

Join Fellow LaTEACH Members!

Put on your Purple

BESE needs to hear your voice!

January 5, 2016

Greetings!

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

WHEN: **January 12-13, 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. Funding to Schools

Do you think state and local funding to schools should be based on student needs?

Law requires funding to all schools, traditional and charter, to be based on student needs. The state share of funding for schools for the 2015-16 year is being distributed based on student needs; however, local funds for charter schools continues to be distributed for each student regardless of the student's level of need. The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council requested that all local funding be distributed according to student need as indicated by weights in the MFP formula.

LDOE disagrees with how the La. DD Council and others interpret the law regarding the distribution of local funding shares to charter schools. At its meeting on December 2, 2015 the MFP Task Force recommended LDOE work with the Council in seeking an expedited opinion from the Attorney General regarding the interpretation of law related to local funding share distributions. LDOE has not submitted a request to the Attorney General yet.

Why are funding levels to schools based on student needs so important?

Louisiana recognizes that on average schools need 2.5 times as much money to educate a student with a disability than is needed for a student without a disability. Two major problems are caused by different funding formula across schools:

1. Schools receiving a flat rate have a financial incentive to avoid enrolling students with high cost needs (i.e., students with disabilities).
2. School systems serving high rates of students with disabilities have inadequate resources.

Do you think reporting of funding should be transparent so everyone can see how funding allocations are calculated?

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) changed how it reports funding to charter schools. The Council has requested transparency by reporting tables previously shared for school enrollments and funding levels.

2. Contracting for a Monitor of Special Education Services

Do you think more monitoring and oversight is needed across the state on the same issues prompting the lawsuit in New Orleans?

As a result of a lawsuit related to issues with charter schools in New Orleans accepting or removing students with disabilities, the Louisiana Department of Education will contract with an outside monitor to oversee services related to students with disabilities in New Orleans. With the growth of charter schools across the state, LaTEACH and the Council have advocated for better oversight and monitoring related to the inclusion and service delivery for students with disabilities.

Click [P.B. vs. John White](#) to read the court order from this case.

3. Special Education Add-On Endorsements and Practitioner Programs for Educators

Do you think more training opportunities and endorsements are needed for teachers to access skills and strategies in teaching students with disabilities?

Two proposals from Local Education Agencies (Ascension and St. Bernard) seek approval to offer Mild/Moderate Special Education Add-on Endorsement Programs for teachers. Northwestern State University is seeking approval to expand its Practitioner Teacher Program with three General-Special Education Integrated teacher training pathways.

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 Agendas

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

Tuesday, August 11th

8:45 AM Minimum Foundation Program (MFP)

Public comment on funding of Louisiana Schools

9:00 AM Administration and Finance Committee

4.1 Minimum Foundation Program ([70% requirement for instruction](#))

6.4 RSD Contracts >\$50,000 - Contract for special education monitor

7.2 Reports Re: Legislative Resolutions (no reports available)

- HR209 H.S. graduation rates of students with disabilities
- HCR 174 Funding sources for early childcare and education
- HCR 204 Advantages, disadvantages, quality, and effectiveness of assessments
- SR 130 Implementation and effectiveness of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports
- Act364 Implementation of the assessment and accountability system for publicly funded childhood education programs

8.1 MFP Task Force ([unofficial minutes](#))

11:00 Educator Effectiveness Committee

4.1 - 4.3 Special education add-on endorsements (Ascension and St. Bernard) and Practitioner Program - Alt Path (NW State U.)

12:00 AM Academic Goals and Instructional Improvement Committee

3.1 [Annual report regarding alternative schools](#)

5.1 [Parental Viewing of Assessments](#)

6.1 [Public Comment re: Bulletin 1508, Pupil Appraisal Handbook](#) Comments seeking guidance on identification related to students in home school situations and RTI.

1:30 PM School Innovation and Turnaround Committee

Wednesday, January 13th

9:00 AM Full Board

Contact your BESE member to tell them how you feel about these issues.
Click [HERE](#) for the list of BESE Members by district.

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
Phone: 1-800-894-6558
Website: www.lateach.org



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