



THE LAE VOICE

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Great Public Schools for Every Louisiana Child

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It's Back to School Time, Y'all!

The return of school brings a fresh beginning and renewed emphasis on learning. As an education professional, you hold a unique place in the lives of so many children. Remember the powerful role you play throughout the year. Roll up those sleeves and get ready for success in 2018 and beyond! Welcome back!

THE NEA FOUNDATION HONORS LAFAYETTE PARISH TEACHER WITH NATIONAL AWARD

Jonathan Cole, a high school teacher in Lafayette Parish, is one of 38 educators who will receive the California Casualty Award for Teaching Excellence at the NEA Foundation's Salute to Excellence in Education Gala this February in Washington, D.C. Cole says it's an amazing honor to be recognized for doing what he loves.

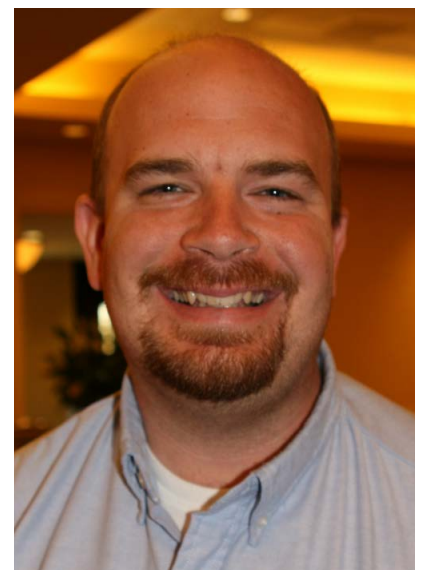
"The students I teach today become tomorrow's teachers, scientists, engineers, doctors, and technicians because they have the power of education on their side," he said. "It's a rewarding feeling to know I equip these future leaders with the tools they need to become productive members of society."

LAE nominated Cole after he received the association's coveted Teacher Image Award at the 2018 LAE Representative Assembly.

Each year, nearly 1,000 supporters of public education gather at the Salute to Excellence in Education Gala to acknowledge and applaud the hard work of the awardees. At the gala, the educators are truly the stars, celebrated throughout the night with music, performances, videos, and more. The evening gives

educators well-deserved recognition for their hard work, personal dedication, and profound influence.

Of the 38 state awardees nominated by their National Education Association state affiliate, five finalists will be announced at the beginning of the school year and receive \$10,000 at the gala. The nation's top educator will be revealed, and this individual will receive an additional \$25,000. The gala will be live-streamed at neafoundation.org.



Louisiana's 2018 California Casualty Award for Teaching Excellence Winner Jonathan Cole.



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Debbie Meaux, President

Sweet summertime has come and gone. There are never enough days off to travel, read books, or play with our children/grandchildren. It's always bittersweet to let go of the freedom of summer, but what this end does bring is a hopeful look toward a new adventure: a new school year. Hopefully, you've had enough time to recharge. (And of course, I hope your students have had a chance to do the same.) My guess is that kids across Louisiana are eager to be moved by your lessons, enthusiasm, and the plans you have for their educational success! I want you to know that your professional association has been hard at work this summer moving forward with plans to help you achieve success throughout the 2018-19 School Year.

Over the summer, LAE saw tremendous success in advocating for the best interests of our public schools. Here are a few highlights:

- *Together, LAE members were able to convince lawmakers to pass a sound and sustainable operating budget that maintains funding to K-12 public schools and saves taxpayers nearly \$400 million.*
- *LAE members in East Baton Rouge Parish accomplished a significant achievement in the school employee pay movement. Through union activism and community support, teachers and other education employees were able to convince school board members to make long-overdue adjustments to the employee pay schedule, increasing pay for returning education employees in the district.*
- *Association members embraced LAE's initiative to reform the controversial Industrial Tax Exemption Program. (Before LAE's push, large corporations were exempt from paying property tax dollars, so money that could have been collected to better local school*

systems and parish services was instead pocketed by big businesses.) Due to the extreme pressure placed on state officials, LAE members were able to convince policymakers to make long-overdue changes to this tax policy. Now, parishes considering tax exemption requests will now see an automatic 20% in new tax revenues that can go to support needed resources for Louisiana's K-12 public schools.

- *School employees in Caddo Parish experienced their own victory on this issue when they stood together to convince school board members to reject not one, but two, industrial tax exemption proposals. School board members in Bossier Parish followed suit and also said NO to unaccountable giveaways. Corporations in the area will now have to pay their share, which means parishes will see an increase in local tax revenues. LAE and Together Baton Rouge continue to work on the issue, training impacted locals how to navigate the revisions to the ITEP policy.*

Association leaders in your district came together at our annual summer conference to examine what we can do to move the mighty "Red for Ed" campaign here in Louisiana. The movement - proven to be successful for our colleagues in West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, Colorado, Arizona, and North Carolina - has helped others bring school funding and educator pay issues to the forefront. It's time for Louisiana citizens to understand the dire need to focus on adequately funding our public schools so we can reward those dedicated professionals - working tirelessly to fulfill the promise of education - with the pay and respect they so rightfully deserve. Leaders walked away with plans in place for the new school year. One way you can keep abreast of this growing movement is by

joining the "Geaux Red for Ed: Louisiana" group on Facebook.

I think most of you can agree, education employees across the state are growing restless with the lack of respect for the profession. Electing champions for our schools into office can help turn the tide. We have a chance to make positive impacts on school districts across Louisiana when we head to the polls to cast our votes in local school board races. This election may be the most important in years because it gives us a chance to elect the individuals who have the final say on local policy decisions for our schools—including school employee salaries and resources for students. Please take these elections seriously. LAE will send out a series of emails titled, *RED ALERTS*, with all you need to know regarding the November 6th elections. Please commit to opening these emails and taking any requested actions. LAE's *RED ALERTS* will be a tremendous resource for you as we approach Election Day.

These initiatives (and many others) are "a-moving and a-shaking" at the LAE Headquarters, but it's important to understand that we cannot be effective without your support and continued activism. I applaud you for your energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to the children of Louisiana.

As a 43-year veteran in education, I can certainly relate. I understand why you do what you do. I also know that you will overcome any obstacles to make this year the best for your students.

As you enter your school hallways, cafeterias, buses, offices, and all other workspaces, may you fulfill your mission to serve Louisiana's public school children. I wish you a great year - one filled with the satisfaction of working to build a bright future for this great state. Thank you for what you do, and always remember, the members and leaders of LAE stand with you - today and always.

In Solidarity,
Debbie Meaux
LAE President

RED FOR ED ENERGIZES 2018 NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY



Public school employees from across Louisiana were among the more than 6,000 men and women from all 50 states who gathered in Minneapolis this summer to attend the National Education Association's 97th Representative Assembly (RA). The event, which hosts the top decision-making body for the three-million-member NEA, convened less than a week after the U.S. Supreme Court struck a blow against working people with its decision in *Janus v. AFSCME*. How to thrive in a post-*Janus* world was just one of the many pressing issues on the minds of delegates as they entered the Minneapolis Convention Center on July 2.

"These are dark days," NEA President Lily Eskelsen-García expressed in her keynote address, "But there is a groundswell of energy and support for public education that is already having an enormous impact. The movement started in West Virginia in February and quickly spread to Kentucky, Oklahoma, Arizona, Colorado, and North Carolina. You spoke the powerful truth that we are fierce fighters who will stand up for ourselves and for our students and we will be heard."

She reminded those in attendance about the powerful ally they have in students.

"Whether it's demanding lawmakers properly fund our schools or take action to help keep students safe from gun violence, young people have taken up the call. You see them come together as a collective voice. You feel the power of their action – they're not complaining. They're not waiting for permission," Eskelsen García said, before she yielded the stage to one of those student leaders, David Hogg, survivor of the Parkland school shooting and outspoken advocate for common sense gun laws.

"We have been speaking up, mobilizing, and standing strong because our friends and family mean the world to us," Hogg said. "We are young and that means we don't have to accept the status

quo. And we never will. We intend to close the gap between the world as it is and what it should be."

Delegates also honored three of the nation's top educators of 2018: Education Support Professional of the Year (ESP) Sherry Shaw from Alaska, Teacher of the Year Mandy Manning from Washington, and – for the first time ever – the NCHE Higher Educator of the Year Loretta Ragsdell from Illinois.

Speeches and celebrations are always highlights of any RA and 2018 was no exception, but the business of the RA was just that, business. Delegates spent the lion's share of their time debating and adopting new policy statements, resolutions, amendments to existing policies, and more than 100 new business items which create a detailed NEA education policy blueprint for the upcoming year. Delegates also held elections for NEA's Executive Committee.

On the final day of the gathering, as delegates celebrated Red for Ed, Marisol Garcia, vice president of the Arizona Education Association, stood on the convention floor to deliver remarkable news about how educators are leading the charge. On July 5, public education activists in her state submitted 270,000 signatures (100,000 more than was needed) to put an initiative on the November ballot that, if approved, could raise hundreds of millions of dollars in new education funding.

The challenges to educators and public schools are mounting, but by the closing gavel four days later, the delegates left Minneapolis ready to harness the energy of the burgeoning Red for Ed movement.

Next year's Representative Assembly will be in Houston, Texas from July 4 – 7, 2019. For photos and additional highlights from the 2018 meeting, go to ra.nea.org.



LAE'S ANNUAL SUMMER CONFERENCE SHOWS ASSOCIATION LEADERS FROM ACROSS THE STATE HOW TO HARNESS THE "POWER OF RED"

Recent #RedforEd actions in states like West Virginia, Arizona, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Kentucky show how this campaign has paved the way for a nationwide call for better supports for our children (and of course, the professionals who work in our schools).

The movement made its way to Louisiana at LAE's annual summer conference, an organizing training that focused on *The Power of Red*. Member representatives from across the state dedicated their time to learn how to best advocate for their schools and the students they serve.

After an intense three days of learning, networking, and strategizing, the member leaders in attendance walked away with viable plans to begin implementing in the new school year.

Attendees were successful in establishing a facebook group to help expand the reach of the movement. Fast-forward a month and 1,800 members, the *Geaux Red for Ed: Louisiana* facebook group is a growing coalition of teachers, education support professionals, parents, students, and other community supporters who care deeply about Louisiana's public schools.

As we begin the 2018-19 School Year, we'll continue to advocate for the resources educators and students need to be successful, but



to be effective, we have to grow our reach across the state. You can help *RIGHT NOW* by taking two simple steps:

1. Head to facebook and join the *Geaux Red for Ed: Louisiana* group to stay "in the know" on future Geaux #RedforEd actions in Louisiana.
2. Go to lae.org/redforded to sign the *Geaux Red for Ed* pledge to declare your support for adequate school funding.

By signing the petition and joining the facebook group, you'll be the first to know about any actions you can take to help advance our advocacy efforts for the students and education employees in Louisiana.



BATON ROUGE EDUCATORS LEAD *RED FOR ED* CHARGE AND CONVINCED SCHOOL BOARD TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO EMPLOYEE PAY SCHEDULE

After years without raises, no cost-of-living adjustments in their paychecks, and overall low morale, East Baton Rouge Parish education employees were fed up. Overworked, underpaid, and professionally stretched to the max, members of the East Baton Rouge Parish Association of Educators were ready to take action and lead a charge for change. Something had to be done and the only way to do it was to organize!

The goal: put pressure on the school board to do whatever necessary to defrost a decade-long salary freeze. The way to achieve it: unlock the school district's employee salary schedule to align all employees' years of service with the appropriate pay step. The challenge: to convince school board members to take a serious look at the budget and make the necessary adjustments to accommodate.

Leaders of the EBRPAE recognized the monumental task at hand. They needed support – not just from association members, but from all corners of the community – and so, a powerful partnership with Together Baton Rouge was born. Together Baton Rouge, a parish-wide network of religious congregations and civic organizations representing community members from all walks of life, engaged a new population of public school stakeholders on the issue. The two groups soon joined forces with other school employee advocacy organizations to raise awareness about the district's problematic salary schedule,

as well as the dire need to increase pay for all school district employees. Educators became vocal in a big way, sharing personal stories about their struggles to do more for students with less financial support from the school district.

From hosting informational meetings and public forums to gathering petition signatures and rallying at school board meetings, the group collected nearly 3,000 signatures from school employees, parents, and community members who supported a school employee pay increase, forcing the school board to take a serious look at the issue. After several meetings between EBRPAE leaders, Together Baton Rouge activists, and school board members (including the superintendent), educators were able to convince board members to meet their demands halfway when the board voted to unfreeze the salary schedule. That means every teacher, paraprofessional, school bus operator, food service worker, secretary, and all others who were frozen, will see a salary change for the next school year. While this isn't a raise, it does bring employees closer to what they should be making for their years of experience.

There's still a lot of work to do to bring EBRPSS employees to the pay level they deserve, but this was a tremendous step in the right direction. LAE state leaders applaud the members of the EBRPAE for their tremendous work on this important issue – the first of many Red for Ed victories in Louisiana.



FISCAL CLIFF AVERTED; FOCUS ON SCHOOL FUNDING MORE PARAMOUNT THAN EVER

After spending nearly a year in legislative session, Louisiana lawmakers finally passed a budget to establish a long-term solution to the fiscal crisis and sustain sources of revenue for public education, health care, TOPS, higher education, and other public services. This summer, during a third special session, state representatives and senators agreed to a compromise by passing House Bill 10. The measure will restructure a temporary sales tax (that expired on June 30th), reducing the tax from a penny to less than a half penny. Not only does this stabilize the budget, it also provides a 600-million-dollar tax break to Louisiana taxpayers. Additionally, the measure rolled-back on some corporate tax breaks and took advantage of dollars received from an oil spill settlement. We applaud those lawmakers who voted for the proposal to keep our state from making drastic cuts to vital public services.

LAE members played a major role in this success by staying in contact with lawmakers throughout all legislative gatherings. In June, nearly 120 LAE leaders, including teachers, support professionals, parents, students, and other education supporters, came to the state capitol in person to put pressure on lawmakers to fix the budget, letting them know that something had to be done to avoid crippling cuts to some of our state's most crucial services.

While the budget didn't directly include a pay raise, it was a first step toward establishing a sound operating budget that can open the door for future pay increases for school employees. Educating lawmakers on educational professional pay will be a major focus for LAE in the coming months. From back-home meetings with lawmakers to school board races happening later this year, LAE leaders are determined to bring serious conversations on educator pay to the forefront before the beginning of the next regular legislative session beginning April 8, 2019. Until then, please be sure to keep up with next steps by following LAE on Facebook (@louisianaassociationofeducators) and also join the "Geaux RED for ED: Louisiana" group.

Where'd they get THE MONEY???

After three special sessions and a boost from congressional action, Louisiana lawmakers used a mix of fixes to balance the state budget...

IMPROVED REVENUE FORECAST	ROLL-BACK OF CORPORATE TAX BREAKS	OIL SPILL MONEY	SALES TAX RENEWAL
=	=	=	=
\$364 MILLION	\$34 MILLION	\$46 MILLION	\$463 MILLION



TEACHING AND LEARNING CENTER FACILITATORS TRAIN THEIR WAY THROUGH THE SUMMER HOSTING FREE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

Facilitators for LAE's groundbreaking Teaching and Learning Center stayed busy this summer, hosting training sessions covering nearly a dozen topics to help members refine and enhance their professional skills. Facilitators also presented at the LADOE's Teacher Leadership Summit in New Orleans on best practices surrounding cultural competency and classroom management. Additionally, center organizers hosted a special conference catered exclusively to education support professionals.

For the 2018-19 School Year, the center is expanding its curriculum offerings to include the following topics:

- **UNDERSTANDING COMPASS (LOUISIANA'S PERFORMANCE EVALUATION RUBRIC):** Guides teachers through each part of the Louisiana Performance Evaluation Rubric (comparison, analysis, and reflection activities) to discover teaching strategies that can improve student learning and boost teacher evaluation scores.
- **TRAUMA-INFORMED INSTRUCTION:** Covers adverse childhood experiences, and how they can cause trauma and impact student learning, and strategies they can use to help students thrive.
- **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT DE-ESCALATION STRATEGIES:** Practical tips to prevent and de-escalate incidents with students.



- **ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING:** Using surveys, analysis, engaging activities, and discussion to help teachers find their own leadership style and how to improve working relationships with colleagues (grade-level team, administration, parents, etc.)
- **SECONDARY TRAUMA:** Covers ways to care for students impacted by trauma, how this can impact teacher well-being, and how de-stress strategies can improve personal health.

Interested in learning more? Like *The Teaching and Learning Center* on facebook to stay up-to-speed on trainings planned for the 2018-19 School Year.



CRAZY GOOD BACK-TO-SCHOOL EXCLUSIVE LAE MEMBER BENEFIT FROM OFFICE DEPOT/OFFICE MAX

LAE Members can save up to 80% on over 93,000 products - great for your printing, classroom supply, or home office needs. Shop online or in any Office Depot or OfficeMax store. Enjoy FREE next-day delivery on online orders over \$50! Go to lae.org/memberbenefits to learn more.

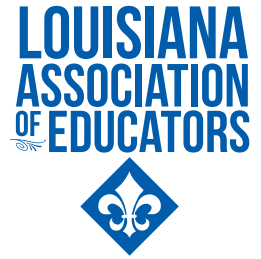
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UPCOMING EVENTS

September 7
LAE Board Meeting

September 3
Labor Day*

September 15
Committee Day

September 8-9
LAE Board Retreat

*LAE Headquarters AWSED

October 20
Executive Committee

LAE Board of Directors July 25, 2018 Conference Call Absences:

Member	Reason
Vicky Guilbeau	Another meeting
Wanda Milliman	
Carol McLaughlin	Another meeting
Walter Brown	