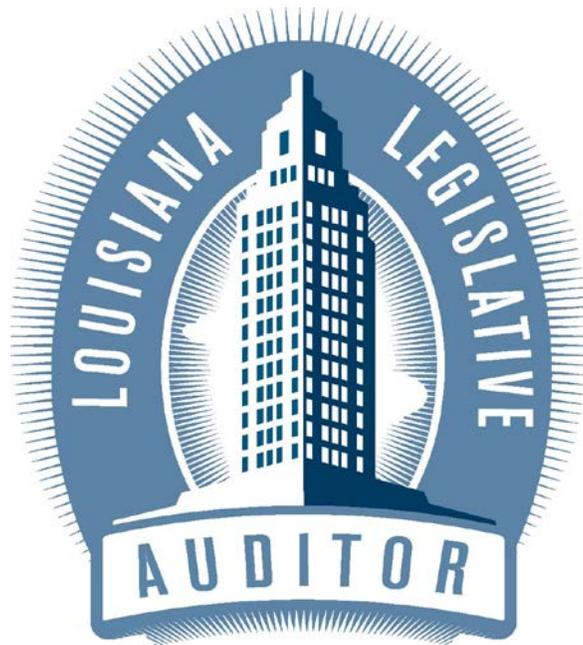


LOUISIANA YOUTH FOR EXCELLENCE  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR



FINANCIAL AUDIT SERVICES  
INFORMATIONAL REPORT  
ISSUED APRIL 29, 2015

**LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR  
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**DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL AUDIT**  
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LOUISIANA LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR  
DARYL G. PURPERA, CPA, CFE

April 29, 2015

The Honorable John A. Alario, Jr.,  
President of the Senate  
The Honorable Charles E. "Chuck" Kleckley,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Dear Senator Alario and Representative Kleckley:

This report provides the results of our review of the Office of Louisiana Youth for Excellence (LYFE) within the Office of the Governor. The purpose of this review was to determine if LYFE is fulfilling its duties and achieving the goals required by the Executive Order BJ 09-09.

The report contains the issues we identified and recommendations for improvement. Appendix A contains LYFE's response. I hope this report will benefit you in your legislative decision-making process.

We would like to express our appreciation to the management and staff of LYFE for their assistance during this review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daryl G. Purpera". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Daryl G. Purpera, CPA, CFE  
Legislative Auditor

GM:ETM:BQD:EFS:aa

LYFE 2015



# Louisiana Legislative Auditor

Daryl G. Purpera, CPA, CFE



## Louisiana Youth for Excellence Office of the Governor

April 2015

Audit Control # 80140131

### Introduction

Pursuant to Executive Order BJ 09-09 (Executive Order) signed by Governor Bobby Jindal in July 2009, the Office of Louisiana Youth for Excellence (LYFE) was established and created within the Office of the Governor, replacing the Office of Abstinence Education.<sup>1</sup> The goals of LYFE include providing abstinence education and positive youth development to 12-19 year olds in Louisiana to lower the incidences of out-of-wedlock teen pregnancies and reduce the rate of sexually-transmitted diseases. Nationally, Louisiana ranks first in reported cases of gonorrhea, second in reported cases of chlamydia, third in reported cases of syphilis,<sup>2</sup> and fifth in teen pregnancies.<sup>3</sup> In response to a legislative request and as part of our audit coverage of the Executive Department, we conducted a review of LYFE.

**Curriculum.** LYFE selected *Choosing the Best* as the vendor for the curriculum that is used in the program. The curriculum includes publications that are purchased directly from the publisher and is provided to participating schools and parishes. The curriculum is free of charge to all high schools and middle schools in Louisiana, and no funds are provided directly to the schools. In most cases, the curriculum is being taught as part of the health education classes. LYFE asserts that *Choosing the Best* is a leader in evidence-based, abstinence-centered sex education and has been taught to more than 4 million students across the United States since 1993.

**Staffing/Participants.** LYFE currently has three employees who promote the curriculum to the parishes and train teachers at participating schools. In addition, LYFE recently contracted with two monitors to randomly observe teachers and schools to determine if the curriculum is being taught appropriately. As of January 2015, the curriculum is being taught in 362 classes within 143 schools/community programs in 23 parishes. According to LYFE, more than 2,700 students received the curriculum during the six-month reporting period ending Sept. 30, 2014.

Exhibit 1 "Choosing the Best" Curriculum Usage as of January 15, 2015		
	# Programs	# Classes
Public schools	124*	298
Community-based programs	19	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>362</b>
*Represents 21% of total middle, junior high, and high schools in Louisiana Source: LYFE		

<sup>1</sup> The Office of Abstinence Education was created in August 2004 by Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco to replace the Abstinence Education Project created by Governor Murphy J. "Mike" Foster in March 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, December 2014, *Sexually Transmitted Disease Surveillance 2013*.

<sup>3</sup> Guttmacher Institute, May 2014, *U.S. Teenage Pregnancies, Births and Abortions, 2010: National and State Trends by Age, Race and Ethnicity*.

According to LYFE, it focuses its efforts on parishes with higher poverty because those are the parishes with higher teen pregnancy and sexually-transmitted disease rates. If a parish superintendent agrees to use the program parish-wide, the curriculum and training are provided in a parish-wide training session to implement the program. However, the executive director stated that most parish superintendents require LYFE to visit and obtain approval from individual school principals prior to implementing the program.

**Funding.** LYFE operates on a cost reimbursement basis funded through state appropriations and federal grant funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) under the Affordable Care Act Abstinence Education Program (CFDA 93.235). Federal funding is limited to 57.14% of program funding. The remaining 42.86% represents the state's share of funding and may include funds appropriated by the state legislature, local funds, cash, or in-kind contributions (teacher training hours, teaching hours, overhead, administrative support hours, and volunteer hours). LYFE's revenues and expenditures since inception are shown in Exhibit 2.

<b>Exhibit 2</b>						
<b>Program Revenues and Expenditures</b>						
	<b>Fiscal Years</b>					
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Revenues:</b>						
Federal grants		\$54,891	\$49,444	\$143,770	\$265,050	<b>\$513,155</b>
State appropriations	\$171,395	114,626	115,960	77,479	74,232	<b>553,692</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$171,395</b>	<b>\$169,517</b>	<b>\$165,404</b>	<b>\$221,249</b>	<b>\$339,282</b>	<b>\$1,066,847</b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>						
Supplies (Choosing the Best)				\$109,226	\$143,933	<b>\$253,159</b>
Salaries	\$109,089	\$105,500	\$116,100	75,677	113,559	<b>519,925</b>
Personnel benefits	36,835	30,696	35,760	15,439	30,613	<b>149,343</b>
Professional services	5,415	2,033	35	5,312	31,539	<b>44,334</b>
Other charges	20,056	31,288	13,509	15,595	19,638	<b>100,086</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$171,395</b>	<b>\$169,517</b>	<b>\$165,404</b>	<b>\$221,249</b>	<b>\$339,282</b>	<b>\$1,066,847</b>
<b>Source:</b> The State's Integrated Statewide Information System (ISIS)						

The objective of our review was:

**To determine if the Office of Louisiana Youth for Excellence is fulfilling its duties and achieving the goals required by Executive Order BJ 09-09.**

Overall, we found that LYFE is not adequately fulfilling its duties and needs to strengthen its oversight and administration of the program to ensure required goals are being met. Appendix A contains LYFE's response to this report, Appendix B contains our scope and methodology, Appendix C provides the Executive Order that includes LYFE's goals and duties, and Appendix D provides a list of schools participating in the curriculum.

**Objective: To determine if the Office of Louisiana Youth for Excellence is fulfilling its duties and achieving the goals required by Executive Order BJ 09-09.**

We found that the LYFE is not adequately fulfilling its duties and needs to strengthen its oversight and administration of the program to ensure required goals are being met. For example, LYFE is not effectively managing its funding, has not established criteria to measure the success of the program, and has not developed a methodology to ensure it is identifying and serving those parishes and schools in greatest need of the program. We also found that LYFE has not performed adequate outreach to youth and parents regarding at-risk behaviors, family values, and positive life skills. The issues are identified below.

**LYFE does not adequately track and report the state match for its federal grants and therefore is not maximizing available federal funds.**

The Office of the Governor, Finance and Administration calculated the state match for LYFE's 2012 federal grant that was closed out in August 2014;<sup>4</sup> however, neither LYFE nor Finance and Administration adequately tracked and reported the state match. As a result, LYFE unnecessarily returned \$36,763 to the federal awarding agency.

As presented in Exhibit 3, LYFE incurred state matching expenditures totaling \$194,452 during the project period for the 2012 grant but only reported \$105,182 to DHHS.

<b>Exhibit 3</b>			
<b>Match Requirement Analysis for 2012 Grant</b>			
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Reported</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>State Share:</b>			
State expenditures	\$194,452	\$105,182	\$89,270
Expenditures originally funded with federal funds	36,763	\$36,763	
In-kind contributions	66,450	66,450	
Total state share	<b>\$297,665</b>	<b>\$208,395</b>	<b>\$89,270</b>
<b>Federal Share:</b>			
Federal funds drawn	\$276,244	\$276,244	
Federal funds returned	(36,763)	(36,763)	
Total federal share	<b>\$239,481</b>	<b>\$239,481</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$537,146</b>	<b>\$447,876</b>	<b>\$89,270</b>
<b>Source:</b> LYFE financial information and ISIS			

<sup>4</sup> The 2012 grant is the most recent data we could review, as the 2013 grant has not closed yet.

If Finance and Administration had properly allocated the total expenditures of \$537,146 for the 2012 grant project period in accordance with the 57.14% federal match requirement, LYFE could have funded the office with \$306,925 in federal funds instead of \$239,481, a difference of \$67,444.

Also, with proper planning, oversight, and monitoring, LYFE could have potentially grown its outreach and made use of additional federal funds. Based on actual state-funded expenditures incurred and in-kind contributions totaling \$297,665, LYFE could have drawn up to \$396,840 in federal funds and, therefore, increased total expenditures to \$694,505 (\$157,359 more than actually incurred during the grant period).

Because of limited state funding and inadequate planning, LYFE did not capitalize on its ability to receive the maximum federal award available for the 2012 grant or the 2013 grant (see Exhibit 4). For the 2012 grant, LYFE only utilized \$239,481 of available federal funding totaling \$917,899. For the 2013 grant, LYFE only utilized \$147,655 of available federal funding totaling \$887,727.

Exhibit 4		
Federal Grant Award Analysis		
	2012	2013
Grant number	1201LAAEGP	1301LAAEGP
Project period	10/1/11 - 9/30/13	10/1/12 - 9/30/14
Award amount	\$917,899	\$887,727
Grant funds used*	\$239,481	\$147,655
Grant funds not used	\$678,418	\$740,072
Maximum state share**	\$688,505	\$665,873
*2013 grant funds used represent actual, as of September 30, 2014.		
**Represents the state share portion needed to receive the entire federal award.		
Source: Federal award letters and ISIS		

**Recommendation 1:** LYFE should work with the Office of the Governor, Finance and Administration to establish a methodology to calculate the required state match as expenditures are incurred and federal funds are drawn and should actively track those expenditures, including in-kind contributions, to ensure that state matching requirements are met, federal grant funds are utilized to the maximum extent allowed, and grant activity is accurately reported.

**Management's Response:** LYFE management disagreed with the finding and stated that the funds were returned "because not all federal funds were needed in that grant year based on enrollment in the program" and that "the Governor's Office of Finance and Administration certifies that state match requirements are met and that grant funds are accurately reported and maximized" (see Appendix A, page 2).

**Additional Comments:** Management could not provide evidence that it actively tracked expenditures to ensure state matching requirements were met and did not provide

an adequate explanation to support why \$36,763 was returned to the federal awarding agency. Using actual expenditures incurred, our calculations indicated that LYFE should not have returned \$36,763 to the federal awarding agency and could have drawn an additional \$30,681 in federal funding, reducing the amount of state funds used by a total of \$67,444.

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**LYFE has not established criteria to measure the success of the program in meeting its goals.**

The Executive Order lists six goals that LYFE is to attain. These goals include reducing the incidence of premarital sexual activity, reducing the rate of sexually-transmitted diseases, lowering the rate of premarital pregnancy, and lowering the number of high-school drop-outs related to at-risk behaviors. However, LYFE has not established benchmarks or criteria to measure the success of the program in meeting these goals. LYFE states in the 2014 and 2015 Annual Reports to the Governor that “there is no local evidence-based data available to determine the efficacy of the program, but teachers who are actually in the field teaching the program have provided a great deal of positive feedback.” LYFE cannot ensure that the program is meeting its intended goals or measure the overall effectiveness of the program without formal criteria.

**Recommendation 2:** LYFE should develop specific criteria to measure success of the program and to ensure that it is accomplishing its required goals.

**Management’s Response:** LYFE management disagreed with the finding and stated that it “relies on third party, peer-reviewed, independent research studies to measure the curriculum’s effectiveness” and referenced a research study in Monroe County, Georgia, that exhibited a dramatic reduction in teen pregnancy rates for students receiving *Choosing the Best* instruction (see Appendix A, page 2).

**Additional Comments:** Instead of developing specific criteria to establish minimum acceptable standards for the program to use as benchmarks for measuring success, LYFE management referred to promotional information that was included on its vendor’s website, which included research studies that are not specific to Louisiana. LYFE did not develop or provide plans to develop any criteria to measure the success of the program in Louisiana or to ensure that LYFE is accomplishing its required goals.

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**LYFE did not timely prepare and submit an annual comprehensive report to the Governor.**

The Executive Order requires the executive director to submit an annual comprehensive report to the Governor by January 1 that addresses the extent to which LYFE has achieved its duties and goals. However, LYFE did not submit the 2014 report until April 15, 2014, as the executive director was unaware of this reporting requirement. In addition to being untimely, the 2014 report did not include relevant comparative data and information relating to the effectiveness of LYFE to similar programs of other states, as required by the Executive Order.

Although the 2015 report was submitted timely, this report also did not include relevant comparative data and information related to the effectiveness of LYFE to similar programs of other states. As a result, the Governor and lawmakers are not receiving the information they need to determine whether LYFE is fulfilling its required duties and achieving its intended goals.

**Recommendation 3:** LYFE should submit its annual report, including all relevant comparative data and information relating to the effectiveness of LYFE to similar programs of other states, to the Governor by January 1 each year in accordance with the Executive Order.

**Management's Response:** LYFE management disagreed with the finding and stated that the "2015 Annual Report was submitted in accordance with requirements set forth in GBJ Executive Order 2009-9. In addition, management states that the 2015 annual report "includes data from a research study which compares results across six high schools in Georgia with groups of students receiving and not receiving *Choosing the Best* instruction." (see Appendix A, page 3).

**Additional Comments:** LYFE management disagreed with the finding but did not explain why the 2014 annual comprehensive report to the Governor was submitted 115 days late. Also, instead of addressing the requirement to include comparative data on the effectiveness of LYFE to similar programs of other states, the 2015 report refers to a research study that is specific only to high schools in the state of Georgia. Neither the 2014 nor the 2015 annual reports to the Governor include any data that is specific to Louisiana, measuring the effectiveness of LYFE, or comparing it to similar programs of other states.

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**LYFE has not established a methodology or tracking system to ensure it is identifying, contacting, and serving those parishes and schools in greatest need of the program.**

The LYFE executive director asserts that the agency currently targets its outreach efforts on parishes with higher poverty rates. According to LYFE's implementation plan, it identified 15 target parishes with high rates of teen sexually-transmitted diseases and pregnancies. LYFE maintains individual folders that include documentation of correspondence with individual

parishes and/or school personnel; however, there are no written policies to document the methodology used for selection of these parishes and there is no master listing of schools that have been contacted. As a result, LYFE cannot ensure it is identifying, contacting, and adequately serving those parishes, schools, and youth in greatest need of the program.

**Recommendation 4:** LYFE should develop and implement a written plan to identify schools with the greatest need, document the rationale used for selecting schools to contact, and maintain a listing of schools it has contacted and plans to contact in the near future.

**Management's Response:** LYFE management disagreed with the finding and stated that LYFE prioritizes parishes and schools based on data provided by the Louisiana Office of Public Health (OPH) and the Department of Education (DOE) to identify and target at-risk student populations. In addition, LYFE management stated it maintained a master list and directory for each school and parish (see Appendix A, page 3).

**Additional Comments:** Although we made multiple requests of LYFE management to provide support for these claims, management did not identify the specific data they obtained from OPH and DOE or explain how this data was used to identify, prioritize, and select schools with the greatest need. In addition, no master listing was available at the time of our request; it was created by LYFE management subsequent to our request.

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### **LYFE has not participated in school assemblies and/or other youth venues to promote messages of youth development and the dangers of at-risk behaviors.**

The Executive Order requires that LYFE provide youth with “messages of character, integrity, and excellence by speaking with school assemblies and other youth venues to promote the positive messages of youth development and the dangers of at-risk behaviors.” In the 2014 and 2015 Annual Reports to the Governor, LYFE referenced plans for conducting state conferences to educate local youth, feature effective speakers in the abstinence and positive youth development arena, and offer activities to engage and challenge the attendees; however, LYFE has not implemented these plans. According to LYFE, it has met with school administrators and teachers to promote the curriculum and train the teachers. However, failure to directly address youth limits LYFE’s effectiveness in educating youth regarding the dangers of certain behaviors and the importance of making wise choices.

**Recommendation 5:** LYFE should implement its plans to conduct state conferences to educate local youth and feature effective speakers to promote the curriculum.

**Management's Response:** LYFE management disagreed with the finding and stated plans to host its first annual statewide conference to educate and engage Louisiana youth on November 12, 2015 (see Appendix A, page 4).

**Additional Comments:** Although we made multiple requests of LYFE management to provide evidence that they have had any meetings with school assemblies and/or other youth venues, LYFE only provided plans to conduct a future event.

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### **LYFE has not focused efforts on providing parents with family life education and skills.**

The Executive Order requires that LYFE provide “parents with family life education and skills which emphasize and support their role as the primary educator of family values.” LYFE has provided a “Parent Resources” link on its website and lists two books/programs from the *Choosing the Best* curriculum to inform and assist parents. This material was provided to parents on one occasion as a result of a local school board request. However, LYFE does not proactively provide this information to parents. In addition, LYFE could not provide us with evidence of any other activities or outreach it has provided parents. As a result, LYFE cannot ensure that parents are receiving the information and skills they need to educate their children on family values.

**Recommendation 6:** LYFE should develop and implement additional and more proactive methods of educating parents and notifying them of resources available through its website.

**Management’s Response:** LYFE management disagreed with the finding and stated that it already has a Parent Program in place that was initiated by LYFE personnel but led by school educators and identified plans to increase one-on-one work with teachers and other community organizations (see Appendix A, page 4).

**Additional Comments:** LYFE management stated that it has a Parent Program, which includes providing information to teachers to communicate to parents; however, LYFE has not developed or implemented any method of educating and/or providing information directly to parents and is not monitoring the participating schools to determine if information is provided to the parents.

## APPENDIX A: MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE



**BOBBY JINDAL**  
GOVERNOR



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

**DEANNE BINGHAM**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
LOUISIANA YOUTH FOR EXCELLENCE  
(LYFE)

April 24, 2015

Mr. Daryl G. Purpera, CPA, CFE  
Legislative Auditor  
1600 North Third Street  
Post Office Box 93497  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9397

RE: Informational Report Office of Louisiana Youth for Excellence (LYFE)

Dear Mr. Purpera:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Louisiana Youth for Excellence (LYFE) Informational Report. Attached is LYFE's response to your findings and recommendations. LYFE disagrees with the findings as the report does not take into account overall program growth, prioritization of student needs and outreach over other activities, federal grant guidelines, and state law. The LYFE curriculum (*Choosing the Best*) provides holistic sexual risk avoidance instruction that emphasizes abstinence, goal setting, emotional consequences, boundary setting, strategies for overcoming peer pressure, and medically accurate information about pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. LYFE is proud to continue the important work of reaching new schools and new student populations, expanding community-based partnerships, and helping to improve outcomes for teens across the state.

Please feel free to contact me at 225-219-4999 or at [deanne.bingham@la.gov](mailto:deanne.bingham@la.gov) should you have any questions regarding the Office's response to the Informational Report and its observations.

Sincerely,

Deanne Bingham  
Executive Director,  
Louisiana Youth for Excellence

April 24, 2015

**LYFE does not adequately track and report the state match for its federal grants and therefore is not maximizing available federal funds.**

**Recommendation 1:** LYFE should work with Office of the Governor, Finance and Administration to establish a methodology to calculate the required state match as expenditures are incurred and federal funds drawn; and should actively track those expenditures, including in-kind contributions, to ensure that state matching requirements are met, federal grant funds are utilized to the maximum extent allowed and grant activity is accurately reported.

*LYFE disagrees with this finding. The methodology to calculate the required state match is determined by federal law. LYFE returned \$36,763 because not all federal funds were needed in that grant year based on enrollment in the program; however, enrollment has increased significantly and by the end of this school year the total number of students reached will be over 20,000. As described in the Federal Funding Opportunity Announcement, the applicant must fund at least 43 percent (3/7) of the project's total cost with non-Federal resources while ACYF will fund no more than 57 percent (4/7) of the project's total cost (section 503(a) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. §703(a)). The match may be state dollars, local government dollars, private dollars, or in-kind support. The Governor's Office of Finance and Administration certifies that state match requirements are met and that grant funds are accurately reported and maximized. Semi-Annual reports to the ACYF are also required and demonstrate how funds are expended.*

**LYFE has not established criteria to measure the success of the program in meeting its goals.**

**Recommendation 2:** LYFE should develop specific criteria to measure success of the program and to ensure that it is accomplishing its required goals.

*LYFE disagrees with this finding. LYFE is prohibited under Louisiana Revised Statute 17:281(A) (2) to survey or collect data on students about personal family beliefs or practices in sex, morality, or religion. LYFE's medically accurate curriculum, Choosing the Best (CTB), meets the goals established for the program in GBJ Executive Order 2009-9. These goals include reducing the rate of premarital sexual activity, STD transmission, and teen pregnancy. LYFE relies on third party, peer-reviewed, independent research studies to measure the curriculum's effectiveness at meeting criteria established in the executive order, and does not attempt to carry out these studies on its own. Last year, a controlled study in Monroe County, Georgia, exhibited a dramatic reduction in teen pregnancy rates (56%) for middle and high school students receiving CTB instruction.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.choosingthebest.com/index.php/newsroom/ctb-news/92-monroe-county-achieves-dramatic-reduction-in-teen-pregnancy>

**LYFE did not timely prepare and submit an annual comprehensive report to the Governor.**

**Recommendation 3:** LYFE should submit its annual report, including all relevant comparative data and information, to the Governor by January 1 each year in accordance with the Executive Order.

*LYFE disagrees with this finding. The LYFE 2015 Annual Report was submitted in accordance with requirements set forth in GBJ Executive Order 2009-9. In this report, LYFE includes data from a research study, which compares results across six high schools in Georgia with groups of students receiving and not receiving Choosing the Best (CTB) instruction. Similar to LYFE, Georgia's Governor's Office for Children and Families, Abstinence Education Division, administers the Choosing the Best curriculum and provides comparative results for Louisiana that demonstrate effectiveness and allow LYFE to act in accordance of state law. The population included in the Georgia study is similar to that in Louisiana. Both states have similar demographic concerns regarding issues of high teenage pregnancy, STDs, and HIV. Both states have urban areas where high concentrations of poverty exist. Both states, likewise, have rural populations with similar social-economic indicators. Georgia's public health trends mirror Louisiana in such a way as to provide a model whereby effective and efficient strategies can be employed, compared, and continuously improved. Several research studies were consulted as to the best option available to the state of Louisiana. The selection of CTB was in coordination with best practices for similar initiatives in other states. As noted above, Louisiana Revised Statute 17:281(A) (2) prohibits surveying or collecting data on students about personal family beliefs or practices in sex, morality, or religion.*

**LYFE has not established a methodology or tracking system to ensure it is identifying, contacting, and serving those parishes and schools with the greatest need of the program.**

**Recommendation 4:** LYFE should develop and implement a written plan to identify schools with the greatest need, document the rationale used for selecting schools to contact, and maintain a listing of schools it has contacted and plans to contact in the near future.

*LYFE disagrees with this finding. LYFE prioritizes parishes and schools based on current data provided by the Louisiana Office of Public Health, which provides parish-level poverty information and rates of teen pregnancy and STD's in Louisiana. LYFE also uses school-level data from the Department of Education to identify and target at-risk student populations.*

*LYFE maintains files of all contact with schools and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). LYFE tracks initial contact, details responses, and follow-ups. LYFE also maintains a master list and directory for each school and parish. Prior to this report, LYFE completed an internal systems upgrade so that all contact and tracking files are stored on a shared electronic server. All LYFE staff has access to these records.*

*This information is publicly available on the DHH and LDE websites.*

**LYFE has not participated in school assemblies and/or other youth venues to promote messages of youth development and the dangers of at-risk behaviors.**

**Recommendation 5:** LYFE should implement its plan to conduct state conferences to educate local youth and feature effective speakers to promote the curriculum.

*LYFE disagrees with this finding. LYFE provides “messages of character, integrity, and excellence” to youth by equipping teachers and school leaders with necessary resources and training. LYFE recognizes that teachers and local mentors play a vital role in a teen’s life and has focused its efforts on inciting positive classroom and after-school dialogue between teachers, mentors, and students. These assemblies are held in schools on a regular basis at the discretion of the school leaders that implement the Choosing the Best curriculum. Now that LYFE has reached a critical mass of students, LYFE will host its first annual statewide conference to educate and engage Louisiana youth on November 12, 2015.*

**LYFE has not focused efforts on providing parents with family life education and skills.**

**Recommendation 6:** LYFE should develop and implement additional and more proactive methods of educating parents and notifying them of resources available through their website.

*LYFE disagrees with this finding. LYFE already has a Parent Program in place. As stated in LYFE’s 2015 Annual Report, LYFE asserts that, “parent involvement is invaluable” and presently implements initiatives to educate parents on the “real life dangers and problems their teens are exposed to each day.” Currently, LYFE provides parenting programs to schools and school districts in the form of a group presentation with instructional and at-home resources. The Parent Program is initiated by LYFE personnel, but led by school educators in a PTO or PTA setting. Every LYFE presentation includes the parent program and all relevant resource information. Parent resources are free of charge to parents and provided to every participating school. Follow-up with parents is done at the school level with school-based leadership taking the lead in further parental involvement. This ensures that students and parents are engaging with someone that they trust and also maintains confidentiality of student data. Going forward, LYFE plans to increase one-on-one work with teachers (who are often in regular communication with parents), as well as partner with the Louisiana Family Forum, the Marriage and Family Commission, the Women’s Policy Commission, and larger, local community organizations to encourage more parent awareness and involvement.*

*The parent resources are available for review upon request.*

## APPENDIX B: SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

We conducted procedures to provide information to the Legislature on the Office of Louisiana Youth for Excellence (LYFE). The objective of our procedures was to determine if LYFE is fulfilling the duties and achieving the goals required by Executive Order BJ 09-09. To achieve our objectives, we reviewed relevant information and performed the following steps:

- Obtained and reviewed Executive Order BJ 09-09 that established and created LYFE.
- Interviewed LYFE personnel and obtained LYFE's Annual Reports to the Governor.
- Reviewed and analyzed LYFE revenues and expenditures for fiscal years 2010 through 2014.
- Obtained and reviewed the federal award letter and federal program regulations.
- Interviewed personnel from the Division of Administration - Office of Finance and Support Services, the Office of the Governor - Finance and Administration, and LYFE to obtain information relating to LYFE's budget; to obtain documentation of program expenditures; and to determine how matching requirements for LYFE's grants are monitored, calculated, and reported.
- Reviewed the *Choosing the Best* curriculum, including student manuals and leader guides.
- Obtained and reviewed supporting documents from LYFE to determine schools and community programs that LYFE personnel have contacted.



## APPENDIX C: EXECUTIVE ORDER BJ 09-09



# EXECUTIVE ORDER

## BJ 09-09

### Establish the Office of Louisiana Youth for Excellence (LYFE)

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**WHEREAS**, the Citizens of the State of Louisiana face many challenges, including high rates of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, which hinder our ability to prepare our youth for the opportunities of the future;

**WHEREAS**, many Louisiana adolescents remain poorly informed about consequences of at-risk behavior, including pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs);

**WHEREAS**, the Governor's Office fights for young people and families of this State and preemptively strikes at the growing crimes related to at-risk behaviors while promoting a successful and thriving generation of Louisiana leaders;

**WHEREAS**, sex related crimes and social issues including sex texting, i.e. "sexting," online sex predators, human sex trafficking, and other related issues have drastically increased due to growing online access;

**WHEREAS**, positive youth development, abstinence education, and life skills training are needed components of education in the schools to teach the next generation of Louisiana leaders character, discipline, good decision making skills, leadership, and other life improvement skills;

**WHEREAS**, youth development along with education programs will encourage Louisiana's youth to say no to at-risk behaviors and yes to the positive choices involved in youth development that will lead to their success in life; and

**WHEREAS**, funding pursuant to Title V of the Social Security Act, as provided in 42 U.S.C. §710 to enable states to provide abstinence education and provide appropriate mentoring, counseling, and adult supervision to youth to promote abstinence from premarital sexual activity, focusing on those groups which have a higher premarital pregnancy rate, was discontinued June 30, 2009;

**NOW THEREFORE, I, BOBBY JINDAL**, Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

**SECTION 1:** The Office of Louisiana Youth for Excellence ( "LYFE" ) is established and created within the Executive Department, Office of Community Programs, Office of the Governor, replacing the Office of Abstinence Education;

**SECTION 2:** The goals of the Office of LYFE shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Promoting positive youth development by teaching goal setting, leadership development, character building, and integrity in school settings and after

school programs;

B. Mitigating the effects of at-risk behaviors for the youth of Louisiana;

C. Reducing the incidence of premarital sexual activity among the youth of Louisiana;

D. Reducing the rate of sexually transmitted diseases among the youth of Louisiana;

E. Lowering the premarital pregnancy rate among the youth of Louisiana; and

F. Lowering the number of high-school drop-outs related to at risk behaviors in Louisiana.

**SECTION 3:** The duties of the Office of LYFE shall include, but are not limited to the following:

A. Applying for and receiving funding for the development and administration of the Office of LYFE from public and private sources;

B. Providing youth with the authentic messages of character, integrity, and excellence by speaking with school assemblies and other youth venues to promote the positive messages of youth development and dangers of at-risk behaviors while using age appropriate and medically accurate data;

C. Providing parents with family life education and skills which emphasize and support their role as the primary educator of family values;

D. Coordinating with non-profit and faith based organizations as well as other state agencies on best practices to reach youth with the messages of the LYFE campaign;

E. Promoting character qualities and human skills that are beneficial to marriage and to raising responsible and productive children; and

F. Developing an aggressive LYFE campaign targeting adolescents ages 12-19 and parents that will build awareness of the consequences of at-risk behaviors, reinforce positive youth development, partner with non-profit and faith-based organizations as well as other state agencies, and coordinate with school administrators and education officials to promote positive life skills and education regarding youth development.

**SECTION 4:**

A. The Office of LYFE shall be directed by an executive director who shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The executive director shall be responsible for administering, overseeing, and evaluating the programs of the Office of LYFE in a manner which facilitates the accomplishment of the program's duties and goals, as set forth in Sections 2 and 3.

B. The executive director shall submit an annual comprehensive report to the

Governor, by January 1, which addresses the fulfillment of the Office of LYFE's goals, as set forth in Section 2 of this Order, and its duties, as defined in Section 3 of this Order. Annual reports shall include all relevant comparative data and information relating to the effectiveness of the Office of LYFE to similar programs of other states.

**SECTION 5:** The executive director of the Office of LYFE shall be located in, and operated from, a state-owned facility. The Office shall be permitted staff and resources to fulfill the goals, duties, and responsibilities specified in this Order. It shall be permitted to accept the efforts of volunteers in accordance with state law.

**SECTION 6:** All departments, commissions, boards, offices, entities, agencies, and officers of the State of Louisiana, or any political subdivision thereof, are authorized and directed to cooperate with the Office of LYFE in implementing the provisions of this Order.

**SECTION 7:** The provisions of this Order are effective upon signature and shall remain in effect until amended, modified, terminated or rescinded by the Governor, or terminated by operation of law.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF,** I have set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of Louisiana, at the Capitol, in the City of Baton Rouge, on this 13th day of July, 2009.

Bobby Jindal  
Governor

ATTEST BY  
THE GOVERNOR  
Jay Dardenne  
Secretary of State



## APPENDIX D: SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN *CHOOSING THE BEST CURRICULUM*

### Schools Participating in *Choosing the Best Curriculum* as of January 15, 2015

Parish, (Number of Schools)	School/Community-Based Program	Classrooms
Ascension (1)	Resilient Overcoming Children of the Kingdom Outreach	2
Assumption (4)	Belle Rose Middle; Labadieville Middle; Napoleonville Middle; Pierre Part Middle	10
Caddo (2)	Foster Care - Goodwill; Destiny Community	4
Calcasieu (9)	Barbe High; Bell City High; DeQuincy High; Lagrange High; Sam Houston High; Starks High; Sulphur High; Vinton High; Westlake High	15
East Baton Rouge (23)	Baton Rouge Magnet; Beechwood; Belaire High; Brookstown Middle; Community School for Apprenticeship Learning Charter Middle; East Baton Rouge Readiness; Foster Care - Catholic Archdiocese of New Orleans (CCANO); Glasgow Middle; Glen Oaks High; Lee High; LSU Lab School; McKinley High; McKinley Middle Magnet; Northdale; Northeast High; Park Forest Middle; Scotlandville High; Scotlandville Middle; Sherwood Middle; Tara High; Women's Help Center; Westdale Middle; Woodlawn High	44
Grant (1)	Grant High	1
Jefferson (6)	Foster Care - CCANO; Gretna Middle; Helen Cox; Henry Ford Middle; Roosevelt Middle; West Jefferson	24
Lafayette (20)	Acadian Middle School; Broussard Middle; A Pregnancy Center and Clinic; Boys and Girls Club; Carencro High; Carencro Middle; Comeaux High; David Thibodaux Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM); Early College Academy; Edgar Martin; Foster Care - Gulf Coast Social Services; Judice Middle; L.J. Alleman; Lafayette High; Lafayette Middle; N.P. Moss Prep; Northside High; Paul Breaux; Scott Middle School; Youngsville Middle	67
Lafourche (1)	Foster Care - Independent Living	1
Lincoln (1)	Foster Care - Methodist	3
Orleans (7)	Bethune; Boys and Girls Club Orleans; Crescent Leadership; Mahalia Jackson; McDonogh 35; McMain; Warren Easton Charter High	21

<b>Parish, (Number of Schools)</b>	<b>School/Community Based Program</b>	<b>Classrooms</b>
Ouachita (6)	Ouachita Parish High; Ouachita Parish Junior; Richwood High; Riser Middle; Sterlington High; West Monroe High	13
Plaquemines (5)	Belle Chase High; Belle Chase Middle; Phoenix High; South Plaquemines High; South Plaquemines Junior High	17
Rapides (2)	Louisiana Youth Challenge; Foster Care - CCANO	15
Red River (2)	Red River High; Red River Junior High	3
St. Landry (19)	Arnaudville Elementary; Beau Chene High; Boys and Girls Club; Eunice High; Eunice Junior High; Krotz Springs Elementary; Lawtell Elementary; Leonville Elementary; Magnet Academy for Cultural Arts; North Central High; Northwest High; Opelousas Jr. High; Opelousas High; Plaisance Elementary; Port Barre High; St. Landry Accelerated Transition Site/Center for Academic Programs; Sunset Elementary; Sunset Middle; Washington Elementary	32
St. Martin (3)	Breaux High; Cecilia High; St. Martinville High	10
St. Mary (12)	Berwick Jr. High; Berwick High; Centerville High; Franklin High; Franklin Jr. High; Franklin Senior JROTC; Morgan City High; Morgan City High JROTC; Morgan City Jr. High; Patterson High; Patterson Jr.; West St. Mary High	21
St. Tammany (1)	Boys and Girls Club - Covington	3
Tangipahoa (14)	Amite High; Champ Cooper Elementary; Hammond Jr. High; Independence Middle; Jewel Sumner Middle; Jewel Sumner High; Kentwood High; Loranger High; Loranger Middle; Lucille Nesom Middle; Pontchatoula High; Pontchatoula Jr.; SLU Independent Living; West Side Middle	27
Terrebonne (2)	Ellender Memorial High; H.L. Bourgeois	13
Vermilion (1)	Boys and Girls Club	3
Webster (1)	Louisiana Youth Challenge	13
<b>Total (143)</b>		<b>362</b>
<b>Source:</b> LYFE program information		