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# SBESE NEWSLETTER

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## **A Word From Me:**

Hello everyone! This is Zach Johnson, your SBESE Student Representative 2021-2022. I am currently a junior at West Monroe High School, and I am truly honored to have been selected for this position. I hope to serve Louisiana's teachers, students, parents, and administration to the best of my ability in each of my endeavors this year. I would also like to acknowledge Mr. Jack Walker for guiding and mentoring me as I continue to learn the many procedures and skills required for my office. Thank you Jack! I can not wait for what this year holds, and I am so excited to share with you the future of Louisiana education!

## **Primary Topics Discussed:**

1. Update Report Regarding Reopening of Schools in Response to COVID-19
2. Preliminary Findings from the Literacy Coaching Pilot
3. Update Report Regarding Accountability and Assessment Structures for the 2020-2021 School Year

## **Update Report Regarding Reopening of Schools in Response to COVID-19:**

At the July 2020 Special Board meeting, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) directed the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) to provide ongoing update reports regarding school reopening data in response to COVID-19. The board moved to receive the report, given by State Superintendent of Education Dr. Cade Brumley. As of April 7, 2021, LDE provided the following data regarding learning modality by student for the 732,558 students reported: 71% in-person schooling (518,612), 20% virtual (144,394), and 9% hybrid (69,552). The state is also glad to report that the total student to device ratio has reached 0.72:1 with a total of 881,195 available devices for Louisiana's students. The available devices are as follows: 68% chromebooks, 16% laptops, 11% desktops, and 5% virtual desktop clients. Additionally, the American Enterprise Institute's Return to Learn Tracker ranked Louisiana No. 7 in the nation for the highest number of students participating in face-to-face learning as of March 15, 2021.

Despite the variety of challenges associated with COVID-19 in Louisiana schools, the state has still experienced significant progress in learning development. To this end, I spoke in favor of Louisiana educators' ability to adapt to teaching both in-person and virtual students. This school year has been a very trying time for our teachers, and they are greatly appreciated.

## **Preliminary Findings from the Literacy Coaching Pilot:**

In January 2021, the Early Literacy Commission recommended that the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) prioritize initiatives to improve K-2 literacy instruction through state-level literacy coordinators and school-based literacy coaches. In response, the LDE developed a comprehensive K-2 Literacy Coaching Model, including a K-2 Literacy Coaching Pilot. The

Literacy Coaching Pilot's mission statement is for Louisiana students to have improved literacy outcomes through high-quality instruction and interactions by an effective teacher who is supported by leaders and families. The results and experiences thus far from the K-2 Literacy Coaching Pilot assisted the LDE in developing four pillars, providing the framework for literacy initiatives and resources moving forward:

- Literacy Goals
- Explicit Instruction, Interventions, and Extensions
- Ongoing Professional Growth
- Family Literacy Engagement

Upon preliminary findings, the LDE has found it quintessential that student progress be checked throughout the school year by a school leadership team. The Pilot also highlighted the importance of continuing to improve efforts around family literacy engagement by Louisiana parents in the homes of our students. Louisiana can expect an expansion of Literacy Coaches by the addition of approximately 300 coaches in K-12 CIR/UIR-A schools in the near future.

### **Update Report Regarding Accountability and Assessment Structures for the 2020-2021 School Year:**

State Superintendent of Education Dr. Cade Brumley provided a verbal update report regarding accountability and assessment structures for the 2020-2021 school year. At this point in time, BESE has directed action regarding accountability and assessment in a manner that allows for reasonable flexibility for each school system throughout the state. Most recently, the board has directed efforts to the relief of pressure on high school seniors. The board requested for a report of aggregate 2020-2021 test results to be provided as quickly as available. The provided motion affirmed the board's collective belief that students should take their assessments in order that testing data be obtained and presented to the board so that appropriate action can be taken from the results. However, in respect to the stress that has been placed on both school administrators and principals this year, members discussed how standardized assessment offered an area in which the state could relieve some of these pressures in the form of a waiver. The board has additionally considered a waiver of letter grades, as seen by neighboring states. More details regarding the attainment of a waiver will be provided at a later time. As many school systems statewide had a late start to the year, the testing window was extended respectably. Thus, the LDE Accountability Commission projects 2020-2021 testing score reports to come in late July. Further action regarding instructional direction can be provided by the board once this data has been presented.

### **Personal Information and Resources:**

COVID Resources: <https://louisianabelieves.com/resources/covid-19>

Love Our Schools Website: <https://loveourschoolsfoundation.org/>

BoardDocs Site: <https://go.boarddocs.com/la/bese/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=BZCHRD498E30>

Learning Connectivity Tool:

<https://datastudio.google.com/u/0/reporting/57592098-3276-452a-9872-456384c0acdc/page/2oidB?s=jF2UNzlqNKM>

Newsletter also available at: <http://www.lascwebsite.com/>

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