special education specific projects). A national consultant will facilitate the work of the committee and guide the members in developing both short and long term action plans. The initial work of the committee will focus on issues pertaining to students with significant disabilities. Future work will entail a partnership with the Leadership Development Committee for Sensorially Impaired to address issues related to students who have deaf/hearing impairments and blind/visual impairments.

The Louisiana Department of Education is providing support to the Louisiana Parent Training and Information Center to present the workshop: All Roads Lead to Literacy. Debra Dixon of the LDE will provide updates on the state literacy initiatives. Nancy Steel, a national consultant on deafblindness to the LDE, will discuss literacy strategies for students with developmental disabilities. Area school district teams also will present on literacy initiatives and strategies that are being implemented at the local level. The sessions will be held as follows:

- September 23, 2008 – Shreveport
- September 24, 2008 – Lafayette
- September 25, 2008 - Kenner

For further information, call (504) 888-9111 or (800) 766-7736.

**2. State Regulations**

Revisions to Title 17 1941 et seq were passed by the Louisiana state house and senate. Bulletin 1706, Regulations for Implementation of the Children with Exceptionalities Act (R.S. 17:1941 et seq.) is on public review beginning with the register published in June 2008. The document has been reformatted to mirror the federal regulations and the numbering format. Interested persons may submit written comments until 4:30 p.m., August 9, 2008, to Nina Ford, State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, P.O. Box 94064, Capitol Station, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064.

**3. Family Support**

The Board of Elementary and Secondary (BESE) has approved contracts for nine Families Helping Families Centers, each at \$76,000. No funding has been approved at this point for Region 7.

On June 7, 2008, the LDE Division of Family, Career and Technical Education held a Parent Conference in Baton Rouge. LDE sponsored the attendance of parents primarily from southern Louisiana. Overnight accommodations, meals and transportation costs were covered so that parents could attend this day of presentations on educational topics of concern to parents of students with disabilities. A second Parent Conference is being planned later in the summer for parents in the northern part of the state, but arrangements have not been finalized. Contact [Shelia.Campbell@LA.GOV](mailto:Shelia.Campbell@LA.GOV) or [Margaret.Brolin@LA.GOV](mailto:Margaret.Brolin@LA.GOV) for further information.

**4. Task Force on “World Class” Program**

The LDE will establish a task force to make recommendations on creating a world class special education program. Approximately 20 individuals, including nationally recognized experts, will begin meeting in fall 2008.

**5. Guidelines on Use of Funds**

A contract is underway to have Dr. Larry Gloeckler, former state director of New York, to study Louisiana’s use of IDEA funds and to develop guidelines on using the funds in compliance with the law and regulations to improve student performance.

**6. Annual Performance Report**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that every state submit a State Performance Plan (SPP) that describes the targets and actions to be taken by the state for a period of six years to comply with IDEA and improve student performance for students with disabilities. An Annual Performance Report (APR) based on 2006-2007 reported data was submitted in February 2008. OSEP reviewed the APR and determined that Louisiana falls into the “Needs Assistance” category in

meeting the requirements of Part B of IDEA, therefore the LDE will avail themselves of federal technical assistance and training.

**7. Alternative Diploma Options for Students with Disabilities**

In June 2008, BESE members reviewed the recommendations from the Alternate Diploma Options Task Force. No actions were taken, and the item has been referred to the next BESE meeting.