



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

August 27, 2021

Randall Brown
Chair, Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
P.O. Box 3455
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3455

Dear Mr. Brown,

The Louisiana Department of Education is appreciative of the on-going, collaborative partnership with the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. Our team shares your commitment to support a safe and inclusive learning environment that allows all students, including our students with disabilities, to successfully engage in learning.

The Department is committed to continuing to support our resilient educators across the state with providing instruction during an ongoing pandemic. On our Louisiana Believes homepage, we have a link to our [Pandemic Relief Funding, Planning Guidance, and Resources](#), which includes funding guidance, Louisiana Department of Health and Center for Disease Control operational guidance, and instructional support materials. We have a specific suite of resources that provides guidance for educators providing virtual instruction to students with disabilities on our [Students with Disabilities](#) landing page, as well as a [Louisiana Virtual Instruction Guide](#), a [Louisiana Virtual Instruction Guide for Parents](#), and training modules for educators and leaders on virtual instruction. Additionally, in response to the recent data you referenced, we have developed [Accelerate](#) resources, which are adaptable for virtual student support as well, to effectively address and prevent unfinished learning. The accelerate model connects unfinished learning in the context of new learning, so that students can continue to progress. The Department is providing a series of free educator learning opportunities designed to target scaffolded instruction for students. We are also supporting school system leaders by leveraging their funding to support these priorities, including supporting students with disabilities who may be accessing instruction from home. These resources were recently shared on our monthly support call for special education leaders across the state and we will continue to engage with special education educators around supports needed.

In response to your second question, the Department released [Ready to Achieve! 2021-2022 School Operational Guidelines](#). This guidance was developed, and will be updated as needed, in collaboration with public health experts. Additionally, school system leaders are allowed to leverage federal dollars to ensure safe school environments for our students and educators.

While we have developed and released many student, educator, and family resources, we know that there is more work to be done to address our students' achievement and opportunity gaps demonstrated by the most recent assessment administration. We agree that a strong collaboration and coordinated engagement with this council will be advantageous and beneficial for students, educators, and families of students with disabilities. We, too, welcome and extend opportunities to engage in dialogue and collaboration with the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council. While we will continue to provide quarterly updates at council meetings, our Executive Director of Diverse Learners, Meredith Jordan, is open to meeting to review referenced resources and to see what additional engagements and supports are needed. Feel free to reach out to her anytime at Meredith.Jordan@la.gov.

Sincerely,

Dr. Cade Brumley
State Superintendent

Louisiana Believes