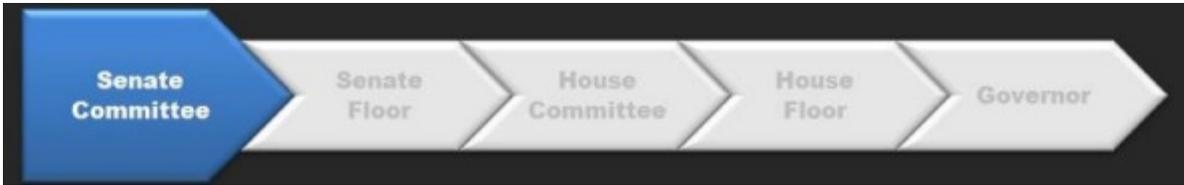




Action Alert #10
Contact Senate Education Committee and Attend Yellow Shirt Day on April 12th

April 9, 2018



The Senate Education Committee needs to hear from you on the importance of requiring the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) to implement a plan to address behavior in schools.

The Senate Education Committee will meet on Thursday, April 12th, to hear public testimony on a proposal to require the LDOE to develop a model master plan for improving school climate and promoting student social, emotional, and behavioral health ([SB345](#)). Several LaCAN members will represent our group by testifying before the committee.

Take action NOW if you believe effective behavioral practices in all schools should be a priority of the LDOE!

How To Take Action

Contact the Chairperson of the Senate Education Committee and Members from your region before April 12th. **Join LaCAN members in your yellow shirt on April 12th at the Capitol.**

All Regions

Senator Dan "Blade" Morrish

Committee Chairman

morrishd@legis.la.gov

(337) 824-3979
(888) 824-3979

Region 1

Senator Conrad Appel

New Orleans Area

appelc@legis.la.gov

(504) 838-5550

Region 2

Senator Mack "Bodi" White

Baton Rouge Area

whitem@legis.la.gov

(225) 272-1324

Region 4

Lafayette Area

Senator Gerald Boudreaux	boudreauxg@legis.la.gov	(337) 267-7520 (844) 885-6578
Senator Dan "Blade" Morrish	morrishd@legis.la.gov	(337) 824-3979 (888) 824-3979
Region 5	Lake Charles Area	
Senator Dan "Blade" Morrish	morrishd@legis.la.gov	(337) 824-3979 (888) 824-3979
Region 7	Shreveport Area	
Senator John Milkovich	milkovichj@legis.la.gov	(318) 676-7877
Region 8	Monroe Area	
Senator Mike Walsworth	walsworthm@legis.la.gov	(318) 340-6453 (866) 518-8573
Region 9	Hammond/Northshore Area	
Senator Beth Mizell	mizellb@legis.la.gov	(985) 839-3936
Senator Mack "Bodi" White	whitem@legis.la.gov	(225) 272-1324
Region 10	Jefferson Area	
Senator Conrad Appel	appelc@legis.la.gov	(504) 838-5550

What to Say?

Start by sharing your story:

- Has your child had an issue with behavioral challenges in school? Do you want the educators responsible for handling behavior to have more access to training in using effective behavioral practices?
- Was your child removed from school too many times for behavioral challenges? Do you want the LDOE to be more proactive and increase their oversight of and support for how schools handle behavior?
- Was your child put in restraints or seclusion for behavior at school? Do you think the LDOE should take action when a school relies on putting a child in seclusion almost every day of the school year (i.e., over 140 times in a school year)?
- Do you want the LDOE to recognize school climate and student social, emotional and behavioral health as one of its priorities?

Finish by telling committee members how they can help:

- Require the LDOE to develop a model master plan for discipline and provide annual progress updates on implementing the plan.

ATTEND YELLOW SHIRT DAY FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY

When: Thursday, April 12th at 9:30 AM*
 The Senate Education Committee meeting starts when the full Senate adjourns, so it is not possible to provide an exact start time of the meeting.

Where: John J. Hainkel, Jr. Room
 Louisiana State Capitol - Baton Rouge, LA

If you plan to attend, need a yellow shirt or want to find out about carpooling options,

contact your [LaCAN Leader](#). **Arrive at least 30 minutes early to ensure you get a seat!**

Background Information

For years stakeholders have advocated for LDOE to increase attention and action on providing support and oversight in the use of effective behavioral supports in schools. For the past two years the Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline has met to provide guidance to LDOE and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) on the implementation of school master plans for supporting student behavior and discipline. To date LDOE has not produced a plan for providing oversight and support to schools with implementing their school master plans for behavior and discipline.

Almost the entirety of data on discipline and behavior collected by LDOE is self-report from schools. Relying on schools to self-report outcomes and practices, particularly on a topic as sensitive as discipline, tends to result in questionable data. Questions to LDOE have not produced responses on how LDOE uses behavioral data from schools to drive decisions and guide actions. For example, five months ago the DD Council requested the LDOE share what actions were taken regarding excessive behavioral practices, such as a child who was put in seclusion for 148 times in a single school year, and what actions were taken as a result of finding students in alternative sites were not receiving needed services (see [LDOE report of students sent to alternative sites](#)). To date, LDOE has not offered any indication it took any action for either of these issues.

Over the past few years LDOE reduced the amount of funding dedicated to supporting schools in the implementation of model master discipline plans. Furthermore, LDOE discontinued collecting reliable, valid data on how well schools are implementing evidence-based practices. Recently LDOE indicated it is increasing the amount of funding to support schools even though LDOE has yet to share any plan on what outcomes or activities the funding increase is intended to target. And, all of the funding LDOE has ever committed toward behavior has been federal funds for students with disabilities.

Every year parents of children with disabilities indicate they believe how schools handle behavioral issues in schools is of critical importance and want LDOE to assume a leadership role. Last week, at the Special Education Advisory Panel meeting, LDOE revealed their survey results with 93 percent of respondents indicating they believe the State should prioritize helping schools to improve how educators...support students with behavioral or mental health challenges.

SB345 would create a clear concrete action of requiring LDOE to develop a plan with stakeholders for improving school climate and promoting student social, emotional, and behavioral health.

Contact Us

LaCAN is an initiative of the LA Developmental Disabilities Council. If there are any questions about the information in this email, contact the Council by replying to this email, or calling the toll free number listed below:

phone: 1-800-450-8108

email: info@laddc.org

website: www.lacanaadvocates.org

facebook: www.facebook.com/lacanaadvocates



Louisiana Developmental
Disabilities Council

twitter: www.twitter.com/LaDDCouncil

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