

THE LAE VOICE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS

LAE RELEASES SUMMARY OF STATEWIDE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

REPORT PROVIDES ASSESSMENT OF WHAT LOUISIANA CITIZENS FEEL THEIR COMMUNITIES NEED TO ENSURE A BETTER FUTURE FOR CHILDREN

LAE leaders recently released an in-depth assessment on what Louisiana citizens feel their neighborhood schools need in order to ensure a better future for children. The newly enacted federal education law, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires input from education stakeholders - the report is the association's response to this obligation. LAE President Debbie Meaux released the report on Monday, October 10, 2016.

Great Public Schools for Every Louisiana Child

and-file community members, parents, and educators are to the law's success in Louisiana.

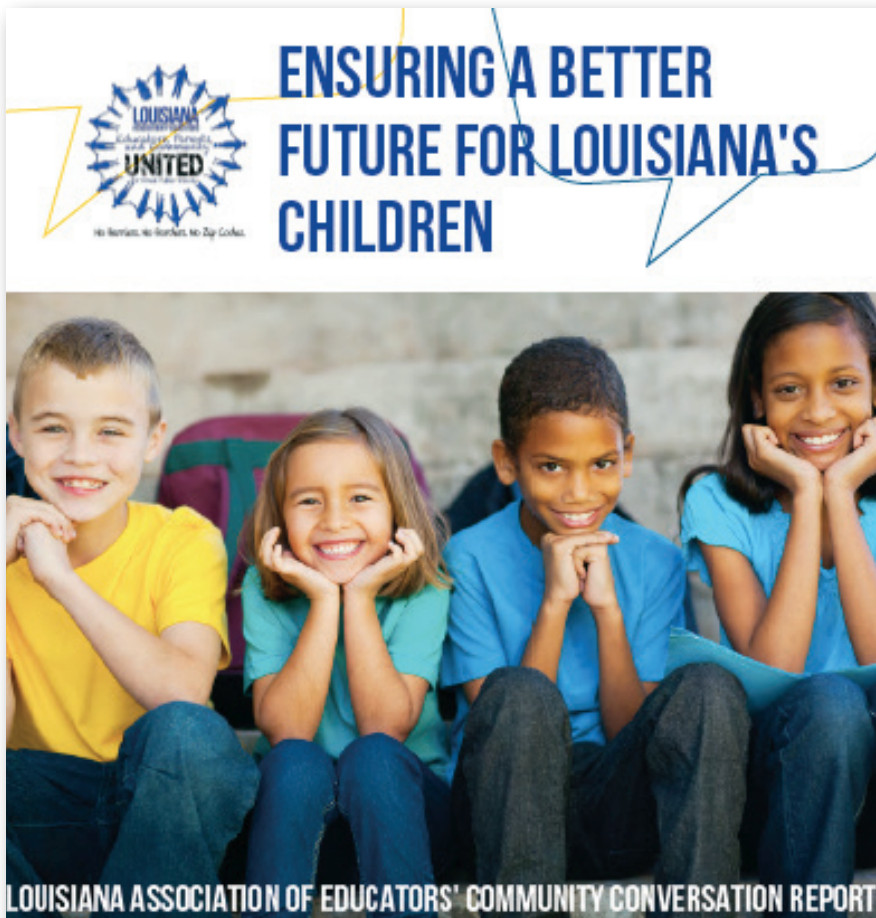
"No one knows the needs of a specific neighborhood better than the citizens who live there, so it is crucial for these individuals to have a say when considering which services are needed to cater to the community's most vulnerable residents," Meaux said.

"Through working together, we are sure to pave a promising path for the educational futures of the children of this state."

From September 14, 2016 through October 6, 2016, more than 750 educators, parents, and community members gathered in nine cities across Louisiana in response to the LAE's call to enhance collaboration on issues related to Louisiana's public schools. Event organizers from the LAE expressed the importance of children's educational excellence and the impact it has on the overall health and stability of each community. During the meetings, attendees received a brief overview of ESSA and then broke into groups to share their thoughts on what neighborhoods need in order to provide children with the types of schools they deserve. The feedback was analyzed and compiled into a report, which the LAE plans to present to the Governor's Advisory Council on ESSA - this report can be found at www.lae.org/communityconvoreport.

"We were thrilled to see so many diverse individuals engaged in these meaningful discussions," Meaux said. "We look forward to continued collaborations with all interested parties in order to make ESSA relevant to each school district in the state. We have a chance to get it right for our future, and we need to do everything we can to ensure that we are successful."

LAE leaders need the support from all members as they continue to build upon these findings. Go to lae.org/strongschoolspetition to show your support for a student-focused, teacher-led school transformation agenda.





FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Debbie Meaux, President

Educators fell on both sides of the political spectrum this past election season. Division tends to be difficult to deal with, so it is my hope that we all move toward our most important goal as school professionals: championing and preserving public education. Working with children each day, educators are uniquely situated to instill both perspective and optimism within kids. It is so important that we, as an education family, focus on bringing love and positivity into the lives of those students who may have felt the sting of political rhetoric. I know that your classrooms are havens of understanding and that every child will be protected within the confines of this sanctuary. I also know you will guide and nurture your students to make sense of how we, together, will mend any divisions amongst one another and keep our eyes focused on moving forward as we strive for success in the classroom.

Over the next four years, there is no question that we will continue to be challenged by education privatizers, especially with the recent appointment of Betsy DeVos as U.S. Secretary of Education. Our fight now is to hold onto the vision and promise of an equitable, free education for all children. We can probably expect Superintendent White to double down on his plans to further accelerate the decline of traditional public schools, opening the doors to further promote school choice – those doors are in the process of opening with sixteen charter schools applying for authorization at the next BESE meeting. Be assured that LAE will

continue to champion public education and the precious students our schools serve.

I recently watched an address by National Teacher of the Year Jahana Hayes; it spoke to me in a special way, as Ms. Hayes beautifully expounded on the one truth that binds all educators to their calling: the power that lies in the relationships that are forged with our students. We must always rely on this simple truth when those outside the classroom seek to fulfill their obsession and bind a student's worth to the scores achieved on standardized tests. I, too, find it awfully tiresome that we must continually defend ourselves and our students against those who seek to condemn locally controlled public education systems and sell them off to unaccountable charter management groups.

I want each LAE member to know that association leadership has been laser-focused on listening to the needs of Louisiana communities. We recently wrapped up a statewide tour in which we spoke with citizens in different regions of the state to obtain a genuine grasp on what they feel their schools need to provide the children in their communities with the kind of education they deserve. We walked away from these meetings with a clear understanding of how important it is to Louisianans to have schools that provide services which ensure the long term success of children, parents, and the community, as a whole. This is why, in partnership with the Alliance to Reclaim Our

Schools, LAE is hopeful in its efforts to bring the "community schools" model to Louisiana. I encourage you to find out more about this initiative at www.reclaimourschools.org. You can also email our state coordinator at laroschools@gmail.com to schedule a presentation of the format. At present, we have at least three districts seriously considering the model; it is our genuine hope to expand that number.

I believe in and will continue to champion public education. The forces that would break down our school systems do not subscribe to the paradigm of equity in education for all children. Now, more than ever, it is time to stand with LAE – an association of fighters who invite you to join us in solidarity against the "choice" movement. Help us by writing your local and state officials, as well as the newly appointed U.S. Secretary of Education, to insist that our local school districts have control over their own operations – this is the only way to allow educators to bring joy and excitement back our classrooms.

In this season of love, peace, and joy, I wish each of you comfort. Take some time to reconnect with your family and friends. Remember, you are ever-present in our thoughts here at LAE. Happy Holidays!

In Solidarity,
President Meaux



LEADERSHIP MATTERS: LAE LAUNCHES LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE IN EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH

In November, the LAE launched an exciting new initiative in conjunction with the National Education Association's Center for Organizing. The partnership establishes an exciting new "campus" of the Center for Organizing's Leadership Institute. The East Baton Rouge Institute is modeled after the successful Montgomery County Institute - a training for education advocates and emerging union leaders. The institute focuses on the importance of leadership development, collaboration, and relational organizing. LAE President Debbie Meaux said she is honored to welcome participants from across the nation to the newly established southern sister branch in East Baton Rouge Parish.



asked members of the community to participate in the "Stand up for Strong Schools" campaign.

President Meaux said she was thrilled with the success of the first event, as dedicated advocates came together in their shared commitment to the students they serve.

"We thank the participants of the EBR Institute's first training for being a part of our efforts to assist our local affiliate determine how to best deliver the types of schools the students of East Baton Rouge deserve," Meaux said. "I look forward to seeing the institute's lasting impact on public schools, not just in the Capitol City, but across the state."

"It isn't often that we have an opportunity to house such a dynamic program right here in Baton Rouge," Meaux said. "Educators understand that the future of our children is paramount to a thriving economy. Coming together to learn how to better collaborate stands to have a lasting impact on kids."

For more information on the institute, as well as a list of upcoming opportunities, visit lae.org/teachingandlearning.

The East Baton Rouge Institute hosted its first training in early December. Teams from across the nation gathered at the LAE Headquarters in Baton Rouge for three and a half days of intensive work. They developed skills in relational organizing, applied leadership identification practices, engaged with employees of East Baton Rouge Parish schools, and developed their own plans for engagement. They were provided opportunities to learn from some of the nation's most powerful teacher associations and then had the opportunity to apply their learning, as they



IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO START THINKING ABOUT NOMINATIONS FOR THE LAE IMAGE AWARDS

The LAE Image Awards are presented annually to recognize members whose leadership and actions in their professions have advanced public education in Louisiana. Every year, the LAE chooses one outstanding teacher, ESP, administrator, ancillary personnel, friend of education, and human and civil rights trailblazer to honor. The LAE is now accepting applications for the 2017 Image Awards. The deadline to submit nominations is March 7, 2017. You can download the applications at www.lae.org/2017laeimageawards.



LAE'S 2017 ELECTION SEASON IS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER

"In a democratically run organization like the LAE, the strength of the whole is determined by those who lead. We are only as strong as those who carry the torch."

– DEBBIE MEAUX, LAE PRESIDENT

LAE is the voice of Louisiana's dedicated education professionals. Have you ever wanted to see a certain change in the association, contribute to initiatives, or serve on committees that can impact your students' learning conditions? If so, now's your chance!

LAE Election Season is right around the corner. In 2017, there are several LAE Board of Directors seats up for re-election. It is required that a candidate have a minimum of three years of association membership to be eligible to run for a seat on the LAE Board. A candidate must have at least two years of association membership in order to run for NEA Director.

Members interested in having a say on policy decisions and the association's agenda on a national level might be interested in attending the NEA Representative Assembly as a Louisiana delegate. This is a position up for grabs this election cycle.

Interested candidates must submit a nomination form for the respective position of interest. In addition to the nomination form, each candidate has the option of submitting a short professional biography (not to exceed 50 words) and a high-resolution photo, which will appear in an upcoming issue of this newsletter. Nomination forms can be obtained by visiting lae.org/2017elections.

CHART OF SEATS OPEN FOR ELECTION

The LAE Board of Directors is composed of association leaders who are active education employees elected by their peers to act for the association in between meetings of the LAE Representative Assembly. A full list of offices up for election is provided below:

Board of Directors	Seat Race	Restrictions	Term of Office
First Associational District	A	Minority	3 years
First Associational District	C	None	2 years
Second Associational District	A	Minority	2 years
Second Associational District	C	None	3 years
Third Associational District	A	None	3 years
Fourth Associational District	C	None	3 years
Fifth Associational District	B	None	3 years
Sixth Associational District	A	None	2 years
Sixth Associational District	B	None	3 years
Education Support Professional	B	None	3 years
Education Support Professional	C	None	3 years
Education Support Professional	D	None	3 years
Administrator	-	Administrator	3 years
NEA Director	-	None	3 years

LAE ELECTION PROCEDURES

- An article in *The LAE Voice* and on the LAE website will outline the nomination process and will include the election procedures.
- Nomination forms will be available on the LAE website, at the LAE Headquarters (candidates may call 800-256-4523), and mailed (via email and snail mail) to local LAE leaders in December.
- Upon receipt of a candidate's nomination form, LAE will verify receipt by email. Candidates are strongly recommended to contact LAE if verification has not been received within one day of the expected arrival of the form at LAE.
- Notification of receipt of a candidate's form will occur within one day of receiving a nomination form, except during the Christmas Holiday Break. Nomination forms arriving during the holiday will be receipted on the date of the reopening of the office.
- The email address for electronically forwarding nominations forms - lguillot@lae.org - will be directed to the office of the Executive Director or her designee. **All forms must be fully completed and in the LAE Headquarters Office by January 7, 2017 by 11:59 pm.**
- For reproduction purposes, photos will only be accepted by mail or email. Quality of the photo may be affected by email in which case the LAE Elections Committee authorizes LAE to contact the candidate requesting a usable photo.
- Biographical information composed by the candidates, not to exceed 50 words, will be included with the election information/ballot. Bio information will be printed as submitted; it will not be edited for content or grammar.
- Candidates will be notified by email (by January 10, 2017) when the nominations have been certified by the LAE Elections Committee.
- An article in *The LAE Voice* and on www.lae.org will inform members of the scheduled elections. The article will contain the bios of candidates along with a sample ballot and voting instructions. Ballots will appear in the March issue of *The LAE Voice* and will be posted on the website in the *Members-Only* area.
- All voting will be online. Voting members will use their LAE ID assigned by the NEA when voting. (ID appears on the membership card issued by the LAE as well as above the name in the address section of every issue of *The LAE Voice*.)
- A paper ballot is available upon request from the elections neutral.
- The first vote recorded by the neutral will be the one counted.
- March 31, 2017 is the deadline for receipt of all ballots by the elections neutral.
- The elections neutral will have the election results certified by a notary public. The certification is to be provided to the LAE Executive Director by overnight delivery. The LAE Elections Committee will meet as scheduled to certify the election results, and will invite candidates or their representatives to be present during the certification of the results. Candidates will be notified by mail of the election results.
- All candidates who receive a majority of the votes cast shall be certified as elected by the LAE Elections Committee. Should no candidate receive a majority of the votes cast, a runoff will be held between the top two candidates.
- Should a runoff election be necessary, members of the appropriate district will be notified electronically and an announcement will appear in *The LAE Voice*.
- After all election procedures and challenges have been followed, the LAE Elections Committee will declare any unopposed candidate as winner of the office sought. The ballot will not reflect any unopposed candidate.

LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS

2017
Representative Assembly
RA

*Celebrating 40 years of
Public Education Advocacy*

save the dates of
April 22 - 23, 2017

for the
2017 LAE Representative Assembly

**Hilton Baton Rouge
Capitol Center**

201 Lafayette St, Baton Rouge, LA

★ networking ★ leadership development ★ association business

★ award presentations ★ special guest speakers ★ legislative reception

★ special 40 year anniversary celebration!

www.lae.org/2017ra



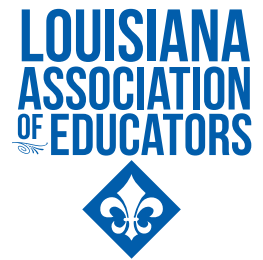
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UPCOMING EVENTS

December 21 -
January 3
LAE Winter Break*

January 7
LAE Committee
Day: LAE Elections
Committee

January 16
Martin Luther
King, Jr. Day*

January 27-28
LAE Executive
Committee Meeting

*LAE Headquarters CLOSED