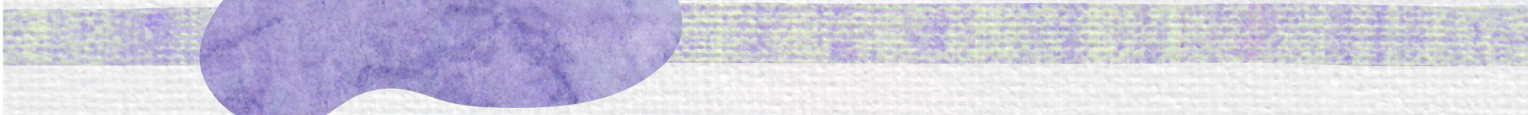




**DEPARTMENT of**  
**EDUCATION**  
*Louisiana Believes*



### Document Mission:

This document was created in a collaborative effort between the [Louisiana Department of Education \(LDOE\)](#) and the [Council for the Development of French in Louisiana \(CODOFIL\)](#), and inspired by the *Vademecum pour les enseignants belge en Louisiane* published by the Bureau Wallonie Bruxelles. This document provides multiple layers of guidance for living and working in Louisiana to current and prospective participants in the State of Louisiana’s International Associate Teacher Program. This guidance document is considered a “living” document as administrators and other educators will find ways to improve the document as they use it.

In this document the State of Louisiana offers examples, but does not endorse any private or public company.

Please send feedback and questions to [language.acquisition@la.gov](mailto:language.acquisition@la.gov) or [codofil@crt.la.gov](mailto:codofil@crt.la.gov).



# Contents

Welcome Letter - LDOE	1
Welcome Letter - CODOFIL	2
Governmental Partner Directory	3
Louisiana at a Glance	7
Geography	7
Climate	7
Population	8
History	8
Earliest Peoples	8
French Exploration and Governance	9
Spanish Exploration and Governance	9
Louisiana Purchase	10
Louisiana Territory, Statehood, and Beyond	10
Practical Information for Living and Working in Louisiana	11
Louisiana Life and Culture	11
Handling Important Personal Documents and Information	12
Before Traveling to Louisiana	12
Once in Louisiana	13
Life in Louisiana	14
Personal Finance	14
Banking	14
Additional Income	15
Transportation	15
Before You Arrive	15
Driving in Louisiana and the U.S.	15
Purchasing a Car	16
Car Insurance	17
Car Maintenance	17
Alternate Transportation	18
Housing	18
Securing Housing	18
Housing-Related Expenses	19
Safety and Security	19
Health and Wellbeing	20
Personal Security	21
911 Emergency	21
Emergency Preparedness	21
Extreme Weather	21
Work in Louisiana	22
State Level Information	23
The Educational System of Louisiana	23
State of Louisiana Agencies	23
State of Louisiana Teacher Professionalism	24
State of Louisiana Teacher Certification	24
State of Louisiana Sponsored Professional Development	25
School System Level Information	25
Types of Schools	25
Parish/Charter School Boards	25
School System Employees	26

School Facilities	26
School Level Information	26
School Level Employees	26
School Policies and Procedures	28
Daily Schedule	28
Teacher Professionalism	29
IAT Evaluations	30
Salaries, Taxation, and Withholdings	31
Salaries and Stipends	31
Taxes	32
Medicare	33
Social Security	33
Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL)	33
J-1 Visa Information	34
Cultural Exchange Projects	34
J-1 Visa Extensions	35
Appendix A - IAT Budget	
Appendix B - J2 Work Authorization	
Appendix C - Daily Schedule Samples	
Appendix D - Frequently Used Terms	
Appendix E - Teacher Toolkit	

# Welcome Letter - LDOE

Famed jazz musician and Louisiana native Wynton Marsalis wrote an “ode to gumbo” that uses one of our state’s signature dishes as a metaphor for the cultural diversity you will experience as a member of our family. Marsalis writes that “no dish speaks more vividly of a melting pot than gumbo. Dating back more than 300 years, it’s a complex dish born of necessity, bringing together a multiplicity of ingredients and ethnicities.” By becoming one of the thousands of professionals to participate in our International Associate Teacher Program since 1972, you are contributing to the rich experience that is Louisiana.



Louisiana students are as capable as any in the nation. We’re committed to language learning and value the lifelong benefits students receive by becoming bilingual. Not only do bilingual students have higher academic achievement and tend to earn higher paying jobs, but they also gain an increased understanding of other cultures and people.

As education professionals in Louisiana, we’ve adopted a set of core beliefs that guide our work. Louisiana believes:

- Children are our highest priority.
- Families are our partners.
- Educators are valued professionals.
- Graduates must be ready.
- Equity matters.
- Choice expands opportunities.
- Schools are invaluable to communities.
- Our future is bright.

Thank you for choosing to serve Louisiana children and families. As some of the newest members of our educational community, I’m excited to see how you will uphold these beliefs, enrich the education of our students, enhance our workforce and help move our state forward.

Dr. Cade Brumley  
State Superintendent of Education

# Mot de Bienvenue du CODOFIL

Chers enseignants, chers collègues,

Vous voici enfin arrivés, ou presque. Un long cheminement, beaucoup de questionnement, des sous économisés, des nuits à tourner en rond, à vous demander si vous faites une bêtise ou si vous faites un bon coup, des papiers à remplir, des relevés de notes à chercher, et j'en passe. Si vous êtes anxieux, c'est normal, mais j'aimerais vous rassurer. Si le travail sera parfois et même souvent difficile, la vie que vous mènerez, les voyages que vous ferez, les amitiés que vous tisserez en valent tous la peine.



Le français en Louisiane, c'est plus qu'une langue d'héritage, c'est quelque chose qui fait partie des fibres des louisianais. Même si plusieurs ont perdu la langue, ils y sont encore très attachés. Vous le verrez et vous le sentirez. Ils vous diront que leurs grands-parents parlent/parlaient français et qu'ils étaient punis pour ça à l'école. Vous comprendrez que le français n'est pas une langue étrangère en Louisiane (même si on enseigne le FLE).

Et c'est cette cause que vous défendrez, c'est pour ça que vous êtes ici, vous faites maintenant partie du mouvement de « résistance »!

Je vous remercie de votre engagement, je vous souhaite de belles rencontres et de belles expériences!

Très cordialement,

Peggy Feehan  
Directrice générale, CODOFIL

# Governmental Partner Directory

<b>Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)</b> <i>Office of Teaching and Learning, Academic Content</i> 1201 North Third Street Baton Rouge, LA 70802 <a href="mailto:language.acquisition@la.gov">language.acquisition@la.gov</a>	
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<b>Soazic Pougault</b> International Technical Expert: France 225-342-3395 <a href="mailto:soazic.pougault@la.gov">soazic.pougault@la.gov</a>	<b>Amalia de Arozarena</b> International Technical Expert: Spain 225-342-1152 <a href="mailto:amalia.arezarena@educacion.gob.es">amalia.arezarena@educacion.gob.es</a>

<b>Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL)</b> <i>Conseil pour le développement du français en Louisiane</i> 217 W. Main St. Lafayette, LA 70501 <a href="mailto:CODOFIL@crt.la.gov">CODOFIL@crt.la.gov</a>		
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<b>Matthew Mick</b> <i>Communications Officer</i> <i>Chargé de communication</i> 337-262-5810 <a href="mailto:mmick@crt.la.gov">mmick@crt.la.gov</a>	<b>Marguerite Justus</b> <i>Community Development</i> <i>Responsable du développement communautaire</i> 337-262-5764 <a href="mailto:mjustus@crt.la.gov">mjustus@crt.la.gov</a>	<b>Jennifer Rodriguez</b> <i>Educational Programs</i> <i>Responsable des programmes éducatifs</i> 337-262-5983 <a href="mailto:jrodriguez@crt.la.gov">jrodriguez@crt.la.gov</a>

<p><b>Consulate of Belgium</b>  <i>Michel Gerebtzoff</i>  1-404-659-21-50  Emergency Number: 1-404-271-96-69</p>	
<p><b>Consul General of Belgium in Atlanta</b>  230 Peachtree Street, NW - Suite 2250  Atlanta, GA 30303  <a href="mailto:atlanta@diplobel.fed.be">atlanta@diplobel.fed.be</a></p>	<p><b>Honorary Consul of Belgium in Louisiana</b>  <i>Roland Vandenweghe</i>  4500 One Shell Square  New Orleans, LA 70139-4596  1-504-585-0151  <a href="mailto:roland.vandenweghe@arlaw.com">roland.vandenweghe@arlaw.com</a></p>
<p><b>Wallonie Bruxelles International</b>  Place Saintelette, 2  1080 Bruxelles, Belgique</p>	<p><b>Assistante - Service Bourses Internationales</b>  <i>Rime Mourtada</i>  32-02-421-82-07  <a href="mailto:r.mourtada@wbi.be">r.mourtada@wbi.be</a></p>
<p><b>Bilateral Relations</b>  (in Brussels)  Vinciane Perrin, Christian Carette, and  Didier DeLeeuw</p>	<p><b>Teachers Abroad and Scholarships</b>  (in Brussels)  Michael Lamhasni, Pascaline Van Bol, and  Julien Sibille</p>
<p>Expatriation support and information can be found at <a href="http://www.belgiumintheusa.be">http://www.belgiumintheusa.be</a>.  WBI resources and information regarding the recruitment of Belgian teachers can be found at <a href="http://www.wbi.be">www.wbi.be</a>.</p>	

<p><b>Consulate of Canada in Dallas</b>  500 North Akard Street – Suite 2900  Dallas, TX 75201  <a href="https://www.canada.ca/Canada-In-Dallas">https://www.canada.ca/Canada-In-Dallas</a></p>	
<p><b>Consul General of Canada</b>  Rachel McCormick  1-214-922-9806  1-844-880-6519 (emergency)  <a href="mailto:ccs.scc@international.gc.ca">ccs.scc@international.gc.ca</a></p>	



<p><b>Consulate of France in New Orleans</b>            909 Poydras Street – Suite 1450            New Orleans, LA 70112  <a href="mailto:info@consulfrance-nouvelleorleans.org">info@consulfrance-nouvelleorleans.org</a></p>	
<p><b>Consul General de France</b>            Vincent Sciamia            504-569-2870  <a href="mailto:Vincent.Sciamia@diplomatie.gouv.fr">Vincent.Sciamia@diplomatie.gouv.fr</a></p>	<p><b>Gestionnaire administrative et comptable en charge du suivi des professeurs détachés du CODOFIL</b>            Marie-Agnes Scialfa            504-569-2877  <a href="mailto:marie-agnes.scialfa@diplomatie.gouv.fr">marie-agnes.scialfa@diplomatie.gouv.fr</a></p>
<p><b>Attaché de Coopération pour le Français</b>            Nicolas Torres            504-569-2879  <a href="mailto:nicolas.torres@diplomatie.gouv.fr">nicolas.torres@diplomatie.gouv.fr</a></p>	<p><b>Chargée de mission - Partenariats culturels et artistiques</b>            Marie-Gabrielle Grenier            504-569-2875  <a href="mailto:marie-gabrielle.grenier@diplomatie.gouv.fr">marie-gabrielle.grenier@diplomatie.gouv.fr</a></p>
<p><a href="http://www.nouvelleorleans.consulfrance.org">www.nouvelleorleans.consulfrance.org</a>            French cultural and academic mission in the United States <a href="http://www.FrenchCulture.org">www.FrenchCulture.org</a></p>	

<p><b>Consulate of Mexico in New Orleans</b>            901 Convention Center Blvd #119            New Orleans, LA 70130  <a href="mailto:connorleans@sre.gob.mx">connorleans@sre.gob.mx</a></p>	
<p><b>Consul General of Mexico</b>  <i>Tito Livio Morales Burelo</i>            1-855-463-6395</p>	
<p>Expatriation support and information can be found at <a href="https://consulmex.sre.gob.mx/nuevaorleans">https://consulmex.sre.gob.mx/nuevaorleans</a>.</p>	
<p><b>Secretaria de Educación Pública de Hidalgo</b>            Blvd Felipe Ángeles s/n CP.            42083, Pachuca de Soto, Hidalgo, México</p>	<p><b>Encargado de la Coordinación Estatal del Programa Binacional de Educación Migrante</b>  <i>Pablo F. Carpio Escudero</i>            01-771-71 93018  <a href="mailto:probemhgo@hotmail.com">probemhgo@hotmail.com</a></p>
<p>Educational resources and information about teacher recruitment for the State of Hidalgo can be found at <a href="http://www.hgo.sep.gob.mx">http://www.hgo.sep.gob.mx</a>.</p>	
<p><b>Escuela Normal Superior de Yucatán</b>            Calle 118 x Calle 71, Yucalpeten, 97238 Mérida, Yuc., México            52-999-985-1492  <a href="https://www.ensy.org/">https://www.ensy.org/</a></p>	

**Consulate of Spain**

1800 Bering Dr. Suite 660  
Houston, TX 77057

[cog.houston@maec.es](mailto:cog.houston@maec.es)

**Consul General of Spain**

*Julia Alicia Olmo y Romero*  
713-783-6166

**Agregaduría de Educación en Miami**

2655 S. Le Jeune Rd. Suite 906  
Coral Gables, FL 33134

[infocenter.usa@educacion.gob.es](mailto:infocenter.usa@educacion.gob.es)  
<https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/eeuu>

Expatriation support and information can be found at  
<https://exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/HOUSTON>.

# Louisiana at a Glance

Home to geographical, cultural, and linguistic landscapes not found elsewhere in the United States, Louisiana prides itself in its unique traditions and way of life. The breadth of Louisiana's diversity can be experienced through its rich history, incomparable music and food, and interaction with its warm and inviting residents.

Living in Louisiana is truly an experience like no other.

## Geography

With a total area of 52,357 square miles (135,651 square kilometers), Louisiana is the thirty-first largest state in the United States. Located in the South, and bordered by Texas to the west, Arkansas to the north, Mississippi to the east, and the Gulf of Mexico to the south, Louisiana is divided into three distinct geographical land areas: the East Gulf Coastal Plain, the Mississippi Alluvial Plain, and the West Gulf Coastal Plain.<sup>1</sup>

Due to its geographical location, Louisiana is home to many natural forests, marshes, swamps, rivers, and lakes. These features make Louisiana the perfect destination for nature lovers and avid sportsmen. Because of this, Louisiana is known to many as the "Sportsman's Paradise."<sup>2</sup>



## Climate<sup>3</sup>

Louisiana's climate is subtropical with an average annual rainfall of 60 inches (152.4 cm). Summers in Louisiana are typically hot and humid with temperatures reaching above 95° Fahrenheit (35° C) with a 74% humidity rate. Because of this, all indoor areas are continuously air conditioned. *For those who are not used to regular air conditioning, it may be necessary to have a jacket when moving between air conditioned and unairconditioned areas.*

While Louisiana does not have a well defined winter, temperatures do sometimes dip below freezing (32° F or 0° C) for short periods of time during the months of December to February. The months of March and April, and October and November, serve as shortened spring and fall seasons.

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<sup>1</sup> Norrell, R. (2021). Louisiana. In *Britannica*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Louisiana-state>.

<sup>2</sup> *Louisiana Facts and Figures*. (n.d.). Retrieved February 24, 2021 from <https://www.crt.state.la.us/tourism/pressroom/almanac/facts-and-figures/index>.

<sup>3</sup> Weather Atlas. (n.d.). Louisiana, USA - climate data and average Monthly weather. Retrieved February 25, 2021, from <https://www.weather-us.com/en/louisiana-usa-climate#:~:text=of%20Louisiana%2C%20USA-,The%20climate%20of%20Louisiana,of%20the%20Gulf%20of%20Mexico>.

## Population

Historically, Louisiana has been a nexus for cultural diversity. Native American peoples were the first to call Louisiana home, settling in the area as early as 11,500 B.C.E<sup>4</sup> Since that time, the cultural and linguistic landscape has continued to change.

The state's earliest and largest groups of European settlers were predominantly French and Spanish. Their influences on present day Louisiana life, language, and culture are unmistakable. However, Louisiana's cultural and linguistic heritage was also influenced by a variety of other sources including, but not limited to, African, British, German, Haitian, Hungarian, and Italian to name a few.<sup>5</sup> These unique threads weave together the tapestry that is Louisiana's population.

Currently, with an approximate population of 4,650,000, Louisiana is the 25th most populous state in the United States. The two largest metropolitan areas in Louisiana are New Orleans and Baton Rouge. These cities have a combined population of over 1.1 million, which is about one-fourth of the state's total population. 62% of Louisiana's population identifies as white, 32% as African American, 2% as Asian, and the remaining 4% as Hispanic, Native American, or Other.<sup>6</sup>

## History

Louisiana's history is as unique and complex as its citizens. Spanning thousands of years, and influenced by countless different peoples and languages, the events of the past have shaped the state and its people, uniquely defining what it means to be a Louisianan.

### Earliest Peoples

The land that makes up Louisiana, as well as the Lower Mississippi Valley, is one of North America's most fertile regions. Because of this distinction, Louisiana is home to some of the [oldest evidence](#) of indigenous peoples in the United States. One example of this is [Poverty Point](#) in northeast Louisiana. It is estimated to be 3,400 years old, and is a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#). This important site was an economic and trading hub of the Gulf South for centuries.

The influence of the [Louisiana Indigenous Tribes](#) on our culture can be seen and felt throughout the state. Many Louisiana traditions, place names, and regional recipes owe their origins to Louisiana's first peoples.

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<sup>4</sup> Saunders, R. (14 February 2020). Prehistoric Archeology in Louisiana. Retrieved February 25, 2021, from <https://64parishes.org/entry/prehistoric-archaeology-in-louisiana>.

<sup>5</sup> Howard, P. (n.d.). Louisiana. Retrieved February 25, 2021, from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Louisiana-state>.

<sup>6</sup> Louisiana population 2021. (n.d.). Retrieved February 25, 2021, from <https://worldpopulationreview.com/states/louisiana-population>.

## French Exploration and Governance<sup>7</sup>

French expansion and colonization of North America in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries included the Mississippi River territory and its tributaries. In 1682, explorer Rene-Robert Cavalier, Sieur de la Salle led the exploration of this territory and named it *Louisiana* in honor of King Louis XIV. This vast territory spanned from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, and today makes up one-third of the area of the continental United States. For more information, see [French Colonial Louisiana](#).

### Notable Events

- 1699 - The Le Moyne brothers (Sieurs de Bienville and d'Iberville) discovered the mouth of the Mississippi River. With the help from the Louisiana Indigenous Tribes, they explored its delta and tributaries, identifying and naming Mardi Gras Point, Bayous Lafourche and Manchac, Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain, New River, and Baton Rouge.
- Early 1700's - The Le Moyne brothers and their designees established forts and trading posts.
- 1714 - The French settlement of Natchitoches is established.
- 1718 - The city of New Orleans is established.
- 1719 - The ship, *Aurora*, brought the first [African slaves](#) from Senegambia to Louisiana.
- 1720 - French Engineer, Adrien de Pauger, completed the levees, wharf, and Vieux Carre in New Orleans.
- 1722 - [Germans](#) begin arriving in Louisiana.
- 1756 - 1763 - The Seven Years' War (French and Indian War) between Britain and France

## Spanish Exploration and Governance<sup>8</sup>

In 1762, France ceded the territory of Louisiana to Spain in the Treaty of Fontainebleau. Over the next four decades, Louisiana grew to be a prosperous and thriving colony by exporting sugar, cotton, and indigo through the port of New Orleans. Due to Spain's immigration and land grant policies, Louisiana grew not only in prosperity, but also in population, welcoming an influx of Spanish, former French colonists, and Anglo-American immigrants. Spain remained in control of Louisiana until 1802 when the territory was handed back over to France. For more information, read [Spanish Colonial Louisiana](#).

### Notable Events

- 1717 - The Spanish mission of Los Adaes is established in Northwest Louisiana.
- 1764 - Following the *Grand Derangement* in Nova Scotia, French Acadians begin arriving in Louisiana.
- 1778 - Los Isleños from the Canary Islands begin arriving in Louisiana.
- 1790 - Following the revolution in Saint-Domingue, Haitian creoles begin arriving in Louisiana.
- 1794 - The Great Fire of New Orleans
- 1802 - Spain transfers control of Louisiana back to France.

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<sup>7</sup> Chamberlain, C. (2020, September 24). Spanish colonial Louisiana. Retrieved February 18, 2021, from <https://64parishes.org/entry/spanish-colonial-louisiana#:~:text=After%20the%20St.,found%20their%20way%20to%20Louisiana.&text=The%20population%20of%20both%20free,from%20269%20to%20948%20people>

<sup>8</sup> Chamberlain, C. (2020, September 24). Spanish colonial Louisiana. Retrieved February 25, 2021, from <https://64parishes.org/entry/spanish-colonial-louisiana#:~:text=After%20the%20St.,found%20their%20way%20to%20Louisiana.&text=The%20population%20of%20both%20free,from%20269%20to%20948%20people>.

## Louisiana Purchase<sup>9</sup>

In 1803, only months after the territory of Louisiana was returned to France from Spain, the French ruler, Napoleon Bonaparte, sold the territory of Louisiana (828,000 square miles or 2,144,476 square kilometers) to the U.S. President Thomas Jefferson for \$15 million. This purchase resulted in doubling the size of the United States. The final transfer of power from France to the United States occurred on November 30, 1803 in the Sala Capitular in the Cabildo in New Orleans.

## Louisiana Territory, Statehood, and Beyond<sup>10</sup>

Today, the American state of Louisiana is much smaller than the territory controlled by the French and Spanish hundreds of years ago. Since the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, Louisiana has undergone many changes, but its unique identity remains intact.

Louisiana's move from foreign colony to U.S. Territory, and later to statehood, was filled with many events that shaped not only our state but also the United States that we know today.

### Notable Events

- 1804 to 1806 - Explorers Lewis and Clark surveyed the Louisiana Territory.
- October 1806 - Spain and the United States agree to the formation of the [Neutral Strip](#).
- April 30, 1812 - Louisiana becomes the eighth state of the United States.
- January 8, 1815 - The Battle of New Orleans
- 1819 - The Transcontinental Treaty, also known as the Adams-Onis Treaty, with Spain transferred all Spanish territory east of the Mississippi River (known as the Florida Parishes) and the Neutral Strip to the U.S..

At the beginning of its statehood, life in Louisiana was agrarian. Fishing and growing crops such as cotton, rice, and sugar was the way of life for many Louisianians. Even today, much of Louisiana's economy is centered around agriculture.

Since its admission to the Union in 1812, Louisiana has adopted 11 constitutions. Louisiana's current constitution, ratified in 1974, includes language that recognizes and protects our unique linguistic and cultural history, "the right of the people to preserve, favor and promote their respective origins, historical, cultural and linguistic, is recognized."

Visit [www.LouisianaStateMuseum.org](http://www.LouisianaStateMuseum.org) to learn more about Louisiana's history.

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<sup>9</sup> The Louisiana Purchase. (n.d.). Retrieved February 26, 2021, from <https://www.crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-museum/online-exhibits/the-cabildo/the-louisiana-purchase/index>.

<sup>10</sup> Territory to Statehood. (n.d.). Retrieved April 13, 2021 from <https://www.crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-museum/online-exhibits/the-cabildo/territory-to-statehood/index>.  
Antebellum Louisiana. (n.d.). Retrieved April 13, 2021 from <https://www.crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-museum/online-exhibits/the-cabildo/antebellum-louisiana/>.

# Practical Information for Living and Working in Louisiana

This section is intended to provide Louisiana's International Associate Teachers, and prospective teachers, with information regarding their preparation for life and work in the state of Louisiana.

## Louisiana Life and Culture

Louisiana is divided into 64 parishes (counties) and 13 distinct geographical regions. Each region has its own unique history, heritage, food, and areas of interest. Exploring the many different regions and what each has to offer is a popular way for our international teachers to learn more about the state and its culture. You can find out more about Louisiana's regions at [Louisiana Travel](#).

### Festivals

Louisiana is well known for its love of festivals. In fact, in Louisiana there is a festival for almost any topic you can think of. Louisiana's festival season begins in September, when the temperatures start to drop, and extends well into the summer months. During autumn, a festival (or two, or three) is held every weekend somewhere in Louisiana.

For more information on Louisiana Festivals, see Louisiana Travel's [Festivals](#) page.

### Food

Louisiana prides itself on having some of the best food in the world. Not only is our food delicious, but our cuisine and the history surrounding it are also a reflection of who we are as a people. While you are here, try sampling our [gumbo](#), [jambalaya](#), and the [Po-Boy sandwich](#). Also, attend [crawfish boils](#) to really experience Louisiana's culture.

### Francophone Population

The number of people who understand and speak French in Louisiana is estimated to be 150,000. These French and Creole speakers live for the most part in the 22 parishes which constitute the Cajun Triangle known as Acadiana. Acadiana is located in the southwest and south-central areas of Louisiana, in the parishes of Acadia, Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, Calcasieu, Cameron, Evangéline, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, Pointe Coupée, St. Charles, St. Jacques, St. Jean, St. Landry, St. Mary, St. Martin, Terrebonne, Vermillion, and West Baton Rouge.

The French language is alive and well in Louisiana. See the articles [Francophone Louisiana](#) and [Cajuns in Literature](#) for additional information.

### Hispanophone Population

Approximately 200,000 persons living in Louisiana speak Spanish. The Spanish language can be found throughout the state with centers of concentration in the metropolitan areas of New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Shreveport/Bossier. In the 1700s, Spanish settlers from Spain known as the [Isleños](#) settled in south Louisiana, primarily in St. Bernard Parish. Descendants of these settlers can still be found there today. Various other Spanish-speaking groups settled in western Louisiana in the 1700s and 1800s in areas along the Sabine River once known as the [Neutral Strip](#).

## Religion

In the U.S., freedom of religion as well as separation of Church and State are guaranteed in the Constitution's Bill of Rights. However, this does not limit an individual's right to express his/her religious beliefs. It is common for religion and religious activities to be an open topic of discussion outside of the public school classroom. Also, students are free to participate in school-based religious clubs or prayers on school grounds. Additionally, some students may be excused from certain school or class activities due to religious exceptions. You will find that schools have established procedures for this.

## Handling Important Personal Documents and Information

There is a variety of information and important documents that teachers will need to collect, secure, and maintain prior to and during their time in Louisiana.

### Before Traveling to Louisiana

- Scan and save important personal records (copies of driver's license, insurances, and birth and marriage certificates) that may be needed while in Louisiana.
- Scan and save important professional documents (including university diplomas, transcripts, and copies of additional certificates, evaluations, and proof of professional development sessions) to a USB, external drive, or the Cloud.





## Once in Louisiana

Originals and photocopies of the following documents should be safely stored in a secure location in your home in Louisiana.

<b>Passport</b>	Your passport should be valid for at least 30 days after the end of your teacher exchange (3 years for a J-1 visa).
<b>J-1 Visa</b>	Affixed to your passport. It is valid for a maximum of 3 years. <i>Your residency status in the United States is non-resident until you meet the qualifications of a substantial presence test.</i>
<b>I-94 Form</b>	You will print this after you arrive in Louisiana. <b>Keep this document with your passport.</b>
<b>DS2019 Form</b>	This important document gives you permission to leave and reenter the United States during your exchange. It must be signed annually by a valid CODOFIL sponsor for French teachers or an LDOE sponsor for Spanish teachers. Check it before leaving the United States. <b>Keep this document with your passport.</b>
<b>Social Security Card</b>	You will apply for this after you arrive in Louisiana. It usually takes 10-15 days (but sometimes up to six weeks) to receive your social security number and card. This is required for working in the United States.
<b>Contract Documents</b>	Signed contract with CODOFIL/LDOE; signed contract with your district; all letters and correspondence confirming your employment in Louisiana.
<b>Home Country Driver's License and Information</b>	The original copy of your driver's license from your home country along with a statement from your home country attesting to your positive driving record.
<b>Proof of Insurance</b>	Documentation providing proof of medical and repatriation insurance

**Documents to always keep with you:** These items must be kept on your person or accessible at all times.

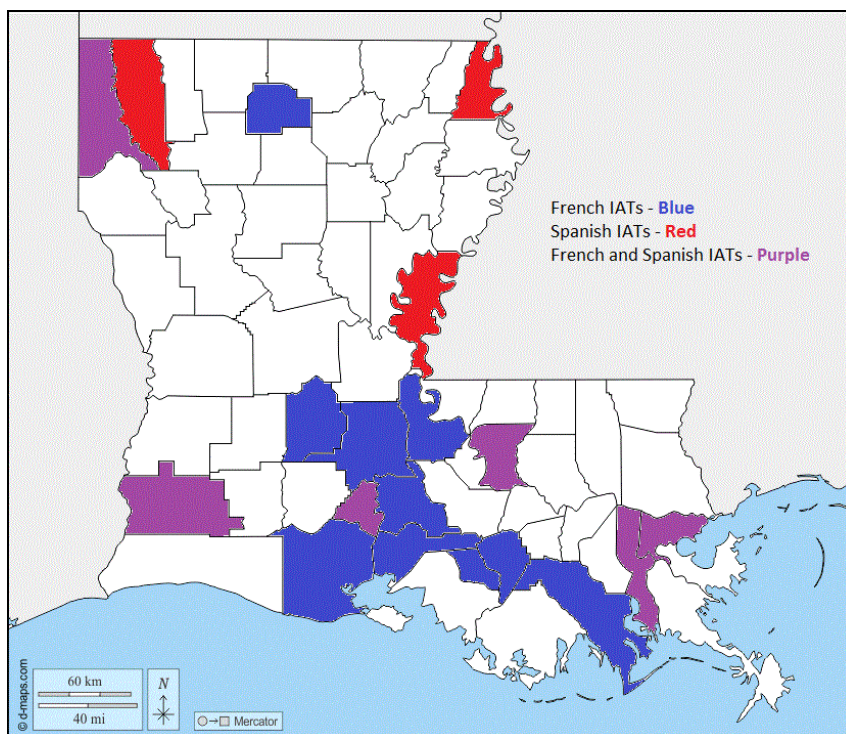
<b>Louisiana Driver's License or State ID Card</b>	These ID cards are obtained from the local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). You can find the address on the <a href="#">Office of Motor Vehicles (OMV)</a> website. You will receive a letter from LDOE that you must present when applying for your driving license. You can drive for 3 months with your international license.
<b>Proof of Car Insurance</b>	Car insurance is required for all drivers in the state of Louisiana. When you secure a car insurance policy, your insurance company will provide you with a proof of insurance card. This should be kept in your wallet, car, or have an e-version accessible.
<b>Proof of Medical Insurance</b>	Medical insurance is required for all U.S.citizens, residents, and non-residents. When you secure your policy, your medical insurance company will provide you with a proof of medical insurance card. This should be kept in your wallet.

## Life in Louisiana<sup>11</sup>

The information in this section addresses important aspects of maintaining your finances, daily life, and security while living and working in Louisiana.

### Personal Finance

Program success and comfort of life in Louisiana is often determined by whether or not international teachers have enough money during the first few months in the U.S.. The State of Louisiana recommends that you verify that your home bank works with and accepts transfers from American banks and that you have access to sufficient funds to cover moving and the first three months of expenses in Louisiana. Please see [Appendix A](#) for a suggested budget.



### Banking

International teachers should choose institutions with the broadest reach, meaning those that have international connections. Your parish supervisor or host will be able to assist you with selecting a reliable bank in your area. Some national banks include [Bank of America](#), [Capital One](#), and [Chase Bank](#).

Opening a bank account can be facilitated by a letter of employment from your supervisor or with your signed Louisiana contract. When setting up your account, you will be asked for identification documents such as your Louisiana driver's license or your passport, accompanied by a credit card recognized in the United States (Visa, Master Card, or American Express).

### Important Information to Know

Be aware that some banks charge handling fees. Basic checking accounts usually do not charge a fee if you maintain a minimum balance. Be sure to ask your bank about monthly fees and service charges.

- A PIN protected **debit card** should be given to you when you open the account. Be aware that some banks block accounts if a PIN number is entered incorrectly three times.
- Some banks charge additional fees for using an ATM from a different bank or using the card internationally.
- Many banks provide free online banking which can save time with depositing money, checking balances, and paying bills.
- You may be charged \$30, or more, for each NSF (non-sufficient funds) check, depending on your bank's policies.

<sup>11</sup> [https://d-maps.com/continent.php?num\\_con=70&lang=en](https://d-maps.com/continent.php?num_con=70&lang=en)

## **Borrowing money**

Avoid using loan companies or “quick cash” loan centers to borrow money. These companies generally charge high interest rates and have severe penalties for late payments. If you need to take out a loan for a large expense, such as for a car, use your bank or your local school board’s credit union.

Be aware that you may not be able to take out an unsecured loan if you do not have an established **credit history**, i.e., having a banking history without overdrafts for a certain period of time and having a regular monthly income in the United States.

## **Credit Cards**

Credit cards can be used to make most purchases in the U.S., however to obtain a credit card from a U.S. institution, it is essential to have a *credit history* in the U.S. credit system. This will take a few months. Once you have begun to establish a credit history, your credit rating and related information can be requested from your bank or from the bank’s website.

## **Additional Income**

J-1 visa holders are not allowed to take part-time employment in a field outside of his/her teaching assignment. J-1 visa holders may receive income for tutoring in the subject they teach or for participating in paid professional development for their district or the state.

## **J-2 Work Authorization**

J-2 visa holders of working age can apply for authorization to work in the United States. To be authorized to work in the U.S., a J-2 dependent must apply for a work permit (Employment Authorization Document). This approval to work usually takes 3 to 6 months.

*To complete this request, applicants will need to*

- complete the I-765 application available on the [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) immigration website,
- write a letter explaining the motivations for the work permit application ([Appendix B\\*](#)), and
- prove that the family’s financial support does not depend on this work.

Once the work authorization has been received and approved, the J-2 visa holder will receive a social security number. *\*Please refer to the directions and sample letter in Appendix B. If you need more help, do not hesitate to contact CODOFIL.*

## **Transportation**

### **Before You Arrive**

Depending on the location and time of your arrival to Louisiana, you may wish to rent a car for use during the first days/weeks after your arrival. There are a number of popular car rental companies in the United States. Availability in your area may vary.

[Alamo](#)

[Avis](#)

[Budget](#)

[Enterprise](#)

[Hertz](#)

### **Driving in Louisiana and the U.S.**

In Louisiana, an international driver's license can be used for up to 3 months, the duration of a tourist visa. You will need to obtain your Louisiana driver's license (for a fee) at a local Office of Motor Vehicles (OMV) office. Local offices and hours can be found on the [OMV website](#).

For the written exam, you can study using the [Louisiana Driver's Manual](#). Additional copies can be found in the Louisiana Associate Teacher Google Classroom. You may request a translator for this exam, however sometimes it is necessary to bring the translator with you. The written exam is a computer-based multiple-choice test. If you don't pass it the first time, don't panic; you can take it again. After passing the written test, you will take the practical road test. A description of the practical road test can be found in the Louisiana Driver's Manual.

Normally in Louisiana, people wishing to obtain a driver's license must successfully complete driver education training. J-1 visa holders participating in the International Associate Teacher program are exempt from taking driver education courses. Unfortunately, the exemption from driving courses is not transferable to J-2 visa holders. All J-2 visa holders wishing to drive must complete a driving course. This course is not free, and typically costs \$300-\$600. Be sure to research the driver education course providers in your area.

***Do not wait too long to secure your driver's license. If there are less than 180 days remaining on your visa, your request will be denied.***

Finally, do not let your Louisiana driver's license expire while you are still in the United States. You could put yourself in an unfortunate situation and be required to pay a fine, retake the tests, or be required to take a driver education course.

### **Support a Cause with Your License Plate**

When you buy your car, you will have to pay a registration fee to get a license plate. Speakers of French are encouraged to choose the "Chez nous autres" license plate to support the teaching of French in Louisiana. Proceeds of the license plate purchase go directly to CODOFIL/Consortium of Louisiana Immersion Schools (LCIS). Contact Peggy Feehan, Executive Director of [CODOFIL](#), for more information.



### **Purchasing a Car**

Budget at least \$5,000 to \$7,000 for a used car. It is important to take precautions when buying a vehicle. Ask Louisiana colleagues familiar with the area and used car market to help you with the process.

- **Don't buy anything without being in place in Louisiana!** It may be tempting to purchase a car from a departing international teacher or online before you arrive. Do not do this. It is important to inspect the vehicle before you make a purchase.
- Check the classified ads in the local newspaper and virtual marketplaces for the sale of private cars, visit used car lots, and/or search online using websites such as [Auto Trader](#), [CarGurus](#), [Get Auto](#), and [Carvana](#) to look for potential vehicles.
- Check the value of the vehicle you intend to purchase on [Kelley Blue Book](#) online to avoid paying too much. Remember, the prices displayed by sellers do not include taxes. Taxes can sometimes exceed 10% of the purchase price of the car.
- When you have identified a car you are interested in purchasing, search the [CARFAX](#) report for the history of the car using the vehicle identification number (VIN). The unique VIN consists of letters and numbers and can be found on a metal band riveted to the dashboard. This number can be seen through the car's windshield.
  - Used cars should be checked by a trusted mechanic prior to purchase. This service is often free and mechanics can be recommended by host families or local colleagues.

- You must obtain car insurance to be able to take your vehicle with you. Call your insurance company to find out what documents they require.
- If you purchase a vehicle from a private party, then you must have the transaction notarized with a public notary and register your purchase with the Office of Motor Vehicles in order to get your license plate. Notaries can often help guide you through the paperwork. If you purchase a vehicle from a dealership, then the dealership will file the necessary paperwork and provide a temporary licence plate that should be taped to the back glass of the vehicle until you receive their official plate in the mail.

## Car Insurance

By law, cars must be insured at all times and drivers must be able to provide proof of insurance. Consequences for non-compliance are very high. If stopped by the police, uninsured drivers will have to pay a large fine and the vehicle will be left abandoned on the side of the road with a large orange decal.

When purchasing car insurance, expect to pay between \$150-\$200 per month. A certificate from the insurer in your home country stating that you have not had an accident for three years may allow you to receive savings for the first year.

Another useful automobile insurance to have is roadside assistance which may include towing, unlocking locked cars, and/or assistance with flat tires. This insurance can be obtained from your insurance company, or from another company at an additional cost. In some instances, roadside assistance may be included for free in other insurance policies.

Below is a sample list of some insurance companies in Louisiana.

[AAA](#)  
[Liberty Mutual](#)

[Farm Bureau](#)  
[Progressive](#)

[GEICO](#)  
[State Farm](#)

[Horace Mann](#)

We strongly advise you to NEVER drive your car out of the U.S.. Most car insurance purchased in the U.S. is ONLY VALID in this country and may not cover an accident in another country. Carefully read your car insurance policy to see what international coverage you have. Do not drive your car out of the country to Canada or Mexico without securing international insurance.

## Car Maintenance

Car maintenance is important to ensure a well-running automobile. Supercenters, like [Walmart](#) or [Costco](#) often offer simple maintenance services. Some available services include tire replacement, oil changes, and battery replacement.

For larger repairs, vehicle owners should look for mechanics at auto repair shops. Automotive shops are sometimes a part of gas stations or automotive stores. Service prices will vary, so it is a good idea to shop around. U.S. mechanics charge by the hour of labor plus parts. For people who like to do their own repairs, libraries have excellent manuals in English.

All cars in Louisiana must go through an annual safety inspection and display an inspection sticker on the driver's side windshield. Inspections cost about \$20 and must be conducted at a [qualified inspection station](#). Vehicle owners must have valid copies of their driver's license, insurance card, car registration to receive an inspection sticker.

## Alternate Transportation

Owning a car is extremely important in Louisiana since the distances between locations is large and the public transportation system is not as extensive or reliable as public transportation in other countries. Choosing to navigate Louisiana roads by bicycle is possible, but not recommended. There are few bike lanes in most areas. As a result, bicycling accidents and fatalities occur each year. Also, Louisiana weather (heat, humidity, and afternoon showers) can make it difficult to navigate by bicycle, motorcycle, or scooter.

## Housing

It is important to wait until you are in Louisiana to rent a home or apartment. Someone from your school or district will be available to assist you with this process and will know the area well. He or she will be able to help ensure that you find a safe and convenient place to rent.

Teachers may rent apartments, duplexes, houses, or even individual rooms. The price differences between Louisiana communities can be significant. Depending on your assignment, the type of accommodation you choose, and the amenities offered, you can expect to pay between \$700-\$1000 per month for a single person, and \$1100-\$1600 per month for a family with children. Teachers may consider reaching out to other International Associate Teachers in your area with whom to share a home and expenses. When sharing accommodations, be sure to clarify living arrangements such as cleaning, shopping, and shared utilities, to ensure that no problems arise later. To alleviate any miscommunications, it is advised to have these provisions in writing.

Be sure to stay in communication with your local supervisors and contacts when searching for housing. You may choose to work with a real estate agent or search for a home yourself on online sites such as [Craigslist](#), [Facebook Marketplace](#), or [Realtor](#), or in local newspapers. Real estate agents can show you apartments and help with next steps, but they will charge a commission for their service.

## Securing Housing

- Landlords will require evidence that you will be able to pay your rent. It is common for landlords to run a credit check and to request bank information from potential renters. As a new employee, you will not have this evidence. Instead, you may provide the letter you will receive from the social security office, a copy of your state contract, and a letter of employment from your host school or school district.
- Ask a local colleague for help in understanding the terms of your lease and the consequences if you choose to move out before the end of the lease contract, including what happens in the case of a natural disaster (hurricane, flood, tornado). Be aware that contracts may include a no smoking or no pet clause. Breaking a clause can lead to fines, loss of deposit, or in severe cases, eviction for breach of contract.
- In general, a deposit (often one month's rent, or sometimes first and last month's rent) is required. If your security deposit is based on the condition of the rental, be sure to take photos of each room and all appliances BEFORE moving in. Report any damages you see right away. Clarify how deposits will be returned or credited (deposit will be credited to the last month's rent, deposit returned by check or transfer, etc.). Remember, an annual contract is understood to be for 12 months. *Any exceptions or negotiations to your contract should be put in writing.*
- Always make sure to get an emergency phone number for the person in charge of your housing in case something goes wrong or you need assistance after hours.
- Generally, apartments are rented with complete household electrical equipment (dishwasher, oven, refrigerator, and freezer). You are responsible to purchase furniture. Second-hand

furniture can be purchased at garage sales, thrift stores or on Facebook MarketPlace for less expense than new furniture. Many teachers also make their first purchases at the large stores such as Walmart or Target.

- [Renter's Insurance](#) is a relatively inexpensive policy that covers the contents of your home if they're stolen or damaged. Renter's insurance is recommended, but not mandatory. Often you can *bundle* your car and renter insurance with the same company for a multi-policy discount.

## Housing-Related Expenses

In addition to paying rent for your house or apartment, you will also need to budget for additional housing-related expenses. Below are expenses to be considered when planning your monthly budget.

### Utilities

#### *Electricity:*

- Be prepared to spend \$100 to \$250 per month depending on the size of your home and your use of air conditioning and heating.
- Activation of the service may take a few days and requires the payment of a deposit. Deposit costs vary depending on providers, but be prepared to budget \$100 to \$200 for activation of the service. Many times the deposit is applied to a bill, or is returned at the end of the contract.
- You may be required to give employment guarantees (school board letter/Louisiana contract) when opening an account without a social security number. Call your local supplier to determine what information will be needed.
- Louisiana Energy Companies (providers in your area may vary):

[Beauregard Electric](#)  
[LUS](#)

[CLECO](#)  
[SLEMCO](#)

[Entergy](#)  
[SWEPCO](#)

*Water and Sewer:* Be prepared to pay between \$40 and \$100 monthly for water and sewer services depending on your usage. This service is often included in the rent of an apartment or house.

### Communication

*Internet:* Home internet plans can cost between \$60 and \$100 per month, depending on access type and features. Some cable and satellite television companies offer all-inclusive bundles that include television channels and land-line telephone access.

Popular Internet Providers (providers in your area may vary):

[CenturyLink](#)  
[Dish Network](#)

[Cox Communications](#)  
[Suddenlink Communications](#)

[DirecTV](#)  
[Xfinity](#)

*Cell Phone:* Mobile phone plans usually cost between \$100 and \$200 depending on the service provider, type of contract, cell phone type, and data plan chosen. Some companies also offer in-home internet, WIFI hotspots, and prepaid options for additional costs.

Popular Cell Phone Providers (providers in your area may vary):

[AT&T](#)  
[Sprint](#)

[Boost Mobile](#)  
[T-Mobile](#)

[Cricket Wireless](#)  
[Verizon](#)

## Safety and Security

Your safety and security while living in Louisiana is very important. This section will provide you with information and tips for staying safe and healthy while living in Louisiana. Additional information will be made available in our International Associate Teacher Google Classroom after you arrive.

## Health and Well-being

Your health and well-being both before you arrive and during your time in Louisiana is important. Because moving to another country for work is stressful, it is crucial that you take steps to protect yourself and your mental health.

- Upon arrival in Louisiana, all CODOFIL/International Associate Teachers **must** register with their corresponding Consulate Generals or Embassies.
- The State of Louisiana recommends that you visit your doctors before you travel to help avoid any unforeseen medical issues or costs once in place in Louisiana. After you arrive, it is important that you locate a doctor or personal care provider in your area.

### International Associate Teacher Incident Report

World Language supervisors and principals are required to monitor International Associate Teachers and report any serious situation that has or could have the effect of endangering the health, safety, or welfare of an International Associate Teacher. This includes any investigations of an IAT's site of activity or serious problem/controversy that could be expected to bring the program into notoriety or disrepute, including any potential litigation in which the IAT may be named party. Schools and/or school systems will report to LDOE and/or CODOFIL using the [IAT Incident Report](#).

### Medical Insurance

- *All J-1 visa holders are required to carry medical insurance for themselves and all dependents throughout their stay in the U.S..*
- *J-1 visa holders may opt to keep their insurance from their home countries.*
- *J-1 visa holders who fail to comply risk the loss of their visa and expulsion from the U.S..*

The United States healthcare system is different from the systems found in other countries around the world. The U.S. healthcare system lacks a compulsory national health insurance system. Because of this, many private insurance companies exist, each with its own rates, coverage areas, and options.

**Please Note:** Louisiana health coverage takes effect on **October 1**. You (and your accompanying dependents) must have medical insurance from your home country that is effective until that date.

Each school system in Louisiana offers its teachers the opportunity to participate in the system's health insurance option(s). You may notice that health insurance options vary from system to system. What is available or covered in your system may not be the same as in a neighboring system. The cost for health insurance ranges between \$100-\$400 per month depending on the options chosen, the number of beneficiaries, and the type of contract offered.

Medical insurance policies issued by most companies offered by school systems only apply within the United States and will have minimal to no coverage for travel outside of the U.S.. Additionally, some policies ask participants to choose from a list of doctors and local specialists under contract (inside the network). If this is the case, doctors not on the approved list may not be covered through the insurance. Generally, U.S. medical insurance does not cover (or poorly covers) dental and/or eye care. Separate policies for dental and/or vision may be purchased (for an additional cost) from your school system.

#### *Basic Coverage Example*

OGB (Magnolia Local Plus Individual) costs about \$150/month (for one person); your visit to a general practitioner will be a \$25 co-pay, a specialist will be a \$50 co-pay, and a \$50 co-pay for an ambulance. More complex emergency and surgical procedures will generally be reimbursed with a \$100 co-pay. For many policies there is also an annual deductible of \$500.



### *Prescription Drugs*

The cost of medicines is also very high *without* the intervention of medical insurance. Popular U.S. pharmacies may be found inside stores, such as [Albertsons](#) or [Walmart](#), or as stand alone stores such as [Walgreens](#), [CVS](#), etc. *It is important to note that a prescription issued abroad does not allow products to be purchased in the United States.* Therefore it may be necessary to have a sufficient stock of your necessary medicines on hand. Be sure to keep a copy of the corresponding prescription(s). *If you require medications for a chronic condition, see your doctor for help with obtaining necessary medications.*

### **Repatriation Insurance**

***Repatriation insurance is required by U.S. Immigration for all J-1 visa teachers.*** The State of Louisiana hopes that repatriation will never be necessary, but if it is we will do everything possible to support you. The State of Louisiana provides a small policy for all J-1 teachers, but not for J-2 dependents. This policy usually does not cover all expenses associated with repatriation. Because of this, J-1 teachers should take out additional repatriation on themselves and purchase policies for all J-2 visa dependents who accompany them to Louisiana. Coverage should cover you up to \$50,000 per person and per accident or illness; \$25,000 for repatriation of the body in the event of death; and \$50,000 for repatriation by sickness or evacuation.

### **Personal Security**

As you transition to your new life in Louisiana, it is essential that you take the necessary steps to protect yourself in your new surroundings. It is easy to be distracted with so much to do and with encountering so many new experiences. Here are some tips to remember.

- Protect personal information from identity theft. Keep banking information, passwords, driver's license, and social security numbers secure.
- Protect your personal information from phishing phone calls and emails. Do not give out your personal information over the phone or in emails.
- When using an ATM or credit card machine, cover the keypad when entering your PIN number.
- Always lock the doors to your home and car.
- Never leave valuables or personal belongings unattended in your car or public places.

### **911 Emergency**

If you find yourself in a dangerous situation or need emergency help, dial **911** from the nearest landline or cell phone. This number is free to dial and will connect you with emergency services (police, ambulance, fire). This number should only be used in emergency or life threatening situations.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

Being prepared for emergencies should be a first priority as you transition into life in Louisiana. Before you arrive, you will be given access to an International Associate Teacher Google Classroom. This classroom will contain information regarding emergency preparedness. It is important that you read through this information to familiarize yourself with common practices in the United States. You will also be given a one-hour training course during the orientation session in July.

### **Extreme Weather**

The risks of severe weather events and natural disasters are much higher and more frequent in Louisiana than in some other areas of the world . Therefore, it is important to check the weather forecast daily and especially before outings to parks, outside activities, or road trips. Be sure to comply with instructions given by the local authorities in the event of storm warnings.

Because of the dangers they represent, threats from hurricanes (early June to late November), tornadoes (year-round), and floods (especially in spring) should never be taken lightly. The Louisiana Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness recommends that *all* Louisiana residents put together an [emergency kit](#) and establish an emergency plan in the case of a disaster. You might also consider visiting Louisiana’s [Get a Game Plan](#) website and downloading the free app. **In the case of a school closure, IATs must check in with their sponsor (CODOFIL for French teachers and LDOE for Spanish teachers) and may check in with their corresponding Consulates or Embassies.**

### Floods

Because of Louisiana’s low elevation, some areas can be prone to flooding. It is important to inquire about potential flooding in your area before renting a home or apartment. Even brief, but heavy rainfall in certain areas may cause flash flooding (a flooding event that happens with little or no warning). In the event that a flash flood warning is issued in your area, be sure to follow authorities’ instructions. Never drive on streets that are flooded, even if the amount of water on the road seems passable. Your car could flood or be swept off the road.

### Hurricanes

Hurricane risks are frequent on both the Atlantic and Gulf coasts (Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas). Hurricane season begins in early June and ends in late November. When there is a hurricane or threat of a hurricane nearing Louisiana, two alert phases are used to notify residents: a *hurricane watch* (observe and be ready) and a *hurricane warning* (take precautions). Hurricanes are classified into 5 categories (5 signifying the most intense storm with a speed of 250+ km/hour). A hurricane can produce additional severe weather events such as thunderstorms, hail, tornadoes, and flooding. During a hurricane threat, it is important to stay tuned to local weather broadcasts so you are better able to track the path of the storm and be aware of potential evacuation mandates. Talk with colleagues, mentors, school liaison, supervisor for advice specific to your area and/or event. ***In the event of a hurricane in your area, you must check in with your visa sponsor and with your Consulate/Embassy.***

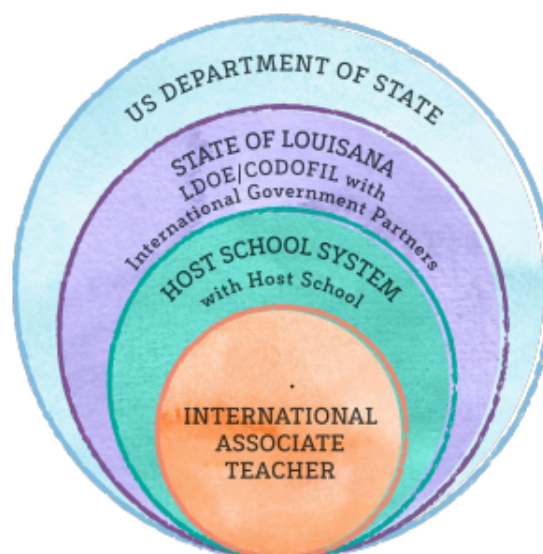
### Tornadoes

Tornado season begins in March and ends in June. If there is a threat of a potential tornado in your area, authorities will issue a *tornado watch* which means there is a likelihood of a tornado in your area. A *tornado warning* is issued when a tornado has been spotted in your area. As soon as a watch or warning is announced, it is important to comply with the safety instructions given by the authorities. Your school will also have a plan in place in case a watch or warning is issued during school hours.

## Work Life in Louisiana

As a Louisiana International Associate Teacher, you have multiple international, national, state, and local agencies and departments available to help make your transition to life and work in Louisiana a success.

This section will discuss these layers of support and provide practical information for working in the state of Louisiana.



## State Level Information

In the subsequent parts below, you will learn information related to the structure of, as well as, the support and guidance offered by the State of Louisiana to all International Associate Teachers.

### The Educational System of Louisiana

The educational system of Louisiana is a Kindergarten to grade 12 system, with some schools offering a PreKindergarten option. Schools in Louisiana usually fall into three basic categories.

- Elementary School (K-5)
- Middle School (6-8)
- High School (9-12)

Note the chart below for age levels for each corresponding grade.

GRADE	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
AGE	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	Elementary						Middle			High			

### State of Louisiana Agencies

This section provides an overview of the different state agencies available to support you during your time in Louisiana.

#### BESE

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education ([BESE](#)) is a democratic body established by the 1974 Louisiana Constitution. It is composed of 11 members, eight of whom are elected to represent the interests of their local population. BESE embodies the partnership between government, commerce, and education. It is BESE that enforces laws and establishes regulations for education throughout the state. In 1984 BESE, made the teaching of world languages compulsory in grades 4-8.



#### Louisiana Department of Education

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) has functions similar to those of the ministries of education in other countries. However, it does not have the same centralized power. Under the direction of the State Superintendent of Education (appointed by the BESE) this government agency is responsible for advising, disseminating educational information, and developing educational programs. LDOE serves as the visa sponsor for teachers of Spanish.

The Office of Teaching and Learning's division of Academic Content at the Department of Education manages [World Languages Programs](#) in Louisiana. In partnership with French, Mandarin, and

Spanish-speaking state and federal governments, LDOE uses the skills of international teachers to develop French, Mandarin, and Spanish education programs in Louisiana. It is through this department that teachers from different countries such as Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, France, Mexico and Spain are recruited, certified, and supervised. Full details can be found in the [Guide for Administrators of Elementary Level Second Language and Immersion Programs in Louisiana Schools](#).

### **Council for the Development of French in Louisiana**

Created in 1968 by the Louisiana State Legislature, the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL), according to [Legislative Act No. 409](#), was empowered to “do any and all things necessary to accomplish the development, utilization, and preservation of the French language as found in Louisiana for the cultural, economic and touristic benefit of the state.” CODOFIL works collaboratively with LDOE and foreign government partners to recruit and support international teachers of French for Louisiana. CODOFIL also serves as the visa sponsor for teachers of French.

### **State of Louisiana Teacher Professionalism**

- Student security and confidentiality are paramount.
- All adults are role models for the children in their school and should act as such.
- All schools are designated as *gun-free* and *drug-free* zones which means that teachers may not have these items with them on campus - including in their car. *Drug-free* not only means illegal drugs but any controlled substances such as alcohol and tobacco.
- Teachers may not smoke on school campuses including the parking lot and violators may be fined. If you smoke, ask if there is a designated smoking location.

### **State of Louisiana Teacher Certification**

International Associate Teachers are certified to teach in Louisiana by LDOE using the [World Language Certificate \(WLC\)](#). This certification helps to ensure that international teachers teach within their area of specialty and certification. Completion of this certification process is essential for keeping a teaching position in Louisiana.

#### **WLC Information**

- The WLC is reserved ONLY for International Associate Teachers recruited directly by the State of Louisiana (LDOE/CODOFIL).
- There is no application fee associated with the initial WLC application, or with its renewal.
- In most cases, applicants DO NOT need to have their diplomas and transcripts translated or evaluated by an outside source for the issuance of the WLC. Degree status will be determined by the LDOE, Division of Curriculum Standards. If LDOE staff cannot make a determination of degree equivalency, the candidate must have his/her credentials evaluated by a credentialing agency that follows the standards of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) for evaluation. *Note: Translation of transcripts may be needed for additional certification transactions.*
- Certification can be verified on the [Teach Louisiana](#) website.
- The WLC is valid for six (6) years and may be renewed by successfully meeting the standards of effectiveness for at least three years during the six-year initial or renewal period pursuant to state law and [Bulletin 130](#).
- The WLC DOES NOT allow for add-on certifications such as administration, ESL, etc.

### School System Certification Steps

- School systems should help first year teachers complete this application during their onboarding process. Detailed WLC Application instructions can be found in the document [WLC Steps](#).
- School systems should upload WLC applications along with diplomas and transcripts to the [Teach LA Live!](#) portal by mid-September or upon receipt of the new teacher’s Social Security number.

### State of Louisiana Sponsored Professional Development

Each year, the Louisiana Department of Education publishes a calendar of professional development opportunities for world languages and dual language immersion teachers. These professional development opportunities are usually free of charge, but paid-for sessions and conferences are sometimes included.

As a part of the support provided by the State of Louisiana, each September a full day of professional development is provided for all J-1 teachers. This is a mandatory professional development day held in Baton Rouge at the Claiborne Building. For this session, you will be given the day off from your teaching duties to attend. This is a great opportunity to meet other teachers in the program, learn new things, and meet with the Louisiana team to discuss how your year is going.

### School System Level Information

Schools in the United States, including Louisiana, are decentralized. Throughout the U.S., there are approximately 16,000 ministries of education and school districts, and each has the right to decide what is best for the students in their charge and how to best educate those students. For this reason, it is important to understand that the following information is typical but not universal. Your experience in Louisiana may be different from colleagues in other districts, but it should be equitable.

### Types of Schools

**Non-public or Private schools** are private entities that, in many cases, follow the guidelines outlined by LDOE and BESE regarding governance, content, and curriculum.

**Public schools** are governed by federal and state education laws. Louisiana public schools are governed by BESE. Louisiana has 1303 public schools and 70 public school districts.

- **Magnet schools** are schools with high academic expectations or provide a specialized curriculum. In most cases, students have to apply and be accepted into these types of schools.

**Charter schools** are independent public schools that are free to be more innovative and are held accountable for improved student achievement. For more information on charter schools in Louisiana, read [Louisiana Charter Schools At-A-Glance](#).

### Parish/Charter School Board

Louisiana is divided into parishes, similar to counties in other states. Each parish or charter school has its own regulations that are enacted by the central agency called a *school board*. This commission is elected by the population of the parish. This commission is your employer.



***Be aware that many Louisiana school districts conduct a drug test as part of the final hiring steps. If you fail a drug test, you will NOT be employed and will be required to return to your country.***

## **School System Employees**

### **Superintendent**

The School System Superintendent is chosen by the parish/charter school board and acts as the head of the school system. He/She is responsible for the implementation of the local school policy.

### **World Language Supervisor**

The school system's World Language Supervisor will be a main point of contact for you. He/She will help with installation and as the World Language program manager. He/She is responsible for your assignment, the purchase and distribution of educational materials for the program, and the continuity of the program from one level to the next. The World Language Supervisor will also assist you in the administrative procedures specific to your parish.

### **Human Resources**

Your school system's Human Resources Department will assist you with necessary employment and onboarding information unique to your school system. Representatives from this department will also assist you with obtaining your Louisiana teaching certificate.

### **Payroll Department**

Representatives from your school system's payroll department will advise you on salary, payment options, payroll deductions. This department will also be responsible for securing your stipends and assisting you with tax related questions.

## **School Facilities**

School facilities throughout the state vary from parish to parish. While new, more modern schools have been built recently throughout the state, many schools are older constructions. In most cases, older schools have been renovated and fitted with modern amenities like computers, iPads, smart boards, and WIFI. You will find that each school is as unique as its community.

## **School Level Information**

This section provides an overview of common school level information. Please be aware that each school is unique and has its own rules and procedures. Your school administrator will provide you with information specific to your school.

## **School Level Employees**

In your school, it is important to know your supervisors, colleagues, and their individual function as well. Below you will find information about the different positions found in Louisiana schools, along with a description of each. You will find that most schools have all or some of the positions listed.

### **School Administration**

All members of a school's administrative team are certified in school administration. They have earned a college degree and passed national exams in educational leadership, which includes many topics including teaching methodology, school management and safety, educational law, school finance, ethics, etc. They are the ultimate role-model for teachers and students alike, and as such, will demand the same from its teachers.

### **Principal and Assistant Principals**

Each school will be led by a principal. The principal is considered the head of the school and is responsible for all important decisions. Along with the principal, schools (depending on the size) will have one or more assistant principals. The job of assistant principal(s) usually consists of teacher supervision, student discipline, and/or curriculum development. Either the principal or assistant principal will be in charge of observing and providing a performance evaluation annually.

### **Lead Teachers**

A lead teacher is a teacher that heads a grade level or department. Lead teachers are typically experienced teachers that work to help guide and support other teachers in that grade or department. In some cases, teachers in the grade level or department work directly with, or report to their lead teacher regarding problems and concerns with students, curriculum, and scheduling.

### **Mentor Teachers**

An experienced teacher will be assigned to help you become acquainted with your school and help you understand its rules and procedures, such as grading scales, discipline plans, and duty. Your mentor teacher should be the first person you reach out to for help, explanations, and advice.

### **Teachers**

By law, all teachers in Louisiana must have, at minimum, a Bachelor's Degree and pass a criminal background check. To be a certified teacher, you must also have successfully completed a teacher preparation program and pass all tests required for certification.

### **Librarian**

The librarian manages the school's library. In some cases, your class may be able to visit the library by appointment. The librarian may also be in charge of overseeing the use of some teacher resources such as textbooks and teacher resources, a die cut machine, or laminator.

### **School Counselor**

The school counselor communicates student accommodations, facilitates family communications and conferences, and coordinates some learning or discipline interventions

### **Security Officer**

Most schools in Louisiana have a Student Resource Officer (SRO). The SRO is on campus to provide a link between the school, community, and local law enforcement agencies. Be aware that most SROs are professional law enforcement officers and carry a holstered firearm at all times.

### **Technology Coordinator**

The school's technology coordinator is in charge of all audio visual equipment, including smart boards, iPads, and computers. Because the types of technology available for student and teacher use vary from school to school, it is important to contact the technology coordinator at your school to learn more about available resources. In many schools, the technology coordinator is also the librarian or a part-time teacher.

### **Testing coordinator**

A school's testing coordinator is responsible for state standardized tests and all related regulations. Testing coordinators may also assist with diagnostic and benchmark testing throughout the year. Generally, in immersion, it is necessary to know the results of these tests to direct and inform teaching.

### Teaching Assistants

Very rarely teachers may be assigned a teaching assistant or paraprofessional to assist in a pre-kindergarten classroom or with one or more students who require an assistant as part of their special education plan.

### Support Personnel

In addition to instructional and administrative staff, schools will have a staff of support personnel who help the school run efficiently and effectively. Members of the support staff include secretaries, custodians, and administrative assistants.

### Student Teachers

College students who are in their last year of study to become a teacher spend a year in a school as part of their internship. They observe and teach under the guidance of their mentor teacher.

## School Policies and Procedures

Each school has developed its own unique teacher handbook that outlines the rules and regulations a teacher must follow at the school and school system. You should follow the guidelines outlined in the handbook for your school. Be aware that the rules and procedures you are expected to follow may differ slightly from others in the program.

### Common Teacher Responsibilities

- Keep accurate daily attendance.
- Create weekly lesson plans in accordance with school/system guidelines.
- Maintain appropriate communications with school staff and parents.
- Participate in required professional developments.

### Common School Level Rules

- Schools will have a teacher professionalism and dress code policy that must be followed by employees. In most cases, teachers are asked to wear conservative professional clothing. Be aware that schools may have rules about tight and/or revealing clothing, facial hair, visible piercings and/or tattoos, and personal hygiene. Principals have the right to send teachers home to change if they are in violation of the dress code.
- Specific daily tasks, outside of classroom responsibilities, are assigned to each teacher. These are referred to as *duty*. Duty usually consists of monitoring students during arrival, dismissal, recess, or lunch times.
- Most schools will have specific procedures regarding record keeping, lesson plans, and for taking leave.



### Daily Schedule

All IATs are required to work a full day teaching in his/her target language. The length of a normal teacher workday is usually 300 minutes. This estimation includes planning time. Teachers will be required to submit a copy of their daily schedule to LDOE and/or CODOFIL annually. A copy of the schedule template will be provided in the IAT Google Classroom.



Sample daily schedules for Elementary and Middle School Early World Language (EWL) and Dual Language Immersion can be found in [Appendix C](#).

In addition to teaching duties, on certain days during the week or month, teachers may be required to extend their day either in the morning or afternoon to complete a required duty. Additionally, teachers may be required to attend school open houses or parent nights after school hours. These functions usually take place once a semester.

You may also have the opportunity to help with extra-curricular activities such as helping with a club or coaching a team. These opportunities are normally voluntary.

## Teacher Professionalism

### Student Monitoring and Security

Children's safety and security is of utmost importance to schools. School officials must know where students are on campus at all times. Students cannot be left unsupervised. Because of this, all teachers are required to remain on campus for the duration of the school day. Teachers are also required to participate in duty, or the surveillance of children during times of potential danger, such as entering and exiting campus, class change, lunch time, or recess.

### Teacher Attendance

Every day, as soon as you arrive at the school and just before leaving at the end of the day, you must indicate your arrival and departure time on a sheet. This sheet is usually placed at the entrance of the teachers' room or in the secretary's office. Do not forget to complete it daily to avoid "convocations" at the principal's office.

- *Sick Leave* - In most cases, teachers receive 10 days of sick leave per year, with the option to carry over unused sick leave to the next school year. Each school and school district has a published sick leave policy. Teachers must follow their school's sick leave policy. Consult your principal or mentor teacher if you have questions concerning sick leave.
- *Substitute Teacher Requests* - If you are absent from school for any reason, a substitute teacher must be secured for your classes. Each school has a published plan for requesting a substitute teacher. This plan should be followed. You will be required to provide the substitute teacher with plans for the day, student rolls, and lists of daily duties. *Be aware that substitute teachers generally do not speak the language you are teaching.* In some cases, you may be asked to prepare a substitute teacher binder in advance to have on file in case of emergency absences.

### Duty

Duty is the monitoring of student behavior outside of the classroom. Each school establishes a *duty schedule* which fairly distributes these responsibilities to all adults on campus. Possible assignments may include recess duty, morning and/or afternoon bus duty, carpool duty, breakfast or lunch duty, or other responsibilities. If you are unable to perform your duty for any reason, including being absent, make sure to inform your principal in advance. ***If an accident were to occur and a child was injured during your duty and you were not present, then you can be held legally liable.***

### Lesson Planning

All teachers will be required to submit lesson plans for review to their principal or supervisor. These are most commonly expected weekly, but your school leaders will give you guidance on their specific expectations. Lesson plan guidelines and requirements vary from school to school. In most cases you will

receive training and/or handouts explaining lesson plan requirements. If you have any questions, ask your mentor teacher or principal.

### Record Keeping

Accurate record keeping is important and mandatory in all school settings. Each school/school system has a clearly stated procedure for recording daily attendance and grades. Teachers should follow these guidelines.

- *Daily Attendance* - Teachers are responsible for taking attendance daily and/or hourly depending on teacher assignment type. In most cases attendance is taken using an online computer format.
- *Grades* - All grades must be based on a measurable amount of points that can be converted to letter grades based on percentages. In most cases, schools use an online grading system where both students and parents have access to grades in real time. Grades are usually formally delivered to students and parents several times throughout the school year.
  - *Progress Report or Interim Report* - At the half-way point in a grading period teachers will be required to submit progress reports. It is essential to send a letter or email in advance to the parents of students who have a grade below C (D = Danger of Failing). Your school normally has ready-made forms and online grading systems have made communication easier.
  - *Report Card* - Report cards are issued every 9 or 6 weeks, usually at the end of a quarter. If your course is not graded, then consider other creative ways to communicate with families - e.g. by creating a class newsletter published quarterly.

A common rating scale is used to measure student performance. Many school districts use the scale below but should be checked with the school.

93 – 100%	A
85 – 92%	B
75 – 84%	C
67 – 74%	D
0 – 66%	F

For a list of common workplace terms, see [Appendix D](#).

### IAT Evaluations

All IATs must be observed in accordance with Louisiana’s [Bulletin 130](#) at least twice during the school year by school administration using an observation tool that aligns with the Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching. However, school principals and district supervisors may formally and informally observe and evaluate their teachers on a more regular basis. Teachers in their first year of the program will receive an additional informal observation in the fall.

The [IAT Evaluation Form](#) will be completed annually in February for all IATs and is used as a primary document when the Louisiana team and foreign governments make decisions as to whether or not a foreign teacher will stay in the program the following year. The school system's designated supervisor has the responsibility of reviewing all principal evaluations and confirming teacher performance. The goal for all International Associate Teachers is to meet the Effective rating of 2 or better. Everyone has room for growth and a perfect score (4) is extremely rare.

An end of program exit evaluation will be completed by administrators annually for each IAT exiting the program. This evaluation provides a snapshot of the teacher’s work in Louisiana as well as his or her professional growth and development while participating in the program.

**Additional Observation Methods**

- **Compass** - An evaluation tool of teachers that is based on observations of teachers. This tool places high value on the environment established by the teacher by measuring students' understanding of the established routines and of students initiating learning. Compass support materials can be found on the Department’s [Compass](#) page.
- **Value Added Model (VAM)** - An evaluation method of teachers where schools compare students’ standardized test scores from the previous year to the current year to evaluate each student’s growth in the subject. **The value that is added to a student’s score from one year to the next is attributed to the efforts of the teacher that taught the subject.** Students who score high scores reflect that the student achieved at a level higher than predicted. Students who score low scores reflect that the student achieved at a level less than predicted. *Only the CODOFIL/International Associate Teachers in the chart below will be evaluated according to this system comparing their students’ scores to the standardized tests.*

<b>3rd grade</b>	<i>English Language Arts</i>	Math		
<b>4th grade</b>	<i>English Language Arts</i>	Math	Science	Social Studies
<b>5th grade</b>	<i>English Language Arts</i>	Math	Science	Social Studies
<b>6th grade</b>	<i>English Language Arts</i>	Math	Science	Social Studies
<b>7th grade</b>	<i>English Language Arts</i>	Math	Science	Social Studies
<b>8th grade</b>	<i>English Language Arts</i>	Math	Science	Social Studies

It is important to note that all persons conducting teacher observations have completed annual training. For more information, refer to [Understanding the Evaluation Framework](#).

**Salaries, Taxation, and Withholdings**

This section includes information and guidance on salaries, stipends, taxation, and withholdings while participating in the International Associate Teacher Program.

**Salaries and Stipends**

In accordance with BESE guidelines, International Associate Teacher salaries are set annually based on the average Louisiana salary of teachers with 3 years experience. All teachers receive this minimum salary. The figures below, provided by the LDOE, show an example salary schedule for 2021-2022. LDOE sends a memo to parish supervisors each year, updating the salary schedule. IAT salary schedules are updated annually.

2021–2022 Salaries	
Year 1	\$45,158
Year 2	\$45,998
Year 3	\$46,781
Year 4	\$47,334
Year 5	\$47,701

Provided that the Louisiana Legislature renews provisions annually, you will receive, in addition to your salary, a stipend each year for your first three years of the program. This stipend will be distributed as follows.\*

- 1<sup>st</sup> year: \$6000 distributed at the end of September
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year: \$4000 distributed at the end of May
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year: \$4000 distributed at the end of May

*\*All stipend amounts are shown pre-tax. Participants are only eligible to receive the stipends once. Teachers returning for a second cycle or more will not receive a stipend.*

## Taxes

International associate teachers employed under J-1 visas are generally subject to United States and Louisiana income tax withholdings. However, the United States currently holds tax treaties with several countries of which international associate teachers are citizens. [Publication 901 U.S. Tax Treaties](#) outlines countries with which the United States holds tax treaties. ***Currently French, Belgian, and Chinese (Peoples' Republic of China) citizens are exempt from state and federal taxation for a two year period as stipulated in their respective tax treaties under Article 20.*** If you qualify, this exemption starts on the day you arrive in the United States to begin work. In the majority of cases, IATs arrive in late July. If this is true for you, it will give you an exemption for two full school years. When you meet the two year tax exemption, you should receive a 1042-S AND a W2 tax form from your school district in the same year. ***Teachers from countries that do not have tax treaties with the United States are subject to tax withholding from the beginning of their employment as an international associate teacher.*** Teachers without tax exemptions are taxed for the duration of the period of validity of their J-1 visas and will receive a W2 tax form from their districts annually at the end of January.

All international associate teachers, even those with tax exemptions, MUST file income tax returns annually. You should use an [IRS Form 1040-NR \(instructions\)](#) or an [IRS Form 1040-NR EZ \(instructions\)](#). If you do not file a return or claim the exemption, you may become retroactively responsible for back taxes. IRS forms, instructions, and publications pertaining to the taxation of foreign persons are available at [IRS](#). Your school system should help you to understand your income tax liabilities. If you have questions, please reach out to them.

Taxpayers may submit international tax questions in writing to the following address:  
 Internal Revenue Service  
 P. O. Box 920  
 Bensalem, PA 19020

## Medicare

Usually, international associate teachers who are first-time J-1 visa holders are considered “nonresident aliens,” temporarily present in the United States in non-immigrant status and ***are exempt from paying Medicare taxes for the first three semesters of their employment.*** Thus, in January of your third calendar year of employment, you must have Medicare withheld from your earnings. For example, IATs beginning their teaching assignment in the fall of 2021 would begin paying in January of 2023. However, IATs who have previously worked in the United States are liable for Medicare withholdings according to the length of their previous employment in the U.S. In general, unless they have not earned wages in the United States for the previous six (6) years, they must pay Medicare. This difference between Medicare and taxes may create a situation where a teacher is still exempt from taxes yet must begin paying Medicare. This usually happens from January to May of the teacher’s second school year of teaching. Your school district’s Human Resources and Payroll Department will be able to answer any questions you may have about Medicare withholdings.

## Social Security

International Associate Teachers working in Louisiana charter schools or private schools as nonresident aliens are exempt from Social Security on wages paid to them for services performed within the United States as long as such services are allowed by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) for these nonimmigrant statuses and such services are performed to carry out the purposes for which they were admitted into the United States. As with the Medicare Withholdings exemption, this Social Security Withholdings exemption is lost if the individual in J-1 status becomes a resident under the residency tax rules. Please see [Aliens Employed in the U.S. - Social Security Taxes](#). For more information, visit the Social Security Administration online or call 1-800-772-1213.

## Teachers’ Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL)

Public school systems in Louisiana use the Teachers’ Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL) for employee retirement funds. As an IAT, you qualify for this retirement fund. If your school system participates in this system, you can expect 8% of your monthly income to be deposited into your TRSL fund. At the end of your time in Louisiana, you can request a refund for the monies paid into your TRSL account. This reimbursement may be subject to tax at 30%. Teachers may receive reimbursements in one of two ways:

- Direct deposit (ONLY available to a U.S. bank or U.S. financial institution), or
- Paper check mailed to a foreign address - Correct address format is needed.

**Unvested Employees (<5 years)** - Your school system helps you complete TRSL’s [Form 7D - Refund of Contributions](#) to have contributions returned via direct deposit.

- Employees complete and sign Member Sections 1 & 2 immediately at termination.
- Employers must wait at least 90 days after the employee’s termination date to complete the remainder of the form, sign Employer Section 3, and submit to TRSL.

**Vested Employees (5+ years)** - Your school system will counsel you about your options at the time of exiting the IAT program or refer you to a TRSL representative.

- If requesting the reimbursement of funds, vested members will be required to fill out additional forms [W-8BEN, Vested Member (Form 7E), etc.].
- Resident aliens (meet the Substantial Presence Test) will complete the IRS Form W-9 (Resident Aliens). Because the TRSL contributions were payroll deductions withheld each pay period on a tax sheltered (pre-tax) basis, employees that meet the substantial presence test will have 20% withheld from their refund for taxes.

## J-1 Visa Information

The following sections contain important information regarding the requirements for maintaining your J-1 Visa. Additional information regarding your visa will be provided at the summer orientation session as well as online in the International Associate Teacher Google Classroom.

### Cultural Exchange Projects

As a part of your exchange program, you are **required by the U.S. Department of State** to complete a Cultural Exchange Project every year. This project is comprised of two components:

- **Cross-Cultural Presentation** - presentation of an overview or aspect of your home country/culture to your classroom, host school, or the community at large.
  - *Classroom Example:* Serve as a guest speaker from the home culture in a Social Sciences class for non-immersion students sharing information on a topic pre-determined by the American teacher. Design a presentation for a university course when enrolled in a public Louisiana university.
  - *Schoolwide Example:* Create an interactive presentation that incorporates art, music and photography from the home culture to be presented to the school at large during an assembly or incorporated into the school's routine. Add to school wide celebrations as they would be celebrated in his/her home country. Organize a traditional game for the school's Fall Fair. Organize a celebration to introduce a holiday not typically celebrated in Louisiana.
  - *Community Example:* Establish a booth or table at a location (i.e. local festival, public library, *table francaise*, school's parent night) to distribute information from the home country and include a traditional cultural-based activity for Louisiana children to do/experience. (i.e. play a game, make art, learn a song or nursery rhyme).
- **Cross-Cultural Exchange** - an activity that involves a dialogue between the visiting teacher's students in the U.S. and school(s) and/or students in another country, preferably the teacher's home country.
  - *Virtual Example:* Establish ongoing contact via scheduled Skype/FaceTime/Google Meet video-conversations, class sponsored Twitter hashtag, Instagram or Snapchat tours of cultural experiences such as a school dance or a crawfish boil. Use social media to establish real time relationships between students in Louisiana and the home culture.
  - *Student to Student Example:* Create and exchange video postcards, written correspondence, photo albums or gift packages on topics that focus on the student world (school, home, city, family, meals etc.) and that include questions for a natural development of language and exchange of interests.
  - **Learning Example:** Teachers select a theme to explore with a class in the home country and use file-sharing programs like Google Drive to share lessons, activities and student products.

***LDOE/CODOFIL will supply you with the appropriate forms to document your culture projects. Evidence of completion of the Cultural Exchange Project is submitted to LDOE/CODOFIL annually in March.***

To facilitate your cultural exchange, it is important to participate in local cultural experiences in your community and throughout Louisiana. Connect with your mentor teacher, colleagues, and neighbors to locate a calendar of local community events and to learn more about opportunities to attend athletic and/or cultural events sponsored by your school system, city, and parish.

## J-1 Visa Extensions

For teachers who are in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the J-1 visa, it is possible to apply for an extension for a 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year. The extension is not guaranteed by American immigration. The requesting teacher must be EXCEPTIONAL. Requests for extensions must be approved by:

- the teacher’s government and/or home school, if applicable,
- the principal of Louisiana host school,
- the school system department of Human Resources
- LDOE/CODOFIL, and
- by the U.S. Department of State (DOS).

Extension Request Timeline	
January 6	LDOE/CODOFIL sends Letter of Intent to IATs. IATs may ask for extensions at this time.
Step 1	The teacher must request an extension from his/her principal. This is non-negotiable. Extensions may ONLY be in the same school, which means that you cannot request a transfer, and principals have the right to refuse an extension.
February 1	Letter of Intent due to LDOE/CODOFIL.
Step 2	The teacher’s file is evaluated by CODOFIL and LDOE. Teacher’s evaluations, cross-cultural reports etc. are reviewed to determine if the teacher meets the “exceptional” criteria.
March 1	Extension application, principal letter, and payment due.
Step 3	The State of Louisiana submits the official request from the United States Department of State’s immigration. From there, a slight wait period of about one month before learning whether immigration accepts or rejects the extension.
Step 4	The teacher must interview with the American Embassy outside of the United States and this evaluator must approve the extension.

***\*Dates are approximate and may change annually or without notice.***

**Note:** Teachers who have already submitted an application for an H-1B visa to the U.S. government and as well as current H1 visas are not eligible for the extension.

### French Citizens

A French citizen detached from his/her Academie in France applying for an extension for a 4<sup>th</sup> year must request a *disponabilité*. The extension and *detachement* are different and independent of each other. Teachers will no longer be *detaché* and the extension granted by American immigration does not give you automatic *disponabilité* - one does not lead to the other. A teacher may have his/her extension accepted, but his/her *disponabilité* refused. This would result in the teacher returning to France.

## Appendix A - IAT Budget

		Canada	Belgium/France	All Other Countries
<b>Sponsor, Placement Fees</b>		Exempt	Exempt	Exempt
<b>Visa Fee</b>		Exempt	\$160	\$160
<b>SEVIS Fee I-901</b>		\$180	\$180	\$180
<b>Estimated Costs Upon Arrival</b>				
<b>Deposits:</b> Rent, Electricity, Water	+/- \$1300	<i>Suggestion: Come with enough money to cover 3 months expenses</i>		
<b>Estimate for Local Transportation</b>	<b>Purchase used vehicle:</b> \$4,000-\$8,000 <b>Car Insurance:</b> \$100-\$200/month <b>Gas:</b> ≈ \$75/month			
<b>Estimate for Monthly Housing Expenses</b> <i>Costs vary based on location and size.</i>	<b>Rent:</b> \$800-\$1200 <b>Electricity:</b> \$100 <b>Water:</b> \$50 <b>Cable:</b> \$50 <b>Telephone:</b> \$60 <b>Internet:</b> \$50 <i>Rental insurance optional</i>			
<b>Estimate for Food</b>	\$400/monthly			
<b>Estimated Deductions from Salary</b>				
<b>Louisiana Medical Insurance</b>	\$200/ monthly	ALL TEACHERS		
<b>Income taxes</b>	<25%	Canadian or American taxes	Tax exempt for first 18 months	Required
<b>FICA</b> <i>Social Security and Medicare</i>	8%	ONLY: Ecole Bilingue, International School of Louisiana, Lycée Français Exempt for first 18 months		
<b>Teacher Retirement System of Louisiana</b>	8%	ALL EXCEPT: Ecole Bilingue, International School of Louisiana, Lycée Français		
<b>*Note: Amounts are communicated in American Dollars.</b>				



# Appendix B - J2 Work Authorization

## Steps to Apply for a J-2 Dependent Work Authorization

1. Click the link below to fill out the I-765 application form.  
<https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/document/forms/i-765-aead.pdf>
2. Fill out the form I-765. Please see “How to Fill Out I-765 Form.”

### Documents to send with your application

- Copy of your I-94 (document with your entry date into USA)
    - Click on <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home> then click on “Get most recent I-94.”
  - Copy of your spouse’s DS-2019 (J-1)
  - Copy of your DS-2019
  - Copy of your wedding certificate in English or provide a certified translation of it.
  - Request letter (see sample on next page)
  - Copy of your passport (pages with your name, photo, and birthdate)
  - 2 passport pictures (in color) / Write in the back: your 1<sup>st</sup> and last name with a pencil
    - One check of **\$410** made to “**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**”
3. Send your application + copy of documents + pictures + payment by mail or Fedex/UPS.

Via the Post Office	Via FedEx or UPS
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>USCIS</b>            PO Box 660867            Dallas, TX 75266</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>USCIS</b>            Attn : NFB AOS            2501 S. State Hwy. 121 Business, Ste 400            Lewisville, TX 75067</p>

4. Be patient. The process can take 4 to 6 months.

**\*NOTE: Fees are subject to change without notice.**

**\*NOTE: Replace highlighted sections with your information**

Your address in Louisiana

123 rue Louisiane

Ville Platte, LA, 70000

July 13, 2018

USCIS

Dear Examiner,

I would like to apply for a J-2 employment authorization. My visa is valid until July 14, 2021; therefore, I would like to have an Employment Authorization valid until that date as well.

My wife's/husband's direct deposit statement shows that she/he earns \$2,500 per month from the Lafayette/Lafourche/Orleans Parish School Board to support us in the United States.

Our monthly budget is approximately as follows.

· \$1,200 for rent and utilities

· \$600 for food

· \$500 for clothing and transportation

· \$400 for health insurance

· \$...

· \$...

As the budget shows, we have enough to live modestly, but there is little money left over for non-essential expenses.

I would like to have an Employment Authorization because working is the best way for me to integrate myself to the community and to perfect my knowledge of the English language and American culture.

I understand that none of my earnings may be used to support my J-1 spouse, and that any money I earn will be used for cultural and recreational activities.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your name « typed »

# Appendix C - Daily Schedule Samples

## Sample Immersion Schedule - Elementary Early World Language (E-WL)

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:20 – 8:45	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty
8:45 – 9:15	Kindergarten Class A	1 <sup>st</sup> grade Class A	Kindergarten Class A	1 <sup>st</sup> grade Class A	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade Class A
9:20 – 9:50	Kindergarten Class B	1 <sup>st</sup> grade Class B	Kindergarten Class B	1 <sup>st</sup> grade Class B	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade Class B
9:55 – 10:25	Duty	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade Class A	Duty	Duty	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade Class A
10:30 – 11:00	PLC	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade Class B	PLC	PLC	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade Class B
11:05 – 11:35	4 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade Class A	4 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade Class A	4 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A
11:40 – 12:10	4 <sup>th</sup> grade Class B	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade Class B	4 <sup>th</sup> grade Class B	3 <sup>rd</sup> grade Class B	4 <sup>th</sup> grade Class B
12:10 – 12:40	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
12:40 – 13:00	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation
13:00 – 13:20	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
13:20 – 13:50	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A
13:55 – 14:25	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Class B	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Class B	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Class B	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Class B	5 <sup>th</sup> grade Class B
14:30 – 15:15	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation
15:15 – 15:30	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty

## Sample Immersion Schedule - Elementary Immersion (IMM)

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
7:25 - 7:55	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:00 - 9:35	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
9:35 - 9:40	Transition and Bathroom	Transition and Bathroom	Transition and Bathroom	Transition and Bathroom	Transition and Bathroom
9:40 - 10:00	IMM Language	IMM Language	IMM Language	IMM Language	IMM Language
10:00 - 11:00	RTI	RTI	RTI	RTI	RTI
11:00 - 11:20	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:20 - 11:40	IMM Language	IMM Language	IMM Language	IMM Language	IMM Language
11:40 - 12:45	RTI	RTI	RTI	RTI	RTI
12:45 - 1:15	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE
1:15 - 1:35	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
1:35 - 2:10	Social Studies/Sci	Social Studies/Sci	Social Studies/Sci	Social Studies/Sci	Social Studies/Sci
2:10 - 2:30	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

**Sample Schedule - Middle School  
Early World Language (E-WL)**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>Monday A-Day</b>	<b>Tuesday B-Day</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY A-Day</b>	<b>THURSDAY B-Day</b>	<b>FRIDAY A-Day/B-Day</b>
6:55 – 7:10	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty
7:10 – 7:30	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom
7:35 – 9:05	6 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A	6 <sup>th</sup> grade Class B	6 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A	6 <sup>th</sup> grade Class B	6 <sup>th</sup> grade Class A / Class B
9:10 – 10:50	7 <sup>th</sup> grade level 1 Class A	7 <sup>th</sup> grade level 1 Class B	7 <sup>th</sup> grade level 1 Class A	7 <sup>th</sup> grade level 1 Class B	7 <sup>th</sup> grade level 1 Class A / Class B
10:55 – 12:45 (includes lunch)	8 <sup>th</sup> grade level 2 Class A	8 <sup>th</sup> grade level 2 Class B	8 <sup>th</sup> grade level 2 Class A	8 <sup>th</sup> grade level 2 Class B	8 <sup>th</sup> grade level 2 Class A / Class B
12:45 – 13:00	Big Break Recess	Big Break Recess	Big Break Recess	Big Break Recess	Big Break Recess
13:00 – 14:30	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation
14:30 – 14:45	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty

**Sample Schedule - Middle School  
Immersion (IMM)**

<b>TIME</b>	<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>FRIDAY</b>
6:55 – 7:10	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty	Arrival & Duty
7:10 – 7:30	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom
7:35 – 9:05	6 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class A	6 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class B	6 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class A	6 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class B	6 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class A / Class B
9:10 – 10:50	7 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class A	7 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class B	7 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class A	7 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class B	7 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class A / Class B
10:55 – 12:45 (includes lunch)	8 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class A	8 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class B	8 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class A	8 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class B	8 <sup>th</sup> grade subject Class A / Class B
12:45 – 13:00	Big Break Recess	Big Break Recess	Big Break Recess	Big Break Recess	Big Break Recess
13:00 – 14:30	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation	Preparation
14:30 – 14:45	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty	Dismissal & Duty

## Appendix D - Frequently Used Terms

**Back-to-School Night / Open House** - this is the only official parent meeting of the entire school year. It takes place in the evening, usually after the first nine weeks of class (late September / early October). Your presence is mandatory! Be prepared to explain to parents the goals and methods of your course. Your colleagues will take advantage of this “social” meeting to dress up professionally. Ask your colleagues.

**Central Office** - the School Board Office, where the Superintendent, World Language Supervisor, Human Resources, and Payroll/Benefit Offices are located.

**Faculty Meetings** - a meeting held in a school building after school hours, at which you are required to attend. It’s part of your contract. Any derogation, even occasional, must be requested personally from your manager.

**Field Trip** - an educational excursion away from school during school hours. These excursions are announced either during faculty meetings or through a calendar in the teachers’ room. You may get a list of participating students. Try to plan your excursions as early in the year as possible and give the exact list of participants as early as possible. These trips take time and planning but are very rewarding.

**Home-School Communications** - communication between the home and school. The home and school are considered a team raising a child to meet his/her full potential. Often Louisiana families are very involved with the education of their children. Families appreciate knowing what is happening in the school so that they can support teachers and reinforce lessons at home. Teachers often use communication tools like class newsletters, Google classroom or the Remind App to send general information and reminders. Families also appreciate knowing how their children are doing in class through progress reports, daily or weekly check-ins, emails and phone calls.

**Inservice Meetings** - meeting outside the school campus, after school hours or a meeting in the school building organized in several sessions, on a pedagogical theme.

**Lesson Plans** - a detailed plan of the lessons you plan to teach in a given week. These plans are submitted to your principal or assistant principal weekly and will include descriptions of activities, materials, and resources you will use.

**Louisiana State Standards** - academic standards that define what students need to know, but not how students learn or how teachers teach. The guidance you need to teach for each subject including language (Modern language or immersion) can be found here: [Louisiana Academic Standards & Grade-Level Expectations](#).

**PLC (Professional Learning Community)** - a group of teachers who work collaboratively to improve their teaching skills and to improve the learning environment and outcomes of their students. In many cases this work takes place within and/or across grade levels within a school or school district.

**Pony Mail / Internal Mail** - free mail system allowing a link between the School Board/Central Office and the other schools in the parish.

**Professional Growth Plan (PGP)** - official document that all your colleagues must complete. With your mentor, use this [PGP planning document](#) to set unique professional goals for yourself to be achieved by

the end of the school year. These objectives must be measurable and related to your course; they consist of self-study and specific activities to enrich your course. You will need to detail how you will achieve your objectives and the criteria for evaluating whether you have achieved them.

**Resource Center** - a center where educational material is made available to the teachers of a parish. You must request access and possibly pay for certain services. The [Louisiana Resource Center for Educators \(LRCE\)](#) in Baton Rouge also has useful 3D materials that can be used as teaching support.

**Roll / Roster / Student List** - list of your students by class. A list of absentees for the day is quickly communicated to the teacher at the beginning of the day, often online. Check with the “office” if you suspect that a student is missing.

**School Calendar / Activities Calendar** - a monthly/annual calendar of schoolwide events and activities. This schedule, made in advance, is subject to change but take it into account when preparing and organizing activities. If you are organizing activities with your students, you will also need to create a briefing note and have it approved by the principal for distribution to your colleagues.

**School Office** - the Main Office of school personnel that serves as the welcome desk for visitors. Personnel such as the school secretary, clerks, security guard, etc. work at the “front desk”. In a practical sense, it is intended for students with disciplinary problems that cannot be solved in class without unduly disrupting the course. Use the intercom in your classroom to call “the office.”

**School Performance Scores (SPS)** - the letter grade awarded to schools based on a numeric score from 0-150. The majority of the score is based on how students perform on standardized tests each spring. This letter grade not only impacts the school, but also the entire community. Watch [School Performance Scores](#) for more information and visit the [Louisiana School Finder](#) to research a specific school.

**Student Learning Targets (SLT)** - learning targets for student performance. Each teacher must do two at the beginning of the year and post them online after approval by his evaluator. It is a question of the teacher determining a goal to be achieved for the specific progression of a group of students. This involves comparing data representing the level of a group of students at the beginning of the year (baseline data) with other data collected at the end of the year and thus quantitatively determining the progress of this group of students in a subject.

**Supervisor** - a person legally entitled to observe teachers in a particular field. In the case of CODOFIL / International Associate Teachers, this person serves as the official link between teachers, the School Board and the Louisiana Department of Education.

**Teachers’ Lounge** - a space within the school reserved for teacher use. This space may be used for teachers to work collaboratively and or gather during free times. This space may have a refrigerator, microwave, sink, and restroom for teacher use.

**Teacher Mailbox** - an internal mailbox at a school. It is often located in the teachers’ lounge, all documents and forms concerning you will be deposited there. Teachers should check their mailboxes at least twice a day: when you arrive, during your planning period, and at the end of the day before leaving.

**Teacher Workroom** - space reserved for teachers which may include a copy machine, laminator, computers, and other materials for teacher use.

## Appendix E - Teacher Toolkit

Advocacy and Support	
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages <a href="#">ACTFL</a>	Center for Advanced Language Proficiency Education and Research <a href="#">CALPER</a>
Joint National Committee for Languages - National Council for Languages and International Studies <a href="#">JNCL-NCLIS</a>	<a href="#">Lead with Languages Advocacy Tool Kit</a>
Louisiana Foreign Language Teachers' Association <a href="#">LFLTA</a>	National Association of District Supervisors of Foreign Language <a href="#">NADSFL</a>
National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Language <a href="#">NCSSFL</a>	National Network for Early Language Learning <a href="#">NNELL</a>

Louisiana World Languages Legislation	
<a href="#">RS 17:272</a> French language and culture; Teaching French in public schools	<a href="#">RS 17:273</a> Second languages; Teaching World Languages in public schools
<a href="#">RS 17:273.1</a> Critical languages; Teaching critical languages in public schools	<a href="#">RS 17:273.2</a> Foreign Language immersion programs: Certification process and criteria
<a href="#">RS 17:273.3</a> Foreign language immersion programs: Creation by local school boards and parent petition	<a href="#">RS 17:273.4</a> State Seal of Bilingualism
<a href="#">RS 17:284</a> American Sign Language (ASL) in secondary schools	<a href="#">RS 17:285</a> African languages in public schools
<a href="#">RS 17:10.1</a> School and district accountability system: Purpose and responsibilities of state board	

<b>World Languages Teacher and Immersion Resources</b>	
<a href="#">Louisiana Department of Education World Languages Landing Page</a>	
<a href="#">The Louisiana World Languages Compendium</a>	<a href="#">The Louisiana International Associate Teacher Program</a>
<a href="#">Louisiana American Sign Language Standards</a>	<a href="#">Louisiana Immersion Language Standards</a>
<a href="#">Louisiana Modern Language Standards</a>	<a href="#">Louisiana World Language Proficiency Targets</a>
<a href="#">World Language Thematic Unit Planner (LDOE)</a>	<a href="#">World Language Lesson Planner (LDOE)</a>
<a href="#">Novice Level Scope and Sequence (LDOE)</a>	<a href="#">Intermediate Level Scope and Sequence (LDOE)</a>
<a href="#">Advanced Level Scope and Sequence (LDOE)</a>	<a href="#">World Languages Glossary of Acronyms and Terms (LDOE)</a>
<a href="#">Administrator’s Guide to Observation and Feedback (LDOE)</a>	<a href="#">World Language Certification (WLC) Steps for J1 Teacher Certification</a>
<b>Helpful Websites</b>	
<a href="#">Advanced Placement (AP) - World Languages</a>	<a href="#">International Baccalaureate Program</a>
<a href="#">LinguaFolio</a>	<a href="#">21st Century Skills Map</a>
<a href="#">National Foreign Language Resource Centers</a>	