

THE LAE VOICE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS

Great Public Schools for Every Louisiana Child

Volume 20, No. 3 August/September 2024

LAE SEEKS TO ENFORCE THE INTENT OF ACT 311

Some districts change job descriptions to avoid paying educators additional pay for additional duties.

Members across Louisiana returned to school to find that their district changed job descriptions to avoid the financial responsibility outlined in Act 311. President Tia T. Mills, Vice President D'Shay Oaks, and Senator Blake Miguez testified before the House Education Committee Tuesday, Sept. 3, about the number of districts that have changed educator job descriptions. It is possible that these districts rewrote the job descriptions to avoid paying educators for duties outside of the school day. Act 311 requires payment to employees for the additional non-academic work they perform beyond the regular school day. Senator Miguez was the sponsor and co-author of SB205, now Act 311. He, along with President Mills and Vice President Oaks, emphasized the need for districts to follow the intent of the law.



President Mills and Vice President Oaks testified to the House Education Committee about the need for districts to pay educators as intended by Act 311.



Iberia Association of Educators President Wanda Milliman spoke to IPSB about Act 311.

SB205 becomes Act 311

SB205 was signed by Governor Jeff Landry at a celebratory bill signing ceremony at Fatima Catholic School in Lafayette on June 19. Louisiana Association of Educators (LAE) State President Dr. Tia T. Mills, LAE Board members (Donna Wilridge, Julia Reed, Valencea Johnson, Vickie Jacquet, and

Delisa Washington), Senator Blake Miguez, and other co-authors in attendance for the signing see this new law as a step toward improving educator retention. In addition to providing additional pay for duties assigned beyond the normal scope of work, Act 311 also requires districts to pay teachers who

do not receive their daily, unencumbered, 45-minute planning period or the weekly equivalent of minutes (per a law supported by LAE and authored by Senator Katrina Jackson in 2021).

Act 311 is a step toward improving teacher retention

Paying educators for work beyond the scope of their academic responsibilities can contribute to teacher retention. Teacher retention is an issue that continues to be a challenge for schools across the state. Louisiana lost 15% of the teaching workforce in the 2022–23 school year, up from 14% the year before and 12% in each year from 2016 – 2019. Some teachers leave to teach

in a neighboring state to pursue higher salaries. Fourteen hundred teachers left for Texas over the last ten years (records from Texas Department of Education). Data from previous member surveys reveal that many educators work a second or third job so they can afford to continue to teach. Teacher salaries are lower than those for college graduates in other fields and can contribute

to teachers leaving the profession. Act 311 is designed to protect an educator's time outside of the school day so they can pursue other income as needed until educator salaries are increased to the Southern Regional Average. Paying educators for additional duties could reduce the need for them to seek other sources of income.

LAE Launches Member Survey

Act 311 is landmark legislation that LAE wants to see implemented as intended. LAE launched a survey to collect information from members about changes to job

descriptions in their districts. LAE asks every member to [complete this survey](#)! The confidential information will help LAE to plan follow-up actions during the upcoming

legislative session. secure.ngpvan.com/fx1_JTiniUCbOeOx11VyVg2



From the PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dr. Tia T. Mills, President

Greetings and welcome back to school, LAE! I hope that you've had a great summer of relaxation! Time with family and friends is essential for recentering so you can focus on future productivity. I humbly resume the role as LAE's leader -- your leader. It is an honor to continue this journey as LAE President, and I hope you are as excited as I am about the new school year. We love what we do as educators knowing the impact we can have on the students we serve. Educators help students see a vision for the future that is bigger and better than they can imagine! Then, we can help them make their dreams a reality! What you do and who you are matters to students this school year!

As we begin, let's continue to band together as members of LAE. We must stay engaged in the policy-making process at the local and state levels to ensure the best learning environment for our students and working

environment for educators. Issues that continue to be top priorities for educators are salaries, school funding, student discipline, and professional respect, any of which can lead to an unhealthy environment for Louisiana's school employees (and ultimately, students) -- if they are not addressed. LAE continues to advocate on your behalf on these topics. I'm asking YOU to stand with us, fight beside us, and speak up on behalf of our public schools and our students. This past year's legislative session was packed with anti-union bills designed to stop or weaken our influence. Luckily, we were able to stop them from passing since we have important work to do as an educator union!

The landmark legislation that LAE worked to pass this year, Act 311 (the new law that provides additional pay for additional work outside of the workday and for planning periods that teachers did not receive during the school day), is supposed to provide additional income for work outside of the school day or decrease required work hours (outside of the school day). This new

law is being challenged by some school districts that have rewritten job descriptions so that educators are not eligible to be paid. LAE launched a member survey to gather information about each district's new policies (job descriptions and salary schedules). The data collected will help us in the develop next steps as we prepare for the upcoming legislative session. Thanks for your participation to help get our bill passed (letters, emails, phone calls)—now let's continue to press forward to make the intent of this bill a reality. [Complete the LAE survey today!](#)

I hope this school year is filled with memories, milestones, and much success to make this the best school year ever. My thoughts are with you for the exciting days ahead. I know you will work hard to advance educational excellence in our schools. I look forward to working with you and making you proud.

In Solidarity,
President Mills

LAE SEEKS TO ENFORCE THE INTENT OF ACT 311, continued



Senator Blake Miguez pauses at the bill signing ceremony to pose with LAE Leaders. Left to right: Valencea Johnson (EBRPAE), Julia Reid (LPAE), Delisa Washington (LPAE), Vickie Jaquet (LPAE), Donna Wilridge (AAE), President Tia T. Mills, and Government Relations Director Marcus Thomas.



Governor Landry signs LAE's SB205 into law, Act 311, with LAE leaders looking on.



Governor Landry takes a moment to pose with LAE President Dr. Tia T. Mills, LAE Government Relations Director Marcus Thomas, LAE UniServ Manager/Lead Organizer Gregg Mills, and LAE leaders.

NEA STAFF LABOR STRIKE PROMPTS REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY CANCELLATION

Seventy-eight Louisiana Association of Educators members traveled to the NEA's 102nd Representative Assembly (RA) in Philadelphia, PA July 4-7 to conduct the business of the association; however, RA was canceled shortly after it started because of an NEA staff union strike. Over 7,000 delegates were expected at the event. When they canceled the gathering, NEA announced that business would be conducted using a virtual platform at a later time.



President Tia T. Mills led the LAE delegation.

The RA meets annually to adopt the strategic plan and budget, resolutions, the Legislative Program, and other policies of the Association. Before the strike, NEA President Becky Pringle opened the meeting with an inspirational message that included a long list of affiliate accomplishments and said the NEA members "will fight privatization, vouchers, and any other scheme to drain resources from our public schools. Every day, we will demand that every school consistently has the equitable funding and the resources they need so that every student in every community has the support and opportunities they need to take their rightful places in the world."



The Aspiring Educator Conference (highlighted in this issue), the National Council of Urban Education Associations Summer meeting, and the National Conference of State Education Associations were

held before and in conjunction with RA. LAE President Tia Mills, Executive Director Karla Owens, Aspiring Educator President Ja'Deric Talbert, Aspiring Educator Delegate Brooke Steward, and Aspiring Educator Sponsor Dr. Danielle Williams participated in some of these events.



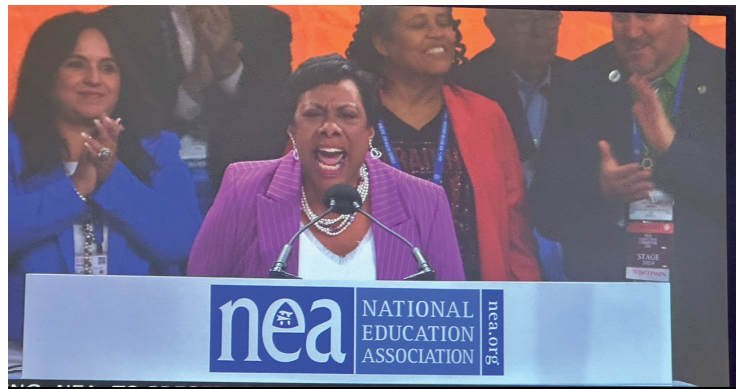
President Mills and Dr. Sullivan (Caddo) shared a moment at RA.



Dr. Mills connected with colleagues from other affiliates.



LAE delegates attended RA ready to work.



NEA President Becky Pringle addressed RA attendees.

ASPIRING EDUCATORS REPRESENT LAE AT THE NEA ASPIRING EDUCATORS CONFERENCE IN PHILADELPHIA

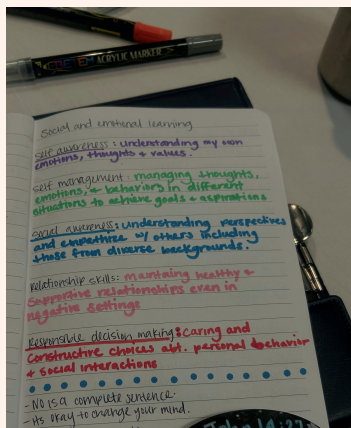


(Left) Ja'Deric Talbert, LAE Aspiring Educator President and Delegate

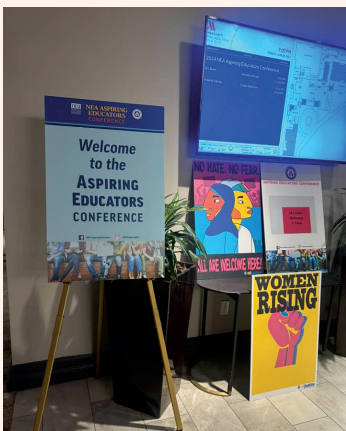
(Right) Brooke Steward, LAE Aspiring Educator Delegate

Grambling University students Ja'Deric Talbert, President of the LAE Aspiring Educators Association, and Brooke Steward served as delegates to the NEA Aspiring Educators Conference in Philadelphia June 29 – July 2. During the conference, aspiring educators connect with colleagues, learn about their profession, and act on important education issues affecting public schools and communities. Delegates attended inspirational plenary sessions and break-

out sessions of interest to them. Some break-out sessions available included 1) the importance of public schools, 2) community schools (a reform model), 3) the benefits of collective bargaining, and 4) assessing the needs of all learners. Delegate Brooke Steward shared that the social and emotional learning competencies (SEL) breakout session was especially impactful to her.



Delegate Brooke Steward took notes during the Social and Emotional Learning break-out session.



Delegates are welcomed to the Aspiring Educator Conference

She learned why SEL is crucial for educators and students, about the five leveraging practices, and the benefits of journaling to create a positive, open classroom environment. Participants also explored their reasons for being in education. Brooke said about the conference, "It was a privilege to be in the same room with these dedicated educators. I'm more determined than ever to pursue a career in education and with the LAE. It was truly a fantastic experience!" LAE President Mills saw Ja'Deric and Brooke at the conference and said, "The future of our profession is comprised of some amazing advocates!"



LAE President Tia T. Mills runs across LAE Aspiring Educator Conference delegates Ja'Deric Talbert and Brooke Steward.

2024-25 PROFESSIONAL LEARNING NETWORK SCHEDULE RELEASED

The Teaching and Learning Center recently released the professional learning network calendar for the 2024-25 school year. This year's topics include Bully Prevention (Sept. 10 – Oct. 1), Educator Self-Care (Oct. 22 – Nov. 19), Student Engagement (Jan. 21 – Feb. 18), and Cooperative Learning (Mar. 6 – Apr. 1), topics that rank at the top of Louisiana educator member surveys. All members are invited to register and participate in each content and conversation-packed learning network! In the Bully Prevention Network, participants will learn what the law says about bullying, when to report bullying, how to use bully-reporting documents, and how to prevent and respond to bullying. Educator Self-Care will focus on compassion fatigue, self-care strategies, mindfulness strategies, and dealing with previous trauma. In the Student Engagement Network, participants will learn the importance of making curriculum relevant for students, using instructional differentiation, providing opportunities for peer-to-peer collaboration, and using technology in instruction. The last network of the school year, Cooperative Learning, will focus on using differentiated instruction to improve student learning, connecting cooperative learning to teaching standards, and discussing practical strategies to use in the classroom. LAE members will be learning all year long! Register for one session or all four—and mark your calendars!!

Bully Prevention

Sept. 10 – Oct. 1

Educator Self-Care

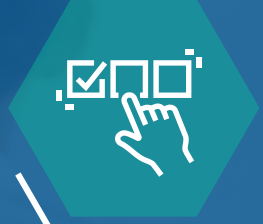
Oct. 22 – Nov. 19

Student Engagement

Jan. 21 – Feb. 18

Cooperative Learning

Mar. 6 – Apr. 1



Benefits designed with **YOU IN MIND**

Explore exclusive benefits online:

- Student debt reduction
- Flexible insurance coverage
- Complimentary life insurance
- Easy retirement planning
- Shopping and travel deals



Scan below
to learn more



LAE BOARD OF DIRECTORS JULY 15, 2024 - JULY 14, 2025

Position	BOD
President	Dr. Tia Mills
Vice President	D'Shay Oaks
1st Associational District	
Seat A	Dr. Elizabeth Sullivan
Seat B	Dawn Phillips Jordan
Seat C	Dr. Frederick Pinkney
2nd Associational District	
Seat A	Tamara Ross
Seat B	Clara Ellis
Seat C	LaChina Clay
3rd Associational District	
Seat A	Donna Wilridge
Seat B	Open
Seat C	Tanya Jackson
4th Associational District	
Seat A	Katina Thompson Givens
Seat B	Valencea Johnson
Seat C	Candita Belona Sims

Position	BOD
5th Associational District	
Seat A	Delisa Washington
Seat B	Julia Reed
Seat C	Open
6th Associational District	
Seat A	Derron Cook
Seat B	Open
Seat C	Annette Foret
Educational Support Professional	
Seat A	Open
Seat B	Gwendolyn Hill
Seat C	Patricia Clark
Seat D	Natasha Joseph
LAE Administrator	Cynthia Henderson
NEA Director	Dr. Elizabeth Sullivan
LAE Retired	Anita Augustus
LAE Aspiring Educator	Terrence Robinson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS SEAT VACANCY

The following board seats are open. Members in the following districts who would like to apply should email a letter of interest and a resume to mcarpenter@lae.org. Applicant's information must be received by Oct. 15, 2024, 4:30. P.M.

Qualifications: Must be an LAE member for at least 3 years to be eligible.

District 3 – Seat B
District 5 – Seat C

District 6 – Seat B
Education Support Professional Seat A



Every Penny Counts

That's why we've made your LAE savings even more rewarding with ODP Business Solutions™ — your one-stop shop for office supplies with savings of up to 75% on the Best Value List of preferred products by shopping online.

To access your savings, visit odpbusiness.com/lae

ODP and ODP Business Solutions are trademarks of The Office Club, Inc.
© 2024 ODP Business Solutions, LLC. All rights reserved.

1299462743



LAE AT NEW TEACHER ORIENTATIONS ACROSS LOUISIANA

LAE travelled the state during July and August to greet new teachers at district New Teacher Orientations. In cooperation with local leaders, staff shared the message about joining the union—1) have a voice to influence policies that affect student learning conditions and their working conditions, 2) have liability insurance, 3) have a connection with a local association, and 4) have access to ongoing professional development opportunities. Here are a few pictures of some local association activities.



Acadia Association of Educators officers pose for picture with Uni-Serv Director Sam Baynes at the annual new teacher orientation.



Concordia Association of Educators leaders, Ethel Rosenthal and Damus Smith, recruited new members at the district new teacher orientation.



LAE Vice President D'Shay Oaks and LAE UniServ Manager/Lead Organizer Gregg Mills join local leaders at Rapides Association of Educators Back to School Prayer Breakfast.

Have you recently moved to a new school district?

[Follow this link to RE-join LAE.](#)



MY UNION MY WAY



LAE eDues

Have you selected an alternative method of payment yet? [Follow this link](#) or use the QR code to select electronic funds transfer or credit card payment.

canopy tutoring

Teachers : Earn up to \$60/hr and help students with small group literacy and math tutoring

About: The LDOE's Steve Carter Tutoring Program supports eligible K-12th grade students with free **literacy or math tutoring**.

Details:

- Work with students at your school
- Flexible Scheduling
- Tutors work with students in small groups for 45-60 min sessions
- Tutors earn up to \$60/hr for groups of 4 students; \$50/hr for groups of 3 students; \$40/hr for groups of 2 students and \$30/hr for individual student sessions

Tutor Responsibilities:

- Identify students & help families enroll
- Coordinate schedule with families
- Complete Canopy Tutoring's self-paced tutor training and curriculum training (~1 hour)
- Administer pre & post assessments
- Tutor students & complete logs

Canopy Tutoring Provides:

- A placement screener & scripted curriculum (no planning necessary)
- Training on using the curriculum, and program logistics
- Operational support on systems & LDOE compliance
- Data analysis on student growth

If applying for K-5 Literacy Tutoring, the Louisiana Act 108/Science of Reading training is required. This training is offered to teachers at no cost.

Learn More:

www.canopytutoring.com

Interested?
[Apply Here](#)

Questions: Brooke@CanopyEd.com

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH INCARCERATED PARENTS

By: Mariah Solis, NEA Editorial Intern (edited)

Published: June 14, 2024 in NEA Today

Removing stigma and letting students know they are not alone in their experience is a critical step.

When children are not able to frequently see and talk to a parent in prison, they may often feel alone and unable to talk about what they are going through. An elementary school counselor in Minnesota, Anna Whooley regularly sees how the stigma of an incarcerated loved one negatively affects students. "I see students with a lot of anger, sadness, confusion, or even fear that it may happen to them or the other parent as well," Whooley says.

According to the Prison Policy Initiative, roughly half of all incarcerated people in state prisons are parents with children ages 18 or younger. The Annie E. Casey Foundation found that over 5.1 million children in the U.S. have had a parent in jail or prison in their lifetime.

Research shows that frequent visits between the child and incarcerated parent not only reduce the likelihood of them being incarcerated again, but they also lower the child's experiences of anxiety and depression. Unfortunately, there are several barriers that could prevent families from visiting their loved ones in prison, including lack of transportation and the distance to a facility. When a loved one is in jail or prison, students may process their grief and trauma for this type of loss differently across grade levels. "It's an ambiguous loss, which I think makes it difficult [for younger children] because they can't figure out exactly why mom or dad isn't here and what that means moving forward," Whooley says.

A NEED FOR TRAINING

While the incarceration of a loved one negatively impacts children, schools may often feel ill-equipped to provide support and resources for these students. This is due to a lack of training that discusses mass incarceration and its impact on students. More training is needed to show how to create affirming spaces in schools, find and offer community resources, respect family wishes, and destigmatize the topic so that students don't feel alone in this experience.

Training also allows educators to learn more about their implicit biases, meaning the prejudices and stereotypes one may unconsciously carry. This helps educators become more aware of the implicit biases they may direct towards someone incarcerated as well as their child. "It's important to not associate the child with the crime because they are also second-hand victims in this situation," Whooley says.

Allison Hollihan, a licensed mental health counselor, works as the director of the New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents (NYCIP) through Osborne's Policy Center. She advocates for a more inclusive and supportive environment for students impacted by the justice system. "Training is critical to help teachers understand the issue and the implicit biases they may not realize they carry," Hollihan says. A survey conducted by Cornell University and FWD.us, a criminal justice and immigration reform advocacy group, found that 6.5 million adults have an immediate family member in jail or prison. Additionally, about 1 in 7 adults have had a family member incarcerated for over one year. This means that some adults in schools could connect with students on this shared experience. "We also always recommend, when working with schools, to identify a couple of key people in the school who feel comfortable talking about incarceration," Hollihan says. "Oftentimes, those tend to be people who also share the experience of having an incarcerated family member."

CREATING AFFIRMING SPACES

A powerful way to reduce the stigma of incarcerated parents is by acknowledging in the classroom the various family dynamics a student may be involved in. "Using simple phrases like 'parents that don't live with us' in conversations can help with making people feel included," Whooley says. It is also recommended for school libraries and teachers to keep books appropriate for their grade levels that discuss the unique but common experience of having a parent in jail or prison. "I think

that having a book that represents that experience appropriate for their age level is so important because that might be the only place where they see that experience reflected," Whooley says. "I would encourage librarians and teachers to have those on their shelves so that children can seek them out on their own or if they disclose, they can be encouraged to check out the book," Hollihan says.

RESPECTING REQUESTS OF FAMILIES

Recognizing that every family and situation is different by asking what the family needs is critical to providing necessary support. "It's important to meet the family where they're at. If they are in a place to talk about it and want to have that conversation, don't shy away from it," Whooley says. "There

are a lot of challenges, and it's not easy for these children to navigate the experience, but when people believe and invest in them and have high aspirations for them, they will succeed," Hollihan says.

THE LAE VOICE

The Louisiana Association of Educators
8322 One Calais Avenue
Baton Rouge, LA 70809

Phone: 225-343-9243
Toll Free: 1-800-256-4523
Fax: 225-343-9272
www.lae.org
LAE Advocacy Center: 1-877-452-3477
advocacycenter@lae.org

Dr. Tia T. Mills, President
Karla Owens, Executive Director

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BATON ROUGE, LA
PERMIT #246

LOUISIANA
ASSOCIATION
OF EDUCATORS



In This Issue

1. LAE seeks to enforce the intent of Act 311
2. From the President's Desk
3. NEA Staff Labor Strike prompts Representative Assembly Cancellation
4. Aspiring Educators represent LAE at the NEA Aspiring Educators Conference in Philadelphia
5. 2024-25 Professional Learning Network Schedule Released
6. LAE BOARD OF DIRECTORS July 15, 2024 - July 14, 2025
7. Board of Directors Seat Vacancy
8. LAE at New Teacher Orientations across Louisiana
9. My Union My Way
10. Supporting Students With Incarcerated Parents

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 5th
Election Day
LAE office closed

November 11th
Veteran's Day
LAE office closed

November 27th-29th
Thanksgiving
LAE office closed