

THE LAE VOICE

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Great Public Schools for Every Louisiana Child

Volume 15, No. 4 February 2019

IT'S TIME TO INCREASE SCHOOL FUNDING & EDUCATOR PAY: WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE 2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

By: LAE Legislative & Political Director Shane Riddle

From back-home meetings with lawmakers to school board races this past Fall, LAE leaders are determined to bring serious conversations on educator pay to the forefront before the beginning of the 2019 Legislative Session. As we approach this year's session, it's important to highlight some of the great accomplishments the association has experienced over the past year. Together, LAE members were instrumental in working with Governor Edwards and lawmakers 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. During a third special session, state representatives and senators agreed to a compromise by passing a measure to restructure a temporary sales tax to help stabilize the budget in a responsible way. Additionally, the measure rolled-back on some corporate tax breaks and took advantage of dollars received from an oil spill settlement. LAE members played a major role in this success by staying in constant communication with lawmakers in order to express the most pressing needs of Louisiana's public schools. Many education supporters came to the state capitol in person to put pressure on their legislators 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.

Looking ahead to the 2019 session (set to begin on April 8), it will be crucial for lawmakers to pass a responsible operating budget for the coming year. To prepare for this, LAE is working diligently to educate lawmakers on the importance of increasing school funding that will ultimately pave the way for sustainable pay increases for all school employees in the state of Louisiana.

Most are aware that it's been more than a decade since Louisiana teachers received a sustained increase in salary, but did you know it's been more than 15 years since school support staff saw increases? Each year, fewer people are entering the teaching

profession in Louisiana primarily due to high-stakes testing and low pay – a trend that must be reversed. Recruiting (and retaining) the best and the brightest to work in our schools for our students is an investment we can't afford to overlook. To make such an investment means paying teachers a salary that meets (or exceeds)

teacher pay in surrounding states so that we don't lose these professionals to nearby states. And just as important, it means paying paraprofessionals, custodians, school bus operators, food service workers, and all other school support professionals appropriately so they can make a respectable living.

Over the past several years, LAE leaders, lobbyists, and member activists have been extremely successful in developing solid, bipartisan relationships with members of both parties in both chambers of the Louisiana legislature. We must continue to nurture these relationships - in addition to establishing new ones - with legislative leaders who truly stand up to help us promote solid and responsible solutions to education funding, educator pay, and restoring the level of respect to the profession that is so rightfully deserved. In our hands, we hold the power to create positive change in the educational environments of all K-12 public school students. We must focus on strengthening our organization by being the bold voice of the Louisiana educator. Please make it a top priority this year to stay in contact with your lawmakers by visiting with them (face-to-face while they're home from the

session), calling them on the phone, and writing them letters echoing LAE's sentiments.

We have the power to do this (and a whole lot more) in the upcoming session. Please keep an eye out for alerts on all of LAE's legislative initiatives, and be sure to head to www.redfordedla.org to stay updated on actions you can take TODAY to help us in our preparation for the beginning of this year's annual legislative gathering.





FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Debbie Meaux, President

The new year is here and LAE is looking forward to an action-packed first six months! I hope you are ready to join us as we gear up to tackle some crucial issues this legislative season.

We all know the changes we'd like to see, especially when it comes to school employee pay. These changes start with securing the funding our school districts so desperately need to adequately fund school budgets. This is exactly what LAE is working to accomplish. Together, alongside education stakeholder groups the Louisiana Association of Principals (LAP), the Louisiana Association of School Superintendents (LASS), the LFT, and the Louisiana School Boards' Association (LSBA) we are working to spread the message surrounding the importance of making long-term financial investments in Louisiana's public schools. Beginning in February and running through the first week of April, this education stakeholder coalition will host discussions across Louisiana to bring pressing issues to the forefront. The goal is to get the public to understand the dire need to hold lawmakers accountable during the 2019 Legislative Session so they 1.) approve appropriate funding measures for our public school systems; 2.) prioritize securing a mechanism to fund school employee pay increases; and 3.) improve the working conditions in our schools so the highest quality professionals are recruited and retained to educate our students. Area lawmakers will be invited to attend and engage with educators, parents, and members of the general public. Please make plans to attend the forum closest to you so you can be a part of the conversation. (*See the Save The Date information provided in this message.) We'll keep you posted on specific event venues as we confirm them.

Across the nation, educators (certified and uncertified) are rising up and facing the powers-that-be, head on. Most recently, the United Teachers of Los Angeles

(UTLA) initiated and settled a walk-out to protest unjust practices in the schools. As the second largest school district in the United States with some of the nation's poorest and neediest students, educators working in Los Angeles' poverty-stricken areas are under-resourced and over-worked. The district was neglecting to appropriately fund schools resulting in classrooms housing nearly 40 or more students. Schools there are in desperate need of librarians, counselors, nurses, and more paraprofessionals - all of which is causing excess stress and resource deficits that impact the quality of education for students. Sound familiar?

Here in Louisiana, it is my intention (and the mission of our great association) to fight for an appropriate and just resolution to Louisiana's school funding problems, but I need your voice echoing mine. Here's how you can help...

Join me in talking with your lawmakers. Share your personal experiences with the lack of funding and the negative impacts it has on your students. The lack of respect for educators is driving talented and devoted individuals away from the profession. We must revive public pride and respect for our work. What we do to address this problem is so important and an essential ingredient to improving the future of our state.

Make a commitment to attend the previously mentioned community forums taking place this spring. We need your voice in the room to echo our message to lawmakers. Now is our chance to let them know how dire the financial situations are in our schools. If we want pay increases this year, we must work to educate our policymakers on the genuine needs of our colleagues, and more importantly, the needs of our students.

There's one more thing. The future of all these initiatives (not to mention the well-being of the association) lies in the hands of those who lead. LAE Leadership Elections

will take place in March. Please be on the lookout for an email with instructions to vote. All candidates are listed within this issue. LAE is a well-respected voice in the education community at the state and national levels. You can have a hand in continuing this reputation by voting in these important elections. Your vote will determine the individuals who serve as officers of the association and also as representatives of the LAE at the NEA Representative Assembly. The individuals elected will steer the organization into the future. Remember to cast your vote online between March 10th and March 29th.

I know that life is a constant to-do list, but we must find time to do all that we can to make the world take notice of our needs - which are ultimately the needs of our students. Do you really want better pay? More resources and better working conditions? Appropriately prepared colleagues? Professional respect? If so, let's make it happen! This is our year - the year of the educator. I look forward to seeing new faces working on our campaigns and along with those new faces will come new success. Thank you for all that you do. You are truly appreciated, not just as member of this association, but for all you do to contribute to the success of Louisiana's students.

In Solidarity,
Debbie Meaux

SAVE THE DATE

MAKE PLANS TO ATTEND AN IMPORTANT
**COMMUNITY TOWN HALL
ON PUBLIC EDUCATION
in Louisiana**

Coming to a city near you...

- February 19: Lake Charles
- February 21: Alexandria
- February 28: Lafayette
- March 12: New Orleans
- March 14: Metairie
- March 19: Baton Rouge
- March 21: Monroe
- March 26: LaPlace
- March 28: Northshore
- April 2: Shreveport
- April 4: Houma

Additional details coming soon...
Visit lae.org/communityforums for updates.

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THIS IS YOUR OFFICIAL NOTICE REGARDING VOTING IN LAE'S ELECTIONS ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ONLINE VOTING PROCEDURES AND REQUESTS FOR PAPER BALLOTS

Please let the candidate information provided within this newsletter serve as reference when voting in LAE's 2019 Elections. Our neutral, Election-America, will send notifications to those LAE members who've provided a valid email address to the LAE. To update this information, contact the LAE Membership Department at 225-412-0775.

The elections portal will open March 10th and remain open through 11:59 p.m. on March 29, 2019. During that period, online voting will be available 24-7. You can expect to receive an email to your personal email address notifying you when the portal is open. This email will provide you with a link to the elections website, along with your LAE member ID number that you need to access your ballot. To avoid any confusion, you may want to make sure

you're able to accept emails from Election-America.com. If you do not receive this email, please be sure to visit lae.org between March 10th and March 29th and look for the LAE Elections link in the LAE Today section on the home page. Simply click the link to be taken directly to the portal. You'll need your LAE member ID number on hand in order to log in to access your ballot -- this number can be found on your LAE Membership Card or above your name in the mailing address section of this newsletter. In addition to your member number, you will also need to enter the last four digits of your social security number.



Election-America
In the business of perfection

PROCESS FOR COLLECTING A PAPER BALLOT

Voting will be by online ballot method. For any member who would prefer to receive a paper ballot, you can request that one be mailed to you by contacting the neutral via help+LAE@election-america.com or 1-866-384-9978. (You will

need to have your LAE member number on hand for voter verification purposes. Again, this number can be found on your membership card or in the address section of this newsletter.) All ballots must be received by the neutral by no later than March 29, 2019.

LAE'S 2019 ELECTION BALLOT

Please note: The biographies contained were not edited for content nor grammatical or spelling corrections. LAE reserves the right to alter the format of the submissions. If the candidate submitted a biography longer than 50 words, it is indicated with "..."

CANDIDATES FOR LAE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

LAE PRESIDENT – ELECTION – VOTE FOR ONE

1. Dr. Tia T. Mills



As a current LAE Board Member, Local President, and NEA Committee Member, I've become knowledgeable regarding policymaking, budgeting decisions and the operations of a corporation. With your vote, I will continue my commitment to the constituents of the organization state-wide by affecting change through initiatives that best serves all members.

2. Daryl Roberson



Daryl Roberson, Vice President

Stand strong for LAE by electing me to serve as your next LAE President.

Vote for six years of experience and training. Vote for proven leadership.

Vote for the BEST future for LAE. We are Better, more Effective and Stronger Together.

For more information visit: www.darylroberson.com.

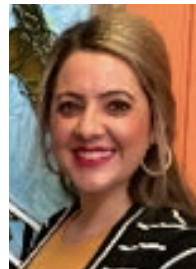
LAE VICE PRESIDENT – ELECTION – VOTE FOR ONE

1. D'Shay Rushing-Oaks



My name is D'Shay Oaks. I am asking for your vote for the Louisiana Association of Educator's Vice-President. I work at Vidalia Junior High in Concordia Parish. I currently serve on the Budget and Investment Committees plus a member of the LAE Board of Directors. Thanks for your support!!

2. Suzanne Breaux



- 17 Year Educator
- Local President and Grievance Chair
- Vice-President, Chief Negotiator, NEA UniServ Committee
- District Insurance Committee
- VAE/LAE Negotiating Team
- NEA Board Training Committee
- NEA Board of Directors
- Lobbied State Legislators and Congressmen
- Passionate LAE/NEA RA Delegate
- Certified Facilitator for LAE
- Vote Suzanne for Association Progress
- GEAX vote BREAU*

CANDIDATES FOR 2019 LAE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FIRST ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT C – ELECTION – VOTE FOR ONE

1. Dr. Fredrick Pinkney



VOICE. VALUE. AND VISION. are attributes I want to bring to the LAE Board of Directors. I will continue to improve, defend, and protect our noble profession through transparency and integrity. It will be an honor to represent the educators of the First Associational District. Please support with your vote.

2. Rachel Gifford



I seek your vote for LAE Board of Directors, District 1, Seat C. Your vote of confidence will allow the voice of all members to be heard. Experienced, dedicated, and ready to rise and meet challenges. Keep advocating, LAE. John Greenleaf Whittier: "Rest if you must, but don't you quit."

SECOND ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT A – ELECTION – VOTE FOR ONE

1. Ron G. Carr

I've been a long time member of LAE and am currently serving as a Board member for Associational District 2. My participation and representation has involved being a strong, stern, and fierce presence for governance

in our great association. Allow me to continue to serve you! Vote for Carr! I ...

2. Clara Staten Ellis



Clara Staten Ellis is a Monroe, Louisiana native that currently serves as President of OAE. She has been an active member of LAE for over fifteen years, serving as Board Vice-President and Secretary. She is married to Charles Ellis

and has one daughter, Jessica Staten that teaches in Dallas, Texas.

3. Tamara Ross



I am a 17 year educator in Monroe City. I am currently the president of my local association and serve as a member on the NEA Resolutions Committee. With your vote and support, I can work collaboratively with other educators to

improve opportunities for students and public education.

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THIRD ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT C – ELECTION – VOTE FOR ONE

1. Ganey Arsement



Ganey Arsement is a special education teacher in Calcasieu parish where he serves as a member of the local executive committee. He works tirelessly as an educational advocate and legislative liaison. In addition, he is the creator and publisher of Educate Louisiana ; his personal blog about education policy.

2. Donna M. Wilridge



My name is Donna M. Wilridge, and I am seeking reelection for the board member position for Third Association Seat C. I am also an Exec. Board member. I devotedly attends the State RA and I have also represented Acadia Association at the National RA. I would appreciate your vote.

WELCOME TO LAE'S NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS!

THE CANDIDATES LISTED BELOW RAN UNOPPOSED AND WERE ELECTED BY ACCLAMATION.
CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME TO THE LAE BOARD OF DIRECTORS!

FOURTH ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT A

Katina Thompson-Givens, Elected, Unopposed

FIFTH ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT A

DeLisa Washington, Elected, Unopposed

SIXTH ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT C

Kathy Randolph, Elected, Unopposed

EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL, SEAT A

Gwendolyn Hill, Elected, Unopposed

CANDIDATES FOR 2019 NEA DELEGATE/SUCCESSOR DELEGATE

CANDIDATES FOR 2019 NEA ADMINISTRATOR DELEGATE – ELECTION – VOTE FOR 1

1. Candace Standberry Robertson



- Member for 15 years – St. Landry, St. John and St. Helena
- Building Representative
- Served on LAE Board of Directors
- Local delegate in 2007
- State delegate 2009-2014
- Committed to Public Education

2. Cynthia Y. Henderson



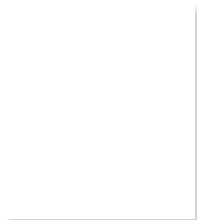
Cynthia Henderson-Assistant Principal Herndon Magnet School.

Thanks to your vote I now serve as your NEA Administrator At-Large. I need your help to continue the work that we have begun. It will be an honor to represent you at NEA Representative Assembly in Houston. Please vote Cynthia NEA State Delegate.

CANDIDATES FOR 2019 NEA DELEGATE/SUCCESSOR DELEGATE – ELECTION – VOTE FOR 10

**Numbers next to candidates' names denote ballot placement.*

1. Michelle Degroat



3. Anita H. Green



Anita H. Green would like your support to attend the NEA RA as a state delegate in Houston TX. I am currently the librarian at Greenville Supt's and Northdale Supt's Academy. I have served on the Resolutions Committee and on the NBI committee of LAE for the last four years.

5. Gwendolyn Hill



My name is Gwendolyn Hill, I have been a member of the Livingston Parish Association for the past years. I serve as secretary for my local. I've attended the Representative Assemblies for my local and would be honored to represent our district at next year's assembly.

2. Ruthie Wright



My fellow LAE members, your expectation of me and this organization have always been a priority. I have represented you on the Local, and State level for over 30 years, and the National Level for 6 years as NEA ESP Director. I am asking for your vote to represent you.

4. Damus Smith, Jr.



My name is Damus Smith, Jr., and I'm thrilled to say this is my 35th year teaching high school Business/Computer Technology. I grew up in Concordia Parish and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business degree from Southern University and a Master of Technology Education in Teaching/Learning degree from ...

6. Donald G. Fontenot



I am a teacher working as an Educational Diagnostician in Calcasieu Parish and have been an LAE member for over 40 years. I have represented Louisiana before at the NEA. I have been active and vocal at LAE and NEA. Please allow me to represent you this summer.

continued on next page

CANDIDATES FOR 2019 NEA DELEGATE/SUCCESSOR DELEGATE – ELECTION – (CONTINUED)

7. Natasha A.M. Joseph



My name is Natasha Joseph and I am a Sped. Para. I am the secretary of Acadia Association of Educators. I am asking for your vote to represent Louisiana as a delegate at the National RA as an educational support personnel. Your vote will be deeply appreciated.

8. D'Shay Rushing-Oaks



My name is D'Shay Oaks. I am asking for your vote for one of the NEA State Delegates to represent the LAE. I work at Vidalia Junior High in Concordia Parish. I currently serve as a district two member on the LAE Board of Directors. Thanks for your support!!

9. Ganey Arsement



Ganey Arsement is a special education teacher in Calcasieu parish where he serves as a member of the local executive committee. He works tirelessly as an educational advocate and legislative liaison. In addition, he is the creator and publisher of Educate Louisiana ; his personal blog about education policy.

10. Angela Doublin



I completed high school in 1982 from Mangham High School in Mangham, Louisiana. In high school, I was a member of the choir, pep cheer squad and the business club. I was a member of Holly Ridge Baptist Church, in Rayville, La. from a child, until my early thirties. I ...

11. Patrick Landreth



I am seeking to attend the NEA convention as a delegate for the first time. I have attended the local convention and enjoy conducting the business of the association on all levels. I serve on the local board representing ESP's. Please vote for me on election day.

12. Rodriguez Taylor



13. Katina R. Thompson-Givens



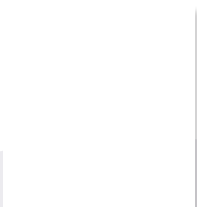
I serve on the East Baton Rouge Parish Association of Educators board. During the summer of 2018, I served as the treasurer for LAE at the RA in Minneapolis, MN. In 2015, I was awarded the LAE Ancillary Image Award.

14. Merrill D. Dickerson



I am a special education teacher in Lafayette Parish. I feel that I can bring my past experiences as a local delegate to the RA as I represent LAE. I have held a seat on the LPAE Executive Board for several years and currently serve as Vice-President of my local.

15. Ethel L. Rosenthal



17. Lauren Lirette Justice



I am an early educator and current member of the EBRPAE board of directors. I would like to have the chance to represent you at the NEARA, so I can learn more about our great association. Thank you in advance for your consideration and vote.

16. Valencea Johnson



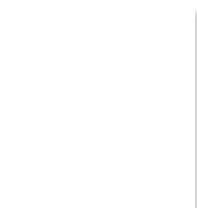
Valencea Johnson is passionate. She is committed to educating students, colleagues, and the community. She has a Master's in Education, a Bachelors in Marketing, and Certification in Education. She has taught various grades levels K-5, is a Lead Teacher, Teacher of the Year, and has ten years of teaching experience.

18. Donna M. Wilridge



My name is Donna M. Wilridge. I am a member of the Louisiana Acadia Association of Educators local. I would appreciate your vote for me to represent Louisiana as a state delegate at the National RA this year. Thank you!

19. Catherine Bosch



20. Christina Badeaux



I am currently Math Coach at Herod Elementary School. I attended last year's RA as a state delegate. Attendance at this assembly has spiked my interest in pursuing an active role in the association. I would be honored to represent Louisiana as a state delegate once again.

continued on next page

CANDIDATES FOR 2019 NEA DELEGATE/SUCCESSOR DELEGATE – ELECTION – (CONTINUED)

21. Peronica Riley



I am Peronica Riley, a paraprofessional at Delmont Elementary and an EBRPAE member for 14 years. I want to attend the NEA Convention so that I can attain more knowledge about my profession and motivation to move forward in the classroom and my local organization. Please vote for me. Thanks.

22. Dr. Fredrick Pinkney



As a 24 year educator and currently Vice-President for the Caddo Association of Educators, I have always championed education by being a voice for the voiceless. I value your work ethic and unselfish dedication as public servants and will represent you with integrity. Please support with your vote.

23. Christopher Jones



Christopher Jones is originally from Little Rock, Arkansas. He attended LSU, where he received a degree in Mathematics. After graduation, he stayed in Louisiana where he pursued a career in secondary education. He has been teaching Mathematics at McKinley Senior High School for the past five years.

24. Jennifer Lee Mathiew



I am Jennifer Mathiew. I am an elementary teacher in Vermilion Parish. I am a member of VAE. I've had the pleasure of being a state delegate for the last two assemblies and would be honored to represent you again.

25. Suzanne Breaux



As a passionate union leader I take pride in working well with others. I have served as both a local and state delegate to the NEA RA and I am once again asking for your vote. I would be honored to represent you this year in Houston at the RA.

26. Erika Benoit

As a passionate union leader I take pride in working well with others. I have served as both a local and state delegate to the NEA RA and I am once again asking for your vote. I would be honored to represent you this year in Houston at the RA.

27. Shelly Byron

I am a teacher in Vermilion Parish. I am currently Vice-President of my local, on LAE's Legislative Committee and have been a dedicated LAE member. I've attended the state and National Representative Assembly for my local and would be honored to represent you at next year's assembly in Houston.

28. Wanda Milliman, M.Ed. NBCT



LAE is where ALL teachers and support staff should be! Having fun learning is my joy. Mentoring leaders is my passion. Lifting public education and its students every day in every way is my calling. I believe in our Association! Please vote for me to represent Louisiana, to represent you.

29. Jois Williams



Jois Williams cares about education. She has devoted 20 years of public service to the EBR Community. She is a highly qualified Special Education Teacher with a Bachelor's degree. She has served at the state level on the Developmental Committee.

30. Jamal Anthony Taylor



31. Emily T. Broussard



- 20 year educator
- Local vice president, treasurer, chief negotiator, and grievance chair
- Local delegate to LAE and NEA Representative Assembly
- State delegate to NEA Representative Assembly 2018
- LAE representative on the Governor's College and Career Readiness Commission

32. Jarred James Breaux



With 13 years of experience as an educator, I now focus on improving public education for my students and my colleagues. I meet regularly with local politicians, community leaders, and parish administrators to make sure our voices are heard.

33. Eva Lois Broussard

As a passionate union leader I take pride in working well with others. I have served as both a local and state delegate to the NEA RA and I am once again asking for your vote. I would be honored to represent you this year in Houston at the RA.



TIME-SENSITIVE
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INFO INSIDE

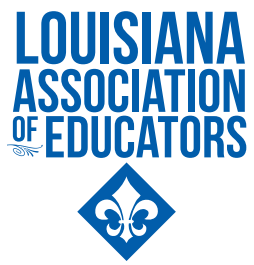
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UPCOMING EVENTS

March 1:
Read Across America
Day

March 4 - 5:
March Gras Holiday*

March 23:
LAE Board meeting

April 8:
2019 Legislative
Session begins

April 13 - 14:
LAE Representative
Assembly

April 19-22:
Easter Holiday*

*LAE Headquarters CLOSED