

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council

SELF-DETERMINATION ♦ INDEPENDENCE ♦ PRODUCTIVITY ♦ INTEGRATION ♦ INCLUSION

May 18, 2020

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

Re: Support for Families Helping Families

Dear BESE members and Acting Superintendent,

I am writing to you today requesting the Louisiana Department of Education continue supporting the Families Helping Families (FHF) Regional Resource Centers. FHF Centers have a long history of providing one of a kind regionally targeted services to the families of our DD community. The variety of work performed daily by FHF Centers is an absolutely necessary and essential resource for families of children with developmental disabilities to navigate and access the multiple service delivery systems designed and charged by law to serve them.

FHF Centers services are provided by people with disabilities and their family members. It is a powerful thing to get advice and assistance from people who have experienced the same or similar issues as you are experiencing and who are also located in the area of Louisiana you both call home. The funds your department provides FHF are essential for them to carry out their vital mission, our vital mission, of inclusion and support for families of children with developmental disabilities.

The DD Council has great concern over the recent release of Request for Proposals for Educational Training and Direct Support to Families of Children and Youth with Disabilities. As we battle this global pandemic together, we feel it is not in the best interest of the citizens of developmental disabilities of our state to begin changing a 20 year contractual relationship during this already difficult and uncertain time for every citizen and system of our state. A sudden change in that process and structure puts unnecessary stress on families who are already in crisis and in need of a consistent vital and uniform source of system assistance.

Please consider the important role you are playing in helping our DD community and state to thrive. We ask you to please continue to work as you have done for the past two decades to fund this critical Centers at the level you currently do for the next few years.

Thank you kindly for your sincere consideration of this request.

Respectfully,



Randall Brown