

# Rigorous, Comprehensive Curricula and Assessments in Louisiana

How the Louisiana Department of Education is improving student and teacher learning through access to high-quality curricula

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## INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2014, all 3rd through 8th graders in Louisiana were faced with a daunting prospect—new English Language Arts (ELA) and math assessments that were linked to the recently adopted, and more rigorous, college- and career-ready standards (CCRS).<sup>\*</sup> Even after LDOE leaders put on hold new accountability measures that would have been linked to the assessments, many educators were concerned about the introduction of new assessments because they felt their students were already behind and would likely struggle with even more rigorous benchmarks.

State leaders realized that the traditional role the LDOE had played—setting standards and implementing assessments to measure success against those standards—would not be enough to help teachers lead their students to higher levels of achievement in the new, more rigorous context. **They ramped up the state’s support to teachers through acquiring and developing high-quality, standards-aligned curricula, made it easy to access, and connected teachers to technical assistance on how to use it.** The state’s investment in professional learning was critical in a context where most of the state’s 79 school districts operate around 10 to 12 schools, largely in rural settings, with a small number of staff.<sup>†</sup>

As the LDOE implemented these changes, the state also faced a looming financial deficit that would eventually reduce the department’s budget by almost half, from roughly \$57 million to \$32 million. This forced the department to downsize its 600-member staff to fewer than 400 full-time employees in the space of three years. Even in the context of this budget reduction, state leaders significantly improved support of educators, by reprioritizing limited time and funds to its top priorities.

The combination of challenges that the LDOE faced—supporting schools in shifting to more rigorous standards in an extremely resource-constrained environment—is familiar to many school system leaders across the country. Ultimately, the role the LDOE assumed with respect to its school

<sup>\*</sup>Louisiana initially adopted Common Core state standards in 2014, but after a standards review process, the state formally transitioned to Louisiana Student Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts in 2016.

<sup>†</sup>There are 79 public school districts in Louisiana that operate alongside 52 charter management organizations.

systems and teachers has parallels to the support that leaders in other states, or in districts where the state has not taken an active role in implementation of CCRS-aligned curricula and assessments, might provide. **The high-quality, detailed curricula that the LDOE made available to its teachers became the foundation of a coherent system of academic supports, enabling dramatically better professional learning on how to teach to higher academic standards—and instruction and student achievement are improving as a result.**

“The curriculum’s higher expectations pushed my students to work harder. Every child I taught grew. The cooperative learning allowed them to feel free to make mistakes and take risks, and helped me become a better teacher. My expectations [previously] were too low. Seeing this rigor, at first, I thought they would not be able to be successful. I was so wrong.”

—Teacher feedback on the Louisiana Department of Education’s ELA Guidebooks 2.0

With the new curricula and critical supports, teachers in Louisiana report better understanding of and adherence to instructional materials and practices that are aligned with College and Career-Ready Standards, and these instructional improvements have led to gains in student learning.<sup>1</sup> Between 2013 and 2015, average scale scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in Grade 4 Math increased by three points while Grade 4 Reading increased by six points. These gains represented the largest state growth in the country in reading and second largest growth in math, and brought Louisiana students within five and six points of the national average, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

The LDOE took four key steps to implement this high-quality curriculum strategy:

1. Define and disseminate a clear, coherent, detailed vision of instruction that meets high academic standards
2. “Make the best decision the easiest decision” for schools and teachers to pursue
3. Engage teachers and other key stakeholders directly to help build better products and ensure usability
4. Invest in data-driven feedback to continuously improve the support provided to schools

## 1) Define and disseminate a clear, coherent, detailed vision of instruction that meets high academic standards

### Vet existing curricula options

Everyone wants kids to experience “high-quality instruction”—but what does that mean? The first thing the LDOE did to support schools in shifting to new standards was to define what good instruction looked like, relative to curricula. Via in-depth reviews that began in 2012, both traditionally published curricula as well as open educational resources (OERs) were rated against national third-party rubrics to assess if they aligned with college- and career-ready academic standards.<sup>3</sup> These reviews took into account a range of quality indicators, including text complexity, scaffolded supports for students, and guidance to teachers on how to differentiate instruction. All reviewed curricula were categorized into three tiers: Tier 1—Exemplifies Quality, Tier 2—Approaching Quality, and Tier III—Not Representing Quality. When the results of these reviews were made public, many educators were surprised to find that only a small portion of the curricula used across the state qualified as Tier 1. Working without quality curricula naturally had made teachers’ jobs even more challenging.

This thorough review of available curricula revealed that of all math curricula reviewed, only Eureka Math met Tier 1 math standards in grades 3-8. So the LDOE began working to help teachers and districts access and use this curriculum effectively. In ELA grades 3-8, the instructional review turned up very few curricular resources that were rated Tier 1. To fill this gap, the LDOE began developing its own standards-aligned ELA curricular resources.

### Create high-quality curricula where needed

In 2013, the LDOE worked with 40 teacher leaders across the state to create basic ELA frameworks that included texts for each unit as well as suggested assessment and assignment prompts. These frameworks were very well-received, but when the LDOE gathered more detailed feedback, it discovered that teachers were still struggling to utilize the frameworks in their daily practice. (For example, teachers might say, “You suggest we read *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* and to think about the unit with this framework in mind, but specifically—what I should do in my classroom tomorrow?”) System leaders at the LDOE realized they would need concrete examples of *how* to translate the new standards into actionable lesson plans. This prompted the development of more detailed ELA curricula in grades 3-12, known as ELA Guidebooks.

The ELA Guidebooks were developed over the course of three years in partnership with teacher leader advisors from across the state. First, in 2014 the LDOE rolled out Version 1.0, which covered 68 units across grades 3-9. After the LDOE gathered feedback on Version 1.0, teachers made it clear that

there was still a significant gap between paper and practice. The main challenge was that the Version 1.0 guidebooks were at the unit level: While these guidebooks might provide a prompt for a teacher to have a discussion with students about a certain chapter of *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*, teachers didn't necessarily know *what* specific questions to ask their students or *how* to best structure that discussion to promote deep learning.

In response to this feedback, the LDOE expanded the teacher leader advisor team to help them develop ELA Guidebooks Version 2.0, which launched in 2016. Version 2.0 expanded the unit-level resources down to daily lesson plans that cover the entire school year in grades 3-12 and are complete with aligned discussion guides, student assignments, and unit assessments that are free to teachers. With the new guidebooks, teachers have a clear view into both *what* they need to teach and *how* to deliver it, aligned with new standards and high-quality instructional practices. Teachers are not required to use the ELA Guidebooks, but they're encouraged to use them for instructional planning. This provides teachers with a strong baseline that they can customize to fit their instructional needs.

“It’s not a script, and it doesn’t expect you to run a cookie-cutter classroom. I can customize the content. It’s an incredibly strong base to work from because the lessons anticipate how students might respond or misunderstand, and build in teacher-specific language to guide the learning process.”

—Elementary teacher in Bossier Parish Schools<sup>4</sup>

## The state’s role in identifying high-level curricula

The LDOE didn't set out to create its own ELA curricula from the start. Its objective was to reduce ambiguity around what “rigorous” high-quality instruction really looks like. It was only after several rounds of learning, feedback, and evolution that it discovered that the best way to support its teachers was to provide both a clear picture of what excellent teaching looks like and a path to achieve it rooted in detailed, actionable lesson plans. This rigorous approach to continuous improvement enabled the LDOE to provide increasingly better support to teachers over a relatively short span of time.

Access to these materials has significantly impacted teachers’ understanding of more rigorous ELA standards *and* their motivation to help their students reach them. Because the curriculum provides a strong foundation for challenging, engaging instruction, it helps change the hearts and minds of educators around what children are capable of achieving when given the right challenge, opportunity, and support.

“I have seen children doing things and talking about text in ways I have never seen. I had a student who used to never speak, but now he is talking about text as an adult would. It is amazing.”

—Teacher Feedback on ELA Guidebooks 2.0

The LDOE’s approach *both* enables its school systems to exercise local decision-making authority and structures the state’s role as an important provider of information, guidance, and support. After defining a clear vision for what good instruction looks like, the state was in a stronger position to help school systems find high-quality material quickly, disseminate it among teachers efficiently, and consistently embed it into ongoing professional learning opportunities. At this point, other states and school systems probably do not need to create their own curricula aligned to CCRS, as enough high-quality options now exist. The important thing is that system leaders obsess over quality and invest in finding the best possible curricula to provide their teachers.



### Guidebooks 1.0 vs. Guidebooks 2.0

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The first version of the LDOE’s ELA curricula was relatively detailed, compared to the “scope and sequence” guidance that many districts provide their schools. For example, the 8th grade Year Plan includes the anchor text for each unit, links to about 10 related readings, related standards, the key themes of the “unit focus,” and sample research projects. The accompanying Unit Plan goes further, laying out lesson plans for each unit, including descriptions of student activities.

Guidebooks 2.0 offers even more support to ensure that teachers can spend their planning time deeply understanding high-level materials and adapting them for their students. The LDOE uploaded all Guidebooks 2.0 content to the online platform LearnZillion. It includes lesson scripts, student handouts, and advice on what teachers should look for in student responses. Each unit is linked to a plethora of teacher resources, such as guides to instructional strategies like the “jigsaw” method and Socratic Seminar, assessment tasks, rubrics, and accompanying videos.

You can see the Guidebooks 1.0 resources as compared to the Guidebooks 2.0 in the [Connected Professional Learning Toolkit](#).

## Making it work

As the LDOE began to carry out this work, system leaders gained insight into how to restructure their departments in response to significant budget cuts while keeping the focus on higher-quality curricula. First, state leaders cut all nonessential work across the department, including all unnecessary auditing and reporting functions. Then they reorganized departments to integrate curricula, assessments, and professional development to create cross-functional content teams to ensure alignment across all of the instruction functions at the state level. This process helped LDOE redefine what good instruction looks like across the state as well as how a state department of education can best support it.

## 2) “Make the best decision the easiest decision” for schools and teachers to pursue

Defining what high-quality instruction looks like turned out to be just the first step. Although it was clear that the majority of schools and school systems in the state weren't using Tier 1 curricula, that knowledge alone wasn't enough to change behavior or practices overnight. The LDOE realized that it would have to make it easier and faster for schools and school systems to understand and access higher-quality curricula. Rebecca Kockler, the Assistant Superintendent of Academic Content explained, “Our goal is to make it clear what high-quality curricula looks like and then create structures to make sure the best choice is also the easiest choice to access.”

## Economic incentives

First, the LDOE created economic incentives to encourage school systems to make the shift towards Tier 1 curricula. For example, in math grades 3-8, the LDOE identified Eureka Math as the only curricula that met rigorous Tier 1 standards. The curricula itself is free, but if districts choose to print, the costs can add up. So, the LDOE negotiated a special printing rate that all districts can access. In fall 2013, the LDOE also sponsored a Eureka Math pilot for five high-profile school systems, where they saw significant student improvements, which led first to important insights on how to implement the program effectively and ultimately to a significant upswing in school systems using Eureka Math. By fall 2014, over 80 percent of surveyed school systems had adopted this math curriculum.

## Ease of access

Second, the LDOE made sure that Tier 1 curricula was easily accessible to all schools and school systems. For example, for its ELA Guidebooks 2.0, LDOE partnered with LearnZillion to host the ELA Guidebooks via its online platform so that the Guidebooks can be accessed, downloaded, and printed for free. A recent study showed that over 70 percent of surveyed school systems in Louisiana indicated that they were using the new ELA Guidebooks 2.0, which system leaders attribute in part to ease of access and high level of quality.<sup>5</sup>

## Training and support

Third, the LDOE created easy linkages between Tier 1 curricula, professional learning opportunities, and state assessment offerings. The LDOE provides free training and support around Tier 1 curricula, including Eureka Math and the ELA Guidebooks, via its quarterly state-sponsored teacher leader trainings. Similar to the instructional review process, the LDOE also created a Professional Development (PD) vendor guide that evaluated PD offerings from a variety of third-party providers to determine the extent to which their support was specific to Tier 1 curricula and to standardize pricing structures across the state.

The LDOE is now focused on making it easy for schools and school systems to access state-provided diagnostic, formative, interim/benchmark assessments that are fully aligned to Tier 1 curricula. Lack of local expertise and economies of scale means that developing assessments can be both expensive, time-consuming, and not very effective for local systems to do on their own. The LDOE plans to provide a full suite of assessments that are aligned to Tier 1 curricula (ELA Guidebooks in ELA, Eureka Math in math), searchable across the standards and units, and housed in the same system as the state summative assessments to give students practice taking online assessments. The system will also provide a unified set of reporting across all the assessments to help teachers understand the “story” behind the data, and it will be available for free, in the hopes that it will free up critical school and school system resources for other investments.

## Understanding the cost of curricula

An important lesson learned for the LDOE throughout this process was a better understanding of the true total cost of curricula ownership. Despite the fact that OERs such as Eureka Math and the ELA Guidebooks are free to access online, schools still have to buy the books, texts, and supporting materials that go along with the free content. In general, school systems face similar costs whether with a traditional publisher or OERs—unless they can deliver OER content using 1:1 technology, which lowers the costs. Because system leaders at the LDOE took on the work of vetting relevant curricula and making it accessible, school systems across the state are able to take advantage of powerful economies of scale. This is particularly valuable for the many small, rural school systems that make up the state’s education system and depend on the state to provide information that a larger school system might be able to generate independently.

Although traditionally published curricula and OERs had a similar distribution cost, OERs did present a valuable advantage with regard to flexibility and customization of its professional learning support. One previously unrealized benefit of using OERs for the LDOE was how they changed the dynamics in the PD market. Schools were no longer limited to receiving PD from traditional publishers or their sanctioned providers; instead, they had access to a greater variety of specialty providers that could support their teachers on their specific learning needs.

### 3) Engage teachers and other key stakeholders directly to help build better products and ensure usability

Throughout the entire process, LDOE made a deliberate effort to deeply engage of teachers. As Whitney Whealdon, LDOE’s Director of Academic Content, explained: “Our guiding principle is that those who are closest to kids are the ones who can make the best instructional decisions. That means that we need to listen to teachers first and foremost. We also know that teachers are more likely to listen and get information from a peer, so we wanted to make sure we were listening to our teacher experts and developing work that they would actively champion back home in their schools.”

Whealdon and her colleagues recognized that getting meaningful teacher participation meant making it attractive to become part of the new initiative—while limiting the financial investment due to state budget cuts. LDOE made it possible for the new Teacher Leader Advisors to work with a unique community of peers, all genuinely recognized as leaders in their field, to co-create tools and resources that would help transform education across the state while evolving their own skills as educators. When combined with an average annual stipend of \$1,500 (though TLAs could receive up to \$6,000, depending on the work they took on), these benefits ultimately reflected an appealing value proposition. One Teacher Leader Advisor explained, “People always ask me why I do all this extra stuff. First, I would rather be on the decision-making end of things than be told what to do. Everybody has been stuck teaching something they don’t want to teach or don’t think is valuable or high-quality, and if someone wants to take the time to ask what I think is good, I would rather give input than be told what to do.” The LDOE was in a unique position to provide this value proposition, given that most of the state’s teachers are dispersed across small, rural school systems.

“Everybody has been stuck teaching something they don’t think is high quality... I would rather give input than be told what to do.”

—A Teacher Leader Advisor for the LDOE

LDOE’s first state-level Teacher Leader Advisor group, comprised of roughly 75 teachers, launched in 2012 to gather input on how it could best support teachers in the shift to the new standards. Selected via an application process, these Teacher Leader Advisors took an active role in all of the LDOE’s academic work, including supporting the instructional review process of rating curricula, writing the



ELA Guidebooks, and leading the trainings on how to use the ELA Guidebooks and other Tier 1 curricula. As the ELA Guidebooks became more sophisticated and the workload expanded, this group of Teacher Leader Advisors grew: in 2013 the group expanded and currently has more than 100 members who continue to advise the LDOE. Roughly half of its members turn over each year, providing a mix of experienced members and those new to this specialized leadership and professional learning opportunity.

The LDOE also created a larger Teacher Leader program that ultimately included a small number of representatives from each school. This cohort began in 2013 with 2,000 Teacher Leaders, expanded to over 5,000 by 2014, and now includes close to 7,000 members. These Teacher Leaders do not receive a stipend and are not expected to do any work for the LDOE. Instead, they are invited to attend the quarterly statewide collaborations, during which they receive training around Tier 1 curricula and other state-provided resources that they can bring back to their schools in a train-the-trainer model. Attendance is optional, but almost all Teacher Leaders choose to attend.

“Even with all my schooling and with my National Board Certification, learning how to write the ELA Guidebooks and doing training for ELA Guidebooks—I learned more in that 18-month period about how to teach ELA than in any course I could’ve taken.”

—A Teacher Leader Advisor for the LDOE

Acting as Teacher Leader Advisors and Teacher Leaders gives many effective teachers opportunities to share their expertise and learn new skills that they don’t necessarily receive in their schools or school systems. After experiencing truly high-quality Tier 1 curricula and aligned professional learning in the context of the LDOE-facilitated collaborations, many return home and become grassroots ambassadors who encourage their respective local systems to evolve and improve their curricula and professional learning opportunities as a result.

#### 4) Invest in data-driven feedback processes to continuously improve the support provided to schools

System leaders decided that the best way to maximize the department’s limited resources was to create numerous channels of feedback to help the LDOE to continuously adapt its top priorities to meet changing needs. In this regard, the LDOE discovered that informal channels of feedback, facilitated across Teacher Leaders, Advisors, their colleagues and the department’s network teams in their respective school systems, often proved to be the most valuable.<sup>6</sup>

For example, the evolution of the ELA Guidebooks from the ELA frameworks to Guidebooks 1.0 to Guidebooks 2.0 was largely driven by feedback collected from Teacher Leaders and Advisors through the years as they observed the response of their colleagues. The LDOE found that teachers were often more likely to be honest about their concerns with peers than they would be with state officials. Relying on Teacher Leaders and Advisors for this type of feedback resulted in more actionable, concrete suggestions on how to improve resources than the LDOE could collect on its own. System leaders at the LDOE devoted a significant portion of quarterly Teacher Leader collaborations to reflection on feedback and ideas for how to improve, and also provided periodic virtual opportunities for these discussions. The type of feedback that Teacher Leaders and Advisors collect continues to inform the evolution of the ELA Guidebooks. One of the next improvements planned is more detailed support guidance on how to serve the needs of diverse learners, including English language learners and students with disabilities.

“People often ask me, ‘Is it really the state’s role to be helping with curriculum or professional development?’ and my response is always, ‘We will play any role our educators need us to. Our role is to improve student learning, so we will do what we can and what we need to do to make that happen.’”

—Rebecca Kockler, Assistant Superintendent of Academic Content, LDOE

The LDOE also conducts more formal channels of feedback, including download rates of all resources such as the ELA Guidebooks, PD Vendor Guide, curricula reviews, and assessment items, to understand usage and improve future resources. It also conducts surveys to understand usage patterns across school systems. A recent survey showed that 80 percent of Louisiana school systems are now using Tier 1 curricula in some form in ELA and math, and system leaders at the LDOE then followed up with the 20 percent of school systems not using Tier 1 curricula to understand why. This follow-up resulted in the addition of a pre-negotiated state contract and a pilot program with Eureka Math to address school systems’ concerns in making the shift to Tier 1 curricula and to encourage their transition in the future.

## Summary of Investments

LDOE Investments	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	Assumptions
<b>Staff and stipends</b>							
<b>Teacher Leader Advisors (TLAs):</b> Corps of ~75 high-performing teachers from across the state who vet curricula, create the ELA frameworks and Guidebooks, create assessment bank items, and lead PD for Teacher Leaders. TLAs were paid between \$700 and \$6,000 per deliverable.	\$135K	\$135K	\$150K	\$150K	\$150K	\$150K	75 TLAs/year x \$1,600 avg stipend per TLA Plus: 8 guidebook writers/year x \$1,750-\$3,750 per year, escalating over time
<b>Teacher Leaders (TLs):</b> Currently, there are 5,000 Teacher Leaders across the state. Schools and districts decide how they use their Teacher Leaders and therefore use them in a variety of ways.	–	–	–	–	–	–	
<b>LDOE staff time:</b> Estimated value of staff time devoted to curriculum and assessments strategy.	\$105K	\$150K	\$290K	\$290K	\$290K	\$290K	Previously calculated by ERS and LDOE team
<b>Total for staff and stipends</b>	<b>\$240K</b>	<b>\$285K</b>	<b>\$440K</b>	<b>\$440K</b>	<b>\$440K</b>	<b>\$440K</b>	
<b>Events and convenings</b>							
<b>Annual Teacher Leader Summit:</b> State-run conferences for Teacher Leaders with a focus on Eureka Math, ELA Guidebooks, and other high-level curricula and instruction.	–	\$250K	\$550K	\$850K	\$850K	\$850K	Current cost = \$800-900K including LDOE team travel and 7,000 TLs. Costs scaled down for 2,000 TLs in 2013-14 and 2014-15 and 5,000 TLs in 2015-16
<b>Teacher Leader Advisor Collaboratives:</b> Quarterly convenings of TLAs to focus on curriculum development and adaptation; held in four different locations in the state over the course of each year. Costs include LDOE staff travel only.	–	–	<\$5K	<\$5K	<\$5K	<\$5K	
<b>Total for events and convenings</b>	–	<b>\$250K</b>	<b>\$555K</b>	<b>\$855K</b>	<b>\$855K</b>	<b>\$855K</b>	
<b>Assessment system</b>							
<b>LEAP 360:</b> A high-quality assessment system that provides teachers with a picture of student learning through diagnostic, interim, and formative classroom assessment tools. Cost includes content, administration, scoring, and reporting.		–	–	–	\$8.0M	\$7.5M	See note below *
<b>Total costs to LDOE</b>	<b>\$240K</b>	<b>\$535K</b>	<b>\$995K</b>	<b>\$1.3M</b>	<b>\$9.3M</b>	<b>\$8.8M</b>	
<b>District Investments</b>							
<b>Printing costs</b> at an LDOE-negotiated rate with a statewide vendor to provide unit texts or printed packets, thus saving the district time. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA Guidebooks</li> <li>• Eureka Math</li> </ul>		\$25-135 per student \$30-45 per student					
Travel costs for quarterly convenings and annual summit		Varies, may be paid by district or teachers					

\*LDOE uses the same vendor for summative and non-summative assessments, which together make up the comprehensive assessment system. The maximum cost to LDOE across relevant contracts is \$8 million a year.

## CONCLUSION

LDOE's systematic approach to supporting teachers' shift to CCRS appears to be working. A recent RAND report found that Louisiana teachers use standards-aligned resources at a higher rate than teachers in other states, demonstrate a deeper understanding of the standards, and pursue aligned instructional activities.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, Louisiana's students are making unprecedented gains: high school graduation and college attendance rates are at an all-time high, and the state's fourth graders achieved the highest growth among all the states on the 2015 NAEP Reading Test. Meanwhile, the number of students enrolled in college credit-bearing Advanced Placement courses has nearly tripled in the last five years, now reaching an all-time high of over 18,000 high school students. Access to more rigorous instruction resulted in the graduating class of 2016 scoring a record-high average composite score of 19.5 on the ACT, making Louisiana the most improved state that assesses all of its students.

The key lessons that can be learned from the LDOE revolve around how to organize limited resources to meet teachers' and students' needs. Other school systems currently have a greater number of publicly vetted curricula options to choose from relative to the LDOE's position in 2013, and likely would not need to create instructional materials from scratch. They still have a responsibility to hold any curricula to a consistently high standard of quality and rigor that will provide teachers with the tools to deliver standards-aligned instruction. When reflecting back on their experience, the LDOE's leaders credit their Teacher Leaders and Advisors with helping them understand the magnitude of the challenge that teachers faced in the transition to CCRS and how the state could best support teachers in meeting it. What ultimately makes system leaders' approach to teachers' professional learning effective is a strong focus on coherence across curricula, professional development, assessments, and accountability structures—and alignment of these components to a clear and detailed vision for what good instruction looks like. This work required the LDOE to assume a new role with respect to its school systems and teachers, and this flexibility to adapt in response to teachers' and students' evolving needs continues to shape the department's priorities.

### TAKE ACTION

State departments of education as well as districts can access examples of rigorous, comprehensive curricula and assessments in our [Connected Professional Learning Toolkit](#).

This includes:

- LDOE ELA Guidebooks 2.0 and links to lesson guides on the LearnZillion platform
- Sample Daily Lesson Resource from the charter management network Achievement First
- Resources from Student Achievement Partners to vet curricula

## Endnotes

1. Kaufman, Julia; Thompson, Lindsey; Ofer, V Darleen. “Creating a Coherent System to Support Instruction Aligned with State Standards.” RAND Corporation, 2016. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1613.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1613.html).
2. Louisiana Department of Education Press Release on the 2015 NAEP Score. Retrieved at: <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/assessment/2015-louisiana-naep-results-fact-sheet.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.
3. The LDOE relies on Student Achievement Partners’ IMET rubric to review alignment of curricula to college- and career-ready standards at the full program level, and Achieve’s EQuIP rubric to review alignment at the lesson level. Learn more about the LDOE’s online instructional materials review resources here: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/curricular-resources>.
4. Interview with ERS, October 2016.
5. Louisiana Department of Education Pilot Feedback Report. <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teacher-toolbox-resources/ela-guidebooks-2-0-feedback-report.pdf?sfvrsn=2>.
6. The LDOE has three Network Teams that oversee all 70 public school districts, as well as some charters. Each team is made up of 5-8 LDOE employees, including a network leader. Each of these teams supports a group of districts in making academic planning decisions and support implementation of these decisions. Learn more about the network structure here: <http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teacher-toolbox-resources/final-network-structure-map.pdf?sfvrsn=4>.
7. Kaufman, Julia; Thompson, Lindsey; Ofer, V Darleen. “Creating a Coherent System to Support Instruction Aligned with State Standards” RAND Corporation, 2016. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR1613.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1613.html).

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