



LATEACH
Louisiana Together Educating ALL Children

Join Fellow LaTEACH Members!

Put on your Purple

BESE needs to hear your voice!

June 15, 2016

Greetings!

The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) meets next week.

WHEN: **June 21-22, 2016**

WHERE: **Claiborne Building
The Louisiana Purchase Room (1-100)
1201 N. Third Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802**



BESE members need to hear from you before they consider the following issues most relevant to students with disabilities:

1. Stakeholder Input and Access to Information

The Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) is charged with providing the La. Department of Education (LDOE) and Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) with advice on policies and programs regarding students with disabilities. Members of SEAP and visitors at SEAP meetings have expressed concerns over the lack of authentic stakeholder input and limited access to information to make informed decisions and recommendations. A review of SEAP minutes reveals a tendency for SEAP to receive reports without any formal advice or recommendations. Although SEAP has previously clarified how the action of receiving a report is not an endorsement of the information presented, the passive actions of receiving reports reflect a lack of an active stakeholder voice on matters pertaining to students with disabilities. [Click here to read recommendations from the La. Developmental Disabilities Council to LDOE for improving authentic stakeholder input.](#)

- **1:00 p.m., June 21st**
- **Academic Goals and Instructional Improvement Committee**
 - **Item 5.1**

2. Monitoring of School Systems for Sp. Ed. Compliance

LDOE is proposing changes to the rules for how it will monitor school systems. Below are the major changes and DD Council's recommendations.

Proposed Change	DD Council Recommendation	DD Council Rationale/History
Removes the steering committee that had previously guided LDOE criteria in which school systems should receive on-site monitoring visits.	Do not remove this Steering Committee.	Ensure more, not less, stakeholders have time to weigh in on this important task.
Shifts the number of performance categories from two to three. Performance categories indicate the level of monitoring required.	Caution with reducing the number of school systems identified for on-site monitoring.	In and of itself the shift in number of monitoring categories is not the issue; however, there are indications from the presentation by LDOE at the latest SEAP meeting that an extremely low number of school systems will fall into the third category - which will trigger an on-site monitoring visit. Since LDOE discontinued on-site monitoring for three years (2012-2013 through 2014-2015) this shift in categories and the criteria for a school system to reach the level of on-site monitoring raises questions about whether adequate monitoring of school systems will occur.
Removes population groups of school systems for making comparisons of performance data across school systems.	Do not remove these population groups.	Comparing a single school of a couple hundred students to a school system of tens of thousands is inappropriate. With the growth in number of small (charter) schools it seems more necessary to consider school student populations when making comparisons.
Removes parents and 'non-employees' from serving on the monitoring teams.	Do not remove parents and non-employees from monitoring teams.	Parents on SEAP expressed concern over the shift from having parents play a role in monitoring school systems. Before LDOE discontinued monitoring for three years (2012-2013 through 2014-2015) parents were an integral part of

monitoring. Furthermore, monitoring team members, including staff from Families Helping Families Centers and local school systems, received training in special education law and practices. This training provided much needed improvements to practices and support for parents across the state regardless if their school system was being monitored that year.

- **1:00 p.m., June 21st**
- **Academic Goals and Instructional Improvement Committee**
 - **Item 6.5**

3. Funding for Projects and Initiatives

Many initiatives are being considered for funding approval. The overwhelming majority of these initiatives seem appropriate to address the needs of the state. See the list of funding levels to projects related to students with disabilities under the BESE agenda item.

- **11:00 a.m., June 21st**
- **Administration and Finance Committee**
 - **Items 5.3 & 5.4**

If you don't have a purple LaTEACH shirt, contact your [LaTEACH Regional Leader](#) and we will provide one for you at the BESE meeting.

BESE Members

Contact your BESE member to tell them how you feel about these issues.

BESE Member Listing by District

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BESE Agendas

Click the links below to see the agenda items for June 2016 BESE Committees and Board meeting.

Tuesday, June 21st

9:00 a.m. Educator Effectiveness Committee

5.1 [Certification requirements for special education administrators](#) (rule changes to align with new law).

10:00 a.m. School Innovation and Turnaround Committee

11:00 a.m. Administration and Finance Committee

5.3 [Contracts over \\$50K](#)

- \$80,500 to each FHF Center (continuation)
- \$64,500 for Games Uniting Minds and Body (continuation)
- \$149,661 to LSU-HDC for the [TIERS](#) group to provide technical assistance to Type 2 & 5 charter schools; a decrease from previous contract of \$171,000. When LDOE proposed to increase funding to \$820,990 SEAP recommended LDOE review TIERS effectiveness data and determine if the proposed amount of those funds should be redirected to the High Cost Services fund. SEAP did not recommend reducing funding to TIERS and LDOE did not redirect those funds to the High Cost Services fund
- \$160,000 Children's Hospital Ventilator Assisted Care Project
- \$1.6 million to Tulane Ed Fund/Dept of Psych and Beh to support child care providers with mental health of children aged 3-5; previous contract was \$832,000 for three months (Apr-Jun)
- \$125,000 to La. Tech University to train five teachers to be Braille certified.
- \$1.5M (3 years) to LSU-HDC for LASARD project for autism training
- \$136,450 to Lighthouse Louisiana to support 20 educational interpreters for students who are deaf

5.4 [Allocations \(competitive and other\)](#)

- \$1.6 M for six Assistive Technology Centers
- \$425,000 for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to support regional efforts. This is an increase from last year but not as much as advocates have requested. While regional consortiums are recommended, evidence in the [2016 LDOE report to the Legislature on PBIS](#) indicates student results have worsened since LDOE reduced state-level planning and support in PBIS. Schools that implement PBIS well tend to rely less on removal of students from school and tend to experience increased academic achievement. According to the LDOE report, "Limited funds at the state and district levels have reduced the ability to...measure program effectiveness."
- \$333,750 for State Personnel Development Grant

1:00 p.m. Academic Goals and Instructional Improvement Committee

5.1 Report on the Special Education Advisory Panel

- [SEAP Minutes March 30, 2016](#)
- [SEAP Minutes \(unofficial\) May 12, 2016](#)

6.5 [Proposed revisions to Bulletin 1922, Compliance Monitoring Procedures for special education](#)

Wednesday, June 22nd

9:00 a.m. Joint BESE/Board of Regents Meeting

10:00 a.m. Full Board

Did You Take Action?

Please let us know if you contacted your BESE Member or attended a BESE meeting by emailing us at info@lateach.org.



Any questions?

If there are any questions about the information in this alert, contact LaTEACH at:

Email: info@lateach.org

Phone: 1-800-450-8108

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Website: www.lateach.org



LaTEACH is an initiative of the [Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council](#).