

LDOE Quarterly Report to the DD Council October 2017

Update/progress on agency initiatives

High School Preparation:

The Louisiana Department of Education award \$350,000 in grant funding to build and implement new programming to prepare students with significant disabilities for employment and/or educational opportunities after high school. The first-of-its-kind grant, funded by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), will be used to create partnerships to increase opportunities for students who have significant cognitive disabilities or persistent academic difficulties as a result of their disability. Those partnerships will construct vocational training and community work-based learning programs on community college and university campuses.

Recipients will later work in state and regional teams to create guidance for other schools and school systems to use when creating and expanding effective programs across all ages and grades for this population of students.

Read more about this opportunity here: <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/newsroom/news-releases/2017/08/11/departments-funds-partnerships-programming-to-prepare-students-with-disabilities-for-post-secondary-success>

The Louisiana Department of Education introduced the **Jump Start Summers initiative** in April 2017, with the goal of providing school districts, charter schools and course providers with the catalytic financial support needed to launch multi-year, paid summer workplace-based experiences for high school students and recent graduates. A Request for Applications was released at that time, and 11 school districts and one approved course provider were **awarded seed funding** up to \$1,000 per participating student to launch the inaugural programs, with the requirement that in-kind and cash contributions from industry partners at least match that amount. The state's portion was generously funded by the JP Morgan Chase **New Skills for Youth Grant** and the Baton Rouge Area Foundation.

Every district and provider that implemented a summer program this year indicated they hoped to again in 2018. They reported participating students benefitted from the opportunity to more intensely focus on attaining credentials in a work-life setting. University-bound students were able to earn credentials outside the academic pressure of the school year, and students with disabilities were given the chance to fully engage in the experience. In addition, the districts and provider were able to collaborate with their peers and build relationships with local industry leaders and community volunteers.

Read more about this opportunity here: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/jumpstart/jump-start-summers-2017-evaluation-report.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

Teacher Preparation:

Louisiana has been selected to receive a \$55.5 million **Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) grant** to improve the reading and writing skills of struggling students. Louisiana is one of 11 states selected to benefit from the federal grant, and the only state to receive it three consecutive times. The grant, which will award the state \$18.5 million each year for three years, will focus on advancing literacy skills—including pre-literacy, reading, and writing skills—for students from birth through grade 12, including limited-English-proficient students and students with disabilities.

The grant funds will be used to create competitive subgrants for Louisiana school systems. School systems will be asked to submit applications for these subgrants, and will be awarded funds based on the strength of their proposed literacy plans. The awarded funds will enable school systems to:

- Purchase high-quality curricula aligned with the state standards;
- Administer meaningful assessments and use real-time data to meet the needs of all students;
- Accelerate the learning of all students reading below grade level through targeted intervention programs; and
- Provide professional development to support effective teaching practices.

Read more about this opportunity here: [https://www.louisianabelieves.com/newsroom/news-releases/2017/10/03/louisiana-awarded-\\$55.5-million-to-improve-reading-writing-skills-of-struggling-students](https://www.louisianabelieves.com/newsroom/news-releases/2017/10/03/louisiana-awarded-$55.5-million-to-improve-reading-writing-skills-of-struggling-students)

The Louisiana Department of Education launched a paid opportunity for experienced educators statewide to receive training to become mentors and to support aspiring teachers as they complete their preparation programs. Training will begin this fall, and over the next three years, Louisiana will establish a cadre of at least 2,500 professionals equipped with the necessary skills to guide the next generation of educators.

Read more about this opportunity here: <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/newsroom/news-releases/2017/08/24/more-than-500-louisiana-educators-to-be-trained-as-mentors-to-future-teachers>

**all news releases linked in this document can be found at:
<https://www.louisianabelieves.com/newsroom/news-releases>