



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
April 2009
Division of Educational Improvement and Assistance

1. Bulletin Update

Bulletin 1508, the *Pupil Appraisal Handbook*, was advertised in the Louisiana Register with comments due on March 11, 2009. Comments will be addressed and the handbook will come before BESE for approval at its May board meeting. Training materials are being developed and webinars are being planned for late spring 2009.

Bulletin 1530, the *IEP Handbook*, is going to the Parish Superintendents' Advisory Council on April 2, 2009 for approval. It will then go to BESE for approval for Notice of Intent in the Louisiana Register at the May 2009 meeting.

2. AIM (Accessible Instructional Materials)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004) requires that students with print disabilities be provided instructional materials in an accessible format. For example, some students may need materials in Braille, while others may need a digitized version of the text book to allow for format adjustment or text modifications. The Louisiana Department of Education continues to work on the framework (e.g., procedures for the purchase of text books in accessible formats, ongoing professional development) to support school districts in the provision of these materials.

Changes to the web-based IEP and the accompanying "help pages" related to the provision of AIM will be made by July 1, 2009. **IEPs written prior to this date should also document a student's need for AIM.** At this point, AIM can be addressed on the IEP in 2 different places: 1) the section on *progress or lack of progress in the general education curriculum*, or 2) in the *Consideration of Special Factors - AT services/devices* section.

Louisiana's AIM web site has a new look. AIM professional development and information can be located on the AIM site at <http://www.atanswers.com/aim>

3. Assistive Technology

The LDE provides funding for regional Assistive Technology (AT) Centers around the state. These centers provide support to school districts on the use of assistive technology for students with disabilities. Information about Louisiana's AT projects can be found at www.louisianaschools.net/lde/eia/1538.html.

The annual Assistive Technology Summer Institute will be held in Baton Rouge, July 15-17. Registration will open in March. For further information, refer to www.lati3.com.

4. Status of Monitoring

The table below provides a list of school districts that were targeted for monitoring during school year 2008-2009. As of March 25, there are two districts left to receive on-site monitoring. The remaining activities include producing Summary of Findings Reports for those two districts and negotiating Corrective Action Plans with districts who exhibit areas of non-compliance. Upon completion of these activities, the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process for the 2008-2009 school year will be complete.

2008-2009 Monitoring Schedule
Focus and Random Visits

Follow-Up Visits	Initial Visits
*St. Charles	Tensas
*Natchitoches	East Carroll
*St. John the Baptist	Jefferson
*Catahoula	Natchitoches
Allen	RSD
Terrebonne	VB Glencoe Charter-St. Mary Parish
Webster	Richland
Tangipahoa	St. James
Jefferson Davis	Orleans
Union	Rapides
*Morehouse	Ouachita
*City of Monroe	Concordia
Pointe Coupee	Evangeline
St. Helena	Lincoln
Avoyelles	New Vision Learning Academy-Ouachita Parish
*Iberville	
*East Feliciana	
**EBR*	
**St. Landry	

* Follow-up to a follow-up

**Last districts to be monitored this year

5. Family Support

The Families Helping Families Region 7 which serves the parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, DeSoto, Lincoln, Red River, Natchitoches, Sabine and

Webster is now serving families through a Department of Education contract which became effective March 1, 2009. Contact information for the Center:

Families Helping Families Region 7

Region VII - serving parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, Desoto, Lincoln, Red River, Natchitoches, Sabine, and Webster
Chanel Jackson, Director
2620 Centenary Blvd. Bldg. 2, Suite 250
Shreveport, Louisiana 71104
318-226-4541 or 1-877-226-4541 318-226-4541 Fax
Email: fhfregion7@bellsouth.net Website: www.fhfregion7.com

IDEA Parent Surveys to measure how well parents perceived that their children's schools facilitated parental involvement to improve student learning were mailed to all IDEA parents in 22 Louisiana school districts on March 1, 2009. Surveys are to be returned to the survey vendor by May 15, 2009 to be included in the official state and district counts. Results will be reported in the February 2010 Annual Performance Report for U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs.

Parent Involvement training for school staff is available to anyone on line at www.accountabilitydata.net. There are 7 modules which include all materials, handouts, etc., to conduct trainings for school building staff or any staff working with parents in educational settings. For more information or assistance in accessing the training modules, please contact Maggie Brolin at Margaret.Brolin@LA.Gov.

6. World Class Special Education System

With the support of national consultants, a committee met on November 17-18, 2008, to discuss how the LDE could create a "world class special education system." The final report will be issued to the LDE cabinet and task force in the near future. The LDE will work with DEIA staff to integrate the recommendations from the task force into the SPP/APR and establish initiatives and resources to implement the recommendations as appropriate.

7. Literacy

Louisiana's Literacy Initiative requires all students with disabilities to participate in the core block of reading for 90-120 minutes per day. Students with disabilities receive intervention (RTI) in reading according to their deficiencies in skills assessed by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). A three tiered intervention model is used in participating schools. All special education staff participate in all professional development provided in the *Ensuring Literacy for All* schools.

Efforts continue to provide support and professional development on the inclusion of students with the most significant disabilities in literacy programs. The LDE is currently working with two nationally recognized experts in this field to build the capacity of the state to engage these students in meaningful literacy instruction.

A section of the Access Guide web site has been devoted to supporting literacy for students with significant disabilities. A variety of resources (e.g., quality indicators for literacy access, links to literacy assessments) are provided. Both parents and educators are encouraged to use this site as a source of guidance on literacy for students with significant disabilities. Refer to the website at (<http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov/Site%20Pages/LiteracyView.aspx>)

8. Autism

The LDE provides on going supports to LEAs on issues related to the education of students with autism. The LDE's Autism State Team, comprised of educators, family members, agency representatives and community members, provides guidance to the LDE on the development and implementation of initiatives related to the support of students with autism.

The LDE continues to fund the LASARD (Louisiana Autism Spectrum and Related Disorders) through the LSU HDC. This project provides a variety of professional development opportunities. The project is in the process of developing and posting electronic training modules on topics related to educating students with autism and related disabilities. All modules will have a pre- and post-test. Once posted, the modules will be accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for your convenience. Go to www.hdc.lsuhsc.edu/LASARD and click on "link to modules" located at the bottom of the page under **New professional Development Opportunities** to enter the site.

The module topics, along with dates of posting, are as follows:

- **February, 2009 – Transition Practices for Students with ASD**
This module will inform learners of best practices in transition across the age span of individuals with ASD (autism spectrum disorders) including early childhood, school-age, and adult transitions.
- **March, 2009 – Behavior Intervention Practices for Students with ASD and Related Disabilities**
This module will inform learners of best practices in behavior intervention across the age span of individuals with ASD.
- **April, 2009 – Inclusive Practices for Students with ASD and Related Disabilities**
This module will inform learners of best practices in inclusive educational settings for students from K-12th grade.

- **May, 2009 – Social Skills Instruction for Students with ASD and Related Disabilities**

This module will inform learners of the most current practices in social skills instruction for students with ASD and related disabilities.

LASARD will also host an Autism Summer Institute on June 22 – 25, 2009 in New Orleans. This will be a 4 –day institute for educators, therapists, families, self advocates, and administrators. For further information, go to:

<http://www.hdc.lsuhsc.edu/LASARD/>

9. Access Guide

Educators and families are encouraged to use the LDE’s web-based *Access Guide* as a resource for supporting access to the general education curriculum for students with disabilities. The *Access Guide* provides a variety of suggestions, resources, and tools to maximize the likelihood of higher academic achievement for ALL students, including struggling learners, students with significant disabilities, and those who need added rigor. The *Access Guide* can be found at <http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov/AccessGuide>. The section of the *Access Guide* focused specifically upon the needs of students with significant disabilities can be found at <http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov>.