

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

SELF-DETERMINATION ♦ INDEPENDENCE ♦ PRODUCTIVITY ♦ INTEGRATION ♦ INCLUSION

February 11, 2020

Board of Elementary and Secondary Education
1201 North Third St.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Re: Selection of the Superintendent of the Louisiana Department of Education

Dear BESE members,

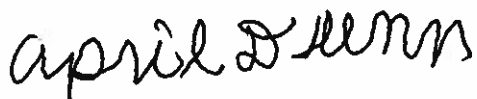
As you consider the important task of selecting someone to lead the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) encourages you to focus on assuring parents of children with disabilities and young adults with disabilities are participants in the design of educational policies and practices. This will ensure children with disabilities have access to appropriate supports and modifications when necessary to maximize their educational potential, benefit from lifelong educational activities, and be integrated and included in all facets of student life.

As with so many decisions, the selection of the leader of LDE is of utmost importance in shaping the direction of educational outcomes of every child throughout the state. To enhance outcomes for students with disabilities the Council advocates for an increased focus and capacity within LDE to address special education. Much of the data from Louisiana's Annual Performance Report indicate room for improvement in outcomes for students with disabilities. While three indicators (graduation rates, dropout rates and post-school outcomes) are moving in a positive direction, there is need to be concerned with the level students with disabilities are included in regular education settings and are experiencing decreases in performance on assessments in Math and English.

The Council is hopeful LDE's next leader will have a vision for adequate oversight of schools in serving children with disabilities and a plan for building a support infrastructure for local education systems and educators that is responsive to the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.

Thank you again for your leadership and commitment to improving the lives of people with developmental disabilities.

Respectfully,



April Dunn

AD:spf