

# Louisiana Special School District

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## Superintendent's Report

David Martin, Ed.D.

August 22, 2023

# Report Topics

- New School Year-Theme
- Program Updates: LSD, LSVI, SSP, AEM
- Legislative Audit
- ESSER Funding
- Academic Priorities for 2023-2024
- Budget Priorities for 2023-2024
- Changes to the District Office Structure



# A New School Year has Started!

- Sense of excitement and optimism
- Solid leadership in place for each of the three programs
- R<sup>3</sup>
  - Reset
  - Re-engage
  - Re-energize



# Louisiana Special School District

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## Louisiana School for the Deaf

August 2023

## LSD Enrollment:

- Outreach: 169
- PreK-12<sup>th</sup>: 81 (and growing!)

## Announcements:

- We are excited for a bright future for LSD! We have had a very positive kickoff for the school year.
- We are hiring for several vacancies:
  - Elementary Teachers
  - CTE Teachers
  - Paraeducators
  - Educational Technology Specialist
  - Instructional Coach



# Upcoming Events:

- Athletic Camp, August 18-20
- Outreach Regional Events, NOLA: Sept 23rd
- PPEP Monthly Playgroups, various locations throughout LA, September
- Deaf Awareness Month, Sept.
  - Field trips open to other schools with Deaf/hard of hearing students
- Homecoming vs. Iowa School for the Deaf, Sept 30th



## Upcoming Regional Events

2023-2024

OPEN TO ALL LOUISIANA FAMILIES WITH STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF, DEAFBLIND, AND HARD OF HEARING

<b>September 23</b>	<b>Greater New Orleans</b> Find us in the meeting room at the River Ridge library, 1:30-3:30 PM!	<b>January 20</b>	<b>North LA</b> Meet us in the front community room at the Lincoln Parish Library in Ruston, from 1-3 PM.
<b>November 04</b>	<b>Southwest LA</b> Meet us and eat at the Sulphur Regional Library, Community Room A, from 1-3 PM.	<b>April 13</b>	<b>Central LA</b> Join us for Deaf History Month! Meet us at Westside Regional Library in Alexandria, from 1-3 PM.

### Visit the Louisiana School for the Deaf!

**Planning your field trips for the year?**  
Deaf and hard-of-hearing students enrolled in nearby parishes are welcome to visit us for Deaf Awareness Month or Deaf History Month!

**Your students can experience:**  
-A tour of our historic campus  
-Deaf culture/history learning activities  
-Socialization with many Deaf and hard-of-hearing students and adult role models  
-And more!

**Open Field Trip Dates:**  
September 21st  
April 12th





# Successes

## Successes:

- Getting trained in our new bilingual ELA curriculum
- Getting our ASL/English bilingual committee established and working towards improved implementation
- Family, staff, and community volunteers helped us organize our curriculum and storage rooms-- our teachers now can locate their instructional materials much easier! We made some homework kits with some of our extra materials.



# Louisiana Special School District

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## Louisiana School for the Visually Impaired

August 2023



## LSVI Enrollment:

- PreK-12<sup>th</sup>: 53 (and growing!)

## Announcements:

- LSVI's theme this year is "DREAM BIG" and we are excited about all of the possibilities!
- We are hiring for several vacancies:
  - High School English
  - Living Skills/ STEM
  - Braille Instructor
  - Paraeducators
  - Assistant Director
  - Guidance Counselor



## Upcoming Events:

- Muffin Monday 8/7 (K-5 parents can come by to have a muffin and meet the teacher on the first day of school.
- LSVI is hosting SCASBI this year!
- Many staff are in the process of starting their TVI training, and some are completing theirs this year. LSVI plans for new TVIs to be NCUEB certified.
- Completed Blind Sensitivity Training
- White Cane Day is 9/14
- Three students received scholarships to attend Space Camp October 1-5.



The picture shows the LSVI faculty wearing LSVI White Cane Day shirts from the past.

## Challenges:

- LSVI had a learning curve this year when students had to use computers to test without human reader accommodation. This year scores dipped by 1% on state testing. The opportunity is for LSVI to become more tech and braille proficient during the year to allow students better accessibility and success.

## Opportunities:

- LSVI partners with LSU's engineering students for their Capstone project. This year's project is Build-a-Bike Ride Share.
- LSVI received new goalball goals and are ready to show the world this inclusive sport.
- LSVI is partnered with LA Tech's VI program to get teachers VI certified.
- LSVI is looking to partner with an O&M program.



LSVI is dreaming BIG for the future!

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## Special School Programs (SSP)

**Shirley Lewis, Ed.D.**  
**Executive Director, SSP**  
[shirley.lewis@la.gov](mailto:shirley.lewis@la.gov)

# SSP Current Enrollment

Student Enrollment: 228 (206)

Pinecrest Supports and Services Center-85  
Central LA Supports and Services Center-39  
Office of Juvenile Justice-83  
Dept. of Corrections/ELMHS-13  
Renaissance Home for Youth-12



*Serving students in 15 programs  
located throughout the state!*





# SSP Student Successes!

2022-2023 Graduates:

PSSC-8

CLSSC-4

OJJ-7 sped



ACT Mentionable: OJJ sped students-27 and 25

RHY 7<sup>th</sup> grade student achieved Advanced on ELA  
(794) on LEAP2025 administration



# SSP: Off to a Great Start!

SSP Instructional Leadership Teams completed Level 2 Teacher Collaboration and Instructional Leadership Team NIET Trainings.

Instructional staff and paraprofessionals attended the Kagan Structures professional learning opportunity during their week of professional learning.

SSP leaders met to get off to a great start for the 23-24 school year.

CLSSC graciously hosted these events!

Other SSP staff engaged in their respective facility trainings

SSD and OJJ leadership teams met to collaborate on how best to serve and meet the needs of all students in OJJ secure care.



# SSP Leaders and Staff



Holly York, Northern Region  
Shawnee Parker, Central Region  
Alexis Walker, Central Region  
Lee Dixon, Southern Region

*Anne, Alyssa, Alyssa C., Aimee, Alexis, Amanda, Anna, Barbara, Carol, Cheryl, Connie, Christopher, Daphne, Diahn, Elizabeth, Emily, Ferdess, Geraldine, James, Jemera, Jeri, Johnathan, Kallie, Karen, Kay, Karla, Kimberly, Kenneth, Latisha, Latoria, Lisa, Macy, Mamie, Melissa, Michael, Michael F., Michele, Randy, Rebekah, Sarah, Sharmon, Stacy, Tanya, Terrell, Tory, Tracy, Victoria, Wanda*



# LA-AEM

## Louisiana - Accessible Educational Materials Center

### 2023-24

#### Interagency Agreement

- Quarterly Reporting
- Data Collection



# AEM – Teacher Impact

## Training

- Annual [AEMing for Success](#) Conference  
Oct. 23rd & 24th, 2023
- Spring Into AAC - March 2024
- Lunch & Learns
- LEA's Professional Developments
- Learning Modules at [ssdla-aem.org](https://ssdla-aem.org)





## Students

- Consults
- Tech Assist
- Accessible Materials
  - Large print/Braille
  - Files
- [Lending Library](#)

AEM - Student Impact



# AEM – CAPACITY IMPACT

## Department of Corrections:

### Louisiana Braille Prison Program

- 3 NLS Certified Transcribers
- Location in Main Prison
- \$80,000 grant from National Braille Prison Forum
  - 15 Computers
  - 1 Embosser
  - Transcribing Software

### Department of Education

- LEAP Connect - Self Contained Classroom
- LEAP Chat - monthly online forum
- New LA-Assistive Technology (AT) Policy updates for 2024



# Legislative Audit-June 2023 Findings and Actions

- **Climate and Culture Issues**
  - Ongoing SWOT Analysis-Create a climate and culture plan
  - Climate and Culture Survey (Fall and Spring administration)
- **Staffing Difficulties**
  - Staff evaluation
  - Recruitment and retention planning
  - Fair and consistent treatment (policies, performance evaluation, compensation)



# Legislative Audit-June 2023 Findings and Actions

- **Grievance Process**
  - New grievance policy adopted and being utilized
- **Policies and Procedure Development**
  - Delegated authority to the Superintendent to expedite the process granted in May
- **Board Training**
  - Board training delivered by SSA in May and August



# Legislative Audit-June 2023 Findings and Actions

- Language Policy
  - Committee formed at LSD to develop a comprehensive language policy
  - On-going professional development around the Bi-Lingual approach
- Lack of Speech Therapy Services
  - We are now fully staffed with SLPs
  - Compensatory services are being offered to students
  - Monitoring and documenting services in with eSER and internal tracking document





# Legislative Audit-June 2023 Findings and Actions

- Unspent Federal Funds
  - Increased collaboration between school leadership, Office of District Wide Supports, and Business Office
  - Each school and program will have a committee
  - Regular monitoring (monthly)
  - Director of Federal Programs



# Legislative Audit-June 2023 Findings and Actions

- Full Report
  - [Special School District - Louisiana Schools for the Deaf and Visually Impaired \(state.la.us\)](https://state.la.us)
- Summary
  - [Special School District - Louisiana Schools for the Deaf and Visually Impaired Highlights \(state.la.us\)](https://state.la.us)
- Podcast
  - [LLA | Your Trusted Advisor](#)



# ESSER Funding

- ESSER I spending is now complete
- ESSER II Funding expires this year (SSP \$500K, LSDVI \$343K)
  - Informed LDOE of no plans to revert any funding (08/04/2023)
  - Monies being spent by the schools and SSP
  - Could have done a much better job tracking and coding to spend down at a more reasonable pace
- ESSER III Funding expires next year (LSDVI \$1.346 million)
  - Big project: CTE Farm to Table
  - More info in the Financial Report



# Academic Priorities 2023-2024

- Realignment of resources
  - Pushing school specific instructional supports back to the schools
  - Supporting all of our programs through the Office of District Wide Supports
- Focus on students and teachers
  - Defined daily intervention time
  - Continued focus on Tier 1/Standards based approach with school specific supports
  - High quality instructional materials and interventions (e.g. Bedrock Literacy and ZEARN implementation)
  - Solid progress monitoring in place (concentrate on growth)
  - NIET rubric for a growth model evaluation system
  - School based instructional leadership teams



# Academic Priorities 2023-2024

- Proactive with the state regarding testing accommodations (LEAP)
  - Ensure all accommodations are entered in to the system correctly
  - Communicate with LDOE any issues around allowable accommodations
- Double down on school/program specific focus
  - LSD: Bi-lingual approach, language acquisition
  - LSVI: Expanded Core Curriculum, Braille, assistive technology
  - SSP: General SPED best practices, working with partners to align resources





# Budget Priorities 2023-2024

- Eliminate/Reduce Reversion (state and federal)
  - This has improved but we are not there yet
- Budget Request
  - Teacher salary schedule (asking for an increase and working on continuity among branches)
  - Other unclassified employees
  - Classified employees (creative enhancements, e.g. premium pay, longevity)

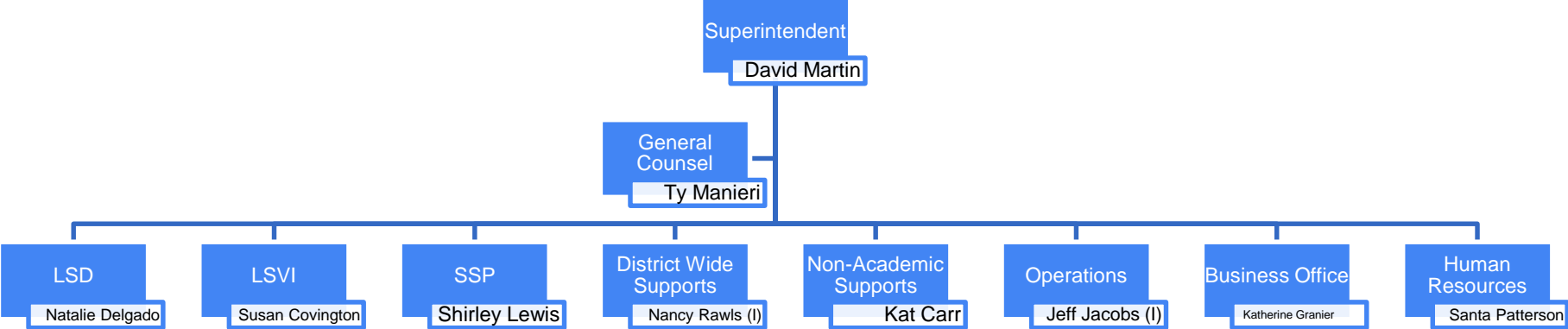


# Budget Priorities 2023-2024

- Facilities and Capital Maintenance
  - Working on developing a five year master plan
  - We have to start with roofs and mechanical
- Staffing
  - Recruitment and retention strategy
  - Ensuring we are filling our oldest position numbers first (like positions)



# Organizational Changes



# Key District Office Changes

- Teaching and Learning is now the Office of District Wide Supports
  - Nancy Rawls will be serving as the interim Executive Director
  - This branch supports both schools and the SSP
  - Exceptional Student Services, School Improvement, Core Instructional Support, Federal Programs, Assessment and Accountability, Compliance, Dean of Students, Admissions, District Social and Emotional Services, School Social Worker



# Key District Office Changes

- Operations Department
  - Jeff Jacobs will be serving as the interim Executive Director
  - IT and Security fall under operations now
  - Focus on a comprehensive school safety and security plan
  - Master facilities plan



# Key District Office Changes

- Non-Academic Student Supports
  - This branch will continue to serve the residential component, student health services, dietary, and transportation
  - OT, PT, Speech Services, and Audiology will remain in this area because of the Medicaid billing component
  - Exceptional Student Services will move to the Office of District Wide Supports



# Key District Office Changes

- Business Office
  - Katherine Granier will continue to lead this work
  - Focus on efficiencies and processes
  - Increase opportunities for collaboration and transparency with both internal and external stakeholders
  - More training opportunities around the budget process, especially for our new leadership



