

The LAE Voice

Official Publication of the Louisiana Association of Educators

Great Public Schools for Every Louisiana Child

Volume 7, No. 1 February 2011

LAE REJECTS GOVERNOR'S STATEMENTS SURROUNDING LACK OF PARTICIPATION IN RED TAPE REDUCTION ACT

Governor Jindal and Superintendent Paul Pastorek pushed the Red Tape Reduction Act in the last legislative session. Both are now disappointed that no school district has applied for waivers as of February. The Red Tape Reduction Act was designed to allow superintendents to request a waiver from specific laws if they had the support of their Boards of Education and a majority of the teachers. Pastorek expressed his belief that the support of a majority of the teachers is holding superintendents back.

LAE President Joyce Haynes characterized both BESE's discussion of the Wavier Bill and Governor

Jindal's recent remarks on the same topic as a "political stunt."

The law followed effective research that indicates school improvement happens at the community, classroom, school and district level, when parents, teachers, principals, superintendents and school board members, work together to focus on helping students learn. Unfortunately, some in state government, the DOE and BESE believe otherwise.

It is interesting that Superintendent Pastorek makes a point of traveling around the state telling teachers

that they are the key to improved performance in Louisiana schools and then expresses reservations when laws are designed to ensure that a majority of the teaching staff is involved.

Perhaps the real "critics" of the current wavier process should realize that one of the greatest problems plaguing school improvement in Louisiana today is the lack of trust between those at the state level who constantly show their disdain for those of us who work tirelessly to educate students daily.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH INTEGRATE AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE & HISTORY INTO YOUR CURRICULUM

Bring Black History Month into your classroom. NEA offers lesson plans that cover a variety of subjects that can be adapted to fit multiple grade levels. Check out the following summaries to see if you're interested in finding out more:

- Musical Harlem: Students in grades K-4 listen to jazz audio clips to learn how to identify styles and musicians associated with the Harlem Renaissance.
- African American Scientists and Inventors: Students in grades K-12 learn about and celebrate the contributions of African American scientists.
- A Jazz History: Students in grades 3-8 listen to ragtime and jazz, and explore the historical events of the years jazz was developed.
- Jacob Lawrence's Migration Series: Removing the Mask: Students in grades 6-8 analyze and compare visual and poetic works by Jacob Lawrence, Helene Johnson and Paul Laurence Dunbar, to consider

how they represent the changing roles of African Americans.

- The Poet's Voice: Langston Hughes and You: Students in grades 6-8 investigate "voice" in Hughes's poetry, develop their own distinctive voices in journal entries and write an original poem or critical essay on an aspect of Hughes' poetic voice.
- The Illusion of Race: Students in grades 6-8 investigate both genetic and societal consequences of the often-artificial and evolving classifications of race and ethnicity.
- Variation in Human Skin Color: Students in grades 9-12 explore factors controlling human skin color variation and how perceived racial differences affect human society.
- African American English: In this unit, students in grades 9-12 examine several hypotheses about the development of African American English (AAE),

consider how AAE has been treated in schools and analyze the influential role of AAE in modern culture and society.

- African American Poets of the Last Century: In this week-long unit, students in grades 10-12 explore 20th century African American poetry, develop strategies for reading and responding to poetry and prepare an oral presentation on a favorite African American poet.
- The Invisible Man: Students in grades 11-12 read Ralph Ellison's novel to explore the theme of invisibility in the book, in their own lives and in their communities.

You can find full versions of these lesson plans at www.nea.org/tools/black-history-month.htm.

GRANTS: NEA FOUNDATION

LAE would like to send big congratulations to EBRPAE member Christina Faulk for winning a Learning and Leadership Grant from NEA.

You can win a grant too! The NEA Foundation supports new ideas and practices to strengthen teaching. Over the years, NEA has funded more than \$7.5 million in grants to public school educators. We encourage you to apply for NEA Foundation grants, as well as any others that might be available. Visit www.neafoundation.org for more information. LAE will also keep you up to speed on any grant information we receive. Check out the grants portion of our website, www.lae.org, for new opportunity listings.



LAE President Joyce Haynes and EBRPAE President Donna Sedevie present McKinley High School's Christina Faulk with a check for a recent NEA Learning & Leadership Grant award.

LAE Mission Statement

The mission of the Louisiana Association of Educators is to organize and empower local associations to promote quality public schools, strengthen the education profession, and improve the well being of members.



LAE Help Desk

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Joyce Haynes, President

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

to predicted achievement; and provide the information to responsible educators and leadership.

He proposed applying a statistical correction to adjust for inconsistent student results and the small amounts of available student data for the early years and early grades. As set forth by Act 54, prior achievement on state assessments, gifted

status, section 504 status, free lunch status, reduced lunch status, student attendance, disability status and discipline records would be the variables taken into consideration when predicting student achievement.

Dr. Noell went on to discuss several concerns with the method, including the variable nature of the scores, omitted variables, narrowing of the curriculum and the fact that many teachers are not included in this type of assessment. Everyone knows these are and will remain concerns; there's no fixing the unreliable, subjective results the model is sure to produce.

In the end, Dr. Noell suggested seven big recommendations to be made to BESE.

Dr. George Noell presented to the Advisory Committee on Educator Evaluations (ACEE) meeting in December to provide members with additional information about the Louisiana Value-Added model. The purpose was to prepare the committee with enough background information so that they could make a recommendation to BESE on the proposed model for the March 2011 meeting. As a member of the committee, I listened to what Dr. Noell had to say.

According to his presentation, Value-Added Assessments in Education would use student achievement history and "key factors" in order to predict each student's achievement; assess actual academic achievement; compare actual achievement

LAE had something to say. We played an instrumental part in acknowledging the major flaws in the considerations brought forth by Dr. Noell. We pointed out that the plan presented was simply a manipulation of numbers; numbers that can make a good teacher look bad or a bad teacher look good. LAE spurred discussions and asked tough questions causing teacher representatives sitting on the panel to quickly follow suit. The acknowledgement of these significant issues ultimately caused Superintendent Pastorek to establish additional meetings to address the flawed system.

We will continue to be the outspoken voice at the ACEE meetings and will keep you updated on any new developments on Louisiana's Value-Added initiative.

In the meantime, I encourage you to read Act 54 and get up to speed on *all* of its requirements. One element of the Act (which I particularly found interesting) was that Superintendent Pastorek and any DOE employee who makes more than \$100,000 will also be held to the same standards and criteria as teachers and administrators. This, in itself, is a flaw. Check out the following website for expert findings that support the argument that test scores should not be used to evaluate teachers - www.epi.org/publications/entry/bp278.

The saga continues...

- President Haynes

A PUBLIC DATABASE OF "VALUE-ADDED" TEACHER RATINGS? YES, IT'S TRUE.

The *Los Angeles Times* created such a database for teachers in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Rankings from "least effective" to "most effective" were assigned to teachers based on an analysis of whether they consistently raised or lowered their students' standardized tests scores. The rankings were then published online. Teachers in New York City face a similar fate. We all know that these assessments produce unreliable, subjective results. Releasing this data unfairly subjects our teachers to public ridicule.

LAE believes that any form of individual teacher evaluation result is matter of personnel and is private information which should never be made available in any format for public scrutiny or access. See the links below or visit our website, www.lae.org, to find out more.

Union/District and NY Times agree to wait: <http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/10/21/city-and-union-agree-to-wait-on-release-of-teacher-data/>

NY Court allows Release of teacher information: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/01/10/ny-justice-cynthia-kern-t_n_806961.html

One Person's plight – explaining your classroom to the "general public" one example of the misapplication of Value Added: <http://projects.latimes.com/value-added/teacher/derin-kennedy-lowry/>

YOUR RETIREMENT: WHAT KIND OF PENSION PLAN IS BETTER FOR EDUCATORS?

Just before the end of the 2010 Louisiana Legislative Session, a joint House and Senate Retirement Committee was formed under a committee resolution. The joint committee was charged with studying the issue of converting state retirement plans for future employees from a defined-benefit pension plan to a defined contribution plan.

What's the difference? The **defined benefit pension plan** is what public school employees in Louisiana have through the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL). It provides a formula (currently around 2.5% times the average of your highest three years of salary, times the number of years you worked) to determine your retirement annuity. A person who works 30 years will retire with a pension of about 70% of their salary.

TRSL receives retirement contributions from employees, the state and school districts. It hires experts to manage its investment portfolio. These managers grow the funds, which provide the necessary revenue for monthly annuity checks.

Most important is the obligation of the Louisiana House and Senate to make required state contributions to the fund. In years past the Legislature has not kept up its obligation, thus putting the fund at risk.

When a slump occurs in the stock market, like the one most recently in 2008-2009, the system still receives funds from employees, the state and school districts. It has ample money to continue paying benefits until the market rebounds, which has happened in the past and is currently happening now. Since most public school employees do not have access to Social Security and do not get automatic cost-of-living adjustments, the defined benefit plan provides them the security of a guaranteed retirement.

The **defined contribution plan**, which is used by many private businesses to supplement the defined benefit Social Security income private employees will also receive, provides that during an employee's working career, he/she will contribute a percentage of salary

and the employer will contribute a percentage of salary to a tax deferred retirement account.

At retirement, the employer has no further obligation to the employee. The employee has a "nest-egg" accrued over the years and as a retiree, has to assume the total responsibility of managing or paying someone to manage that account for the rest of his/her life.

As the reader can ascertain, a defined contribution plan is an advantage for the state, not the public employee.

The last decade is a classic example of the vagaries of the stock market. People with defined contribution accounts (401(k), etc.) did very well during the mid to late 1990's, when the stock market was yielding double-digit returns almost every year. When the most recent slump hit, many of those 401(k) accounts began to look more like 201(k) accounts. Many people lost 30%, 40% and even 50% or more of their retirement savings in just a few months.

The core issues in the defined benefit vs. defined contribution discussion are deciding what the primary purpose of a retirement system is and who is best qualified to fulfill that purpose. LAE believes a retirement system ought to reward the career education employee who has served this state for 25, 30 or 40+ years. (Yes, there are still people working in our schools for 40 plus years.) Since this is the only retirement fund available to most educators, LAE feels the investment experts at TRSL can garner a better return on funds in the stock market than each of the 88,000 employees and 62,000 retirees and beneficiaries could do individually.

Public employee pension checks represent a vital, continuous source of spending in every city and community across Louisiana. Spending by retirees provides stability to national, state and local economies, especially during tough economic times. Research shows that public employee retirees pump \$358 billion into local economies and help to create 2.5 million jobs.

Therefore, LAE will continue to support the defined benefit system for educational retirees in Louisiana. Rather than change a system that has worked well for the last 70 years, LAE will be working with the Legislature to improve that defined benefit system. We will recommend more sensible and solid solutions to the current defined benefit system which will continue to create a sustainable retirement annuity for Louisiana's educational retirees.

ATTENTION LAE DELEGATES!

We will be conducting regional meetings on the following dates at the locations listed below. Please make every effort to attend these important meetings!

February 15 - LSU-A - Live Oaks Conference Center, Bayou Roberts' Room, Alexandria

February 16 - Houma - Holiday Inn, 1800 MLK Blvd, Houma

March 10 - Bossier - Horseshoe Casino, Orleans Room, 711 Horseshoe Blvd, Bossier City

March 15 - Lafayette - Lafayette Hilton, 1101 West Pinhook Rd, Lafayette

March 22 - Monroe - Holiday Inn - 1051 US Highway 165, Monroe

March 23 - Belle Chase - Lil G's Cajun Restaurant - 9338 Hwy 23, Belle Chase

March 28 - Lake Charles - Isle of Capri - 100 Westlake Ave, Westlake

March 29 - Baton Rouge - Marriott - 5500 Hilton Ave, Baton Rouge

Pre-RA regional conferences will take place from 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM.

Legislative/Membership meetings will take place from 5:15 PM- 7:00 PM.

CANDIDATES FOR 2011 LAE ELECTION OF OFFICE

Please note: The biographies contained were not edited for content nor grammatical or spelling corrections. LAE reserves the right to alter the format of the submissions. If the candidate submitted a biography longer than 50 words, it is indicated with "..."

FIRST ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT A



1. Priscilla Savannah

Hello Everyone, My name is Priscilla Savannah and I am a 7th grade science teacher in Shreveport. I have had experience serving on the Board of Directors before. I am asking for your vote to represent you on the Board of Directors as the First Associational District, Seat A representative.



2. Emma Shepard

I'm Emma Shepard, a 28 year loyal member with the following experiences: NEA/LAE BOD, CAE President, LAE/NEA Delegate, Many other positions Currently, LAE-BOD- District 1. Please vote and allow me to continue serving you in this position. I will represent you with the highest level of integrity and confidence. Thanks.

FIRST ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT B



1. Daryl Roberson, Unopposed – Elected

Advocate for Public Education. Active in Caddo Association of Educators and currently serving as local President. Appointed to the LAE Board-September 2010. I serve on the LAE Budget Committee, and have been a delegate to the LAE and NEA Representative Assemblies. Dedicated to Serving.

THIRD ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT A



1. Marcus Broussard, Unopposed – Elected

At present, I am a Science teacher at Sunset Middle School with 14 years experience. I am also president of my local chapter SLAE, have been a member of the NEA for over 5 years, and have membership in other professional organizations. Respectively, Marcus Broussard.

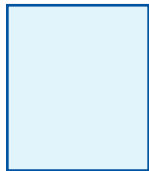
THIRD ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT B



1. Marie Moore, Unopposed - Elected

For the past ten years, I have worked as an elementary and middle school teacher. Parents have voiced many issues of concern, but don't know how to address them. With leadership authority as a trustworthy educator, I think I am best qualified for the position of Third Association District, Seat....

FOURTH ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT B



1. Kathryn Smith, Unopposed – Elected

Hi, my name is Kathryn Smith, I am asking for your vote to serve you on the Board of Director District 4, Seat B. LAE/NEA/TAE is my HEART AND SOUL. I am currently serving as the vice-president of TAE. I am currently fulfilling the vacant on the BOD, District...

FOURTH ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT C



1. Milton Gholar, Unopposed – Elected

Please reelect Milton Gholar for LAE Board of Directors Seat C. I have been employed with Bogalusa City Schools for 30 years. I have served as Building Representative and Local President of the BAE. I want to continue to serve and protect employees' rights. Your vote would be greatly appreciated.

FIFTH ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT, SEAT B



1. Suzette Riddle, Unopposed – Elected

As a 17 year educator, I have been very active in our local, state, and national association. Coming from a strong collective bargaining local, I have the knowledge and expertise to represent the members of the fifth district on the LAE Board of Directors. I am currently your LAE District...

EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL, SEAT C



1. Pat Thomas, Unopposed – Elected

Paraprofessional from Lake Charles, Calcasieu Parish. I have been a public education advocate at the local, state, and national level for years, also has attended numerous conferences and conventions held by NEA. I would be honored to have your vote and support.

EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL, SEAT D



1. Vickie Jacquet

Hi, I am Vickie Jacquet, I am seeking your support in re-election to the LAE Board of Directors – ESP Seat D. I would like to continue being your voice on the Board of Directors. I will continue to make sure your questions, concerns, and issues are addressed. VOTE Vickie Jacquet.



2. Carol McLaughlin

As your ESP Board member I would bring a new voice and new vision to the table. With the training from Leaders for Tomorrow, I have had the opportunity to be a voice for my local and would like the opportunity to be a voice for the state. Thank you...

CANDIDATE FOR NEA DIRECTOR



1. Joycelyn Olivier, Unopposed - Elected

Hi, I am Joycelyn B. Olivier, I am seeking your continued support in re-election to the LAE-NEA Board of Directors. I would like to continue lobbying and educating Louisiana Legislators in Washington, DC about the concerns and issues as it pertains to LAE Members. PLEASE VOTE JOYCELYN B. OLIVIER LAE-NEA...

CANDIDATES FOR 2011 NEA STATE DELEGATE/SUCCESSOR DELEGATE

ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT 1



1. Priscilla Savannah

Hello Everyone, My name is Priscilla Savannah and I am a 7th grade science teacher in Shreveport. I am asking for your vote to represent you as a delegate at the NEA convention. Thank you for your support.



2. Emma Shepard

I'm Emma Shepard, a 28 year loyal member who has represented you as NEA/LAE BOD, CAE President, LAE/NEA Delegate, many other positions in the organizations and currently LAE-BOD-District 1. Please vote for me as your NEA Delegate. I will represent your interest with the highest level of integrity and...



3. Carol McLaughlin

ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT 2



1. Paige Burnaman

As a member in LAE I have had the honor to represent District Two as NEA State Delegate in 2009 and would like to be elected in 2011. I have taught for twelve years and feel I have insight into the needed improvements in education. I would appreciate your...



2. Amanda Nolan



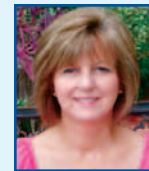
3. Linda K. Paul



4. Patsy Moore



5. Marcy Bonnette



6. Nancy Gingras

I am the Media Specialist and Louisiana Virtual School Facilitator at Avoyelles High School. My experience includes being a classroom teacher and librarian while also serving on the LAE Executive Committee and Board of Directors along with being Rapides Association of Educators President for many years. Please vote for me.

ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT 3



1. Candace Robertson

• active member since 2002 • 9 years teaching experience • 2009 – 2010 NEA RA (State Delegate) • 2007 NEA RA (Local Delegate) • attended numerous NEA leadership conferences • committed to promoting public education and empowering school employees.



2. Marcus Broussard

At present, I am a Science teacher at Sunset Middle School with 14 years experience. I am also president of my local chapter SLAE, have been a member of the NEA for over 5 years, and have membership in other professional organizations. Respectively, Marcus Broussard.



3. Theaolecia Broussard

I have been an educator employed in St. Landry parish for 33 years. A member of LAE for over 25 years, served as AR for 22 years, and presently serve as treasurer for SLAE for 2 years.

ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT 4



1. Diane Vickers

Please vote for me to represent you at the 2011 RA. I am a dedicated, committed, and hard working member of the Association. I serve on the Board of Directors for both LAE and EBRPAE. A vote for me is a voice for you. Thanks for your continued support.



2. Lisa Hayes

I am requesting the opportunity to be elected as a state delegate. It is my goal to inform the teachers and other employees of the current laws, changes, or potential policies that may affect their voting decisions. Attending the convention will equip me with useful information to share with all...



3. Karen Bell

Karen is a 5th grade teacher at Hammond Westside Upper, in Tangipahoa. She has been a member of LAE for 33 years, serving on numerous local and state committees over the years, and is currently the President of the Tangipahoa Association of Educators, and on the LAE Program and Budget...



4. Gwendolyn Hill

My name is Gwendolyn Hill; I am running for state Delegate in July 2011. I want to make a difference as being a representative that wants to improve and bring in new members to our association. I would like to help train others to be more knowledgeable about our...



5. Sarah Scott

I am Sarah Scott from Livingston Parish. I have been a strong supporter and advocate for NEA/LAE in my parish, state, and nation when necessary. Please vote for me for NEA State Delegate.

ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT 5



1. Toni Fowlkes



2. Shelia Washington



3. Pat Thomas



4. Suzette Riddle

As a 17 year educator, I have been very active in our local, state, and national association. I am currently your LAE District 5 Board of Director; I have served you in this position for the past three years. On the local level, I have held several elected position as...

EDUCATORS RECOMMEND NATHAN GRANGER FOR STATE SENATE DISTRICT 26

Recently, the State Senate District 26 seat encompassing Acadia, Lafayette, St. Landry and Vermilion parishes was vacated by Nick Gautreaux.

Local Legislative Contact teams from two parishes - Lafayette and Vermilion - gathered to screen and recommend candidates for Senate District 26. A joint screening and recommendation committee interviewed Nathan Granger and Jonathan Perry. Each candidate answered questions from the committee on various topics including school funding, teacher accountability, educator due process rights and

retirement. After an extensive interview process with each candidate, the committee voted to recommend Nathan Granger for the seat.

The recommendation made by the committee will be submitted to the LAE Fund for Children and Public Education (LAE-FCPE) for endorsement and approval. Be on the lookout for this endorsement to be made official in the next few weeks.

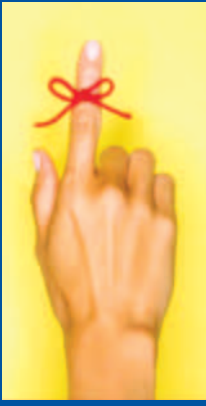
"We feel quite confident in our decision to recommend Nathan Granger for the District 26 seat," explained

Vermilion Association of Educators President Jason Roy. "Both candidates interviewed well. The committee ultimately made the decision to recommend Mr. Granger to the LAE-FCPE because we believe he best understands our issues as public educators. He also shows the most support for public education in our area and state."

Election Day for Senate District 26 is Saturday, February 19, 2011. Early voting begins on February 5th and ends on February 12th.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark your calendar for the upcoming events.



Feb. 11-12	Training: Introduction to Bargaining
Feb. 18-19	Board Meeting
Feb. 21	President's Day
Feb. 26	Read Across Louisiana <i>State Celebration</i>
March 2	Read Across America Day
March 7-8	Mardi Gras Holiday
March 18-19	Executive Committee
March 25-27	NEA Black Issues Conference <i>Baton Rouge</i>
April 1	Board Meeting
April 2-3	LAE RA

READ ACROSS LOUISIANA 2011

LAE is gearing up to celebrate the wonderful world of reading on **Saturday, February 26th** through our statewide reading initiative, READ ACROSS LOUISIANA. Our state celebration is set to kick off at 10 AM at the Mall of Louisiana in Baton Rouge. LAE and Louisiana Public Broadcasting are set to host a fun-filled day of reading, educational activities and giveaways. Kids will have a chance to read alongside some of Baton Rouge's biggest superstars including WBRZ-TV meteorologist Dave Nussbaum, Mayor-President Kip Holden and many more. Be sure to check out the celebrations scheduled in your area on the 26th. So far, we've confirmed the following location hosts: The Prien Lake Mall in Lake Charles, The Mall of Acadiana in Lafayette, The Boardwalk in Bossier City, The Alexandria Mall in Alexandria and The Pecanland Mall in Monroe.



New Orleans Saints Wide Receiver Devery Henderson joins LAE members at the 2010 Read Across America celebration.

LAE MEMBERS IN ACTION

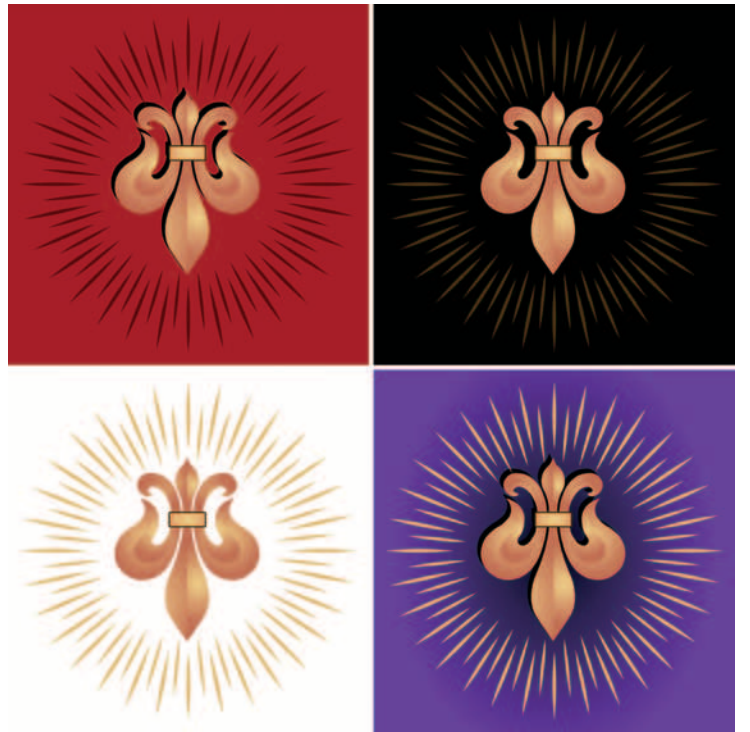
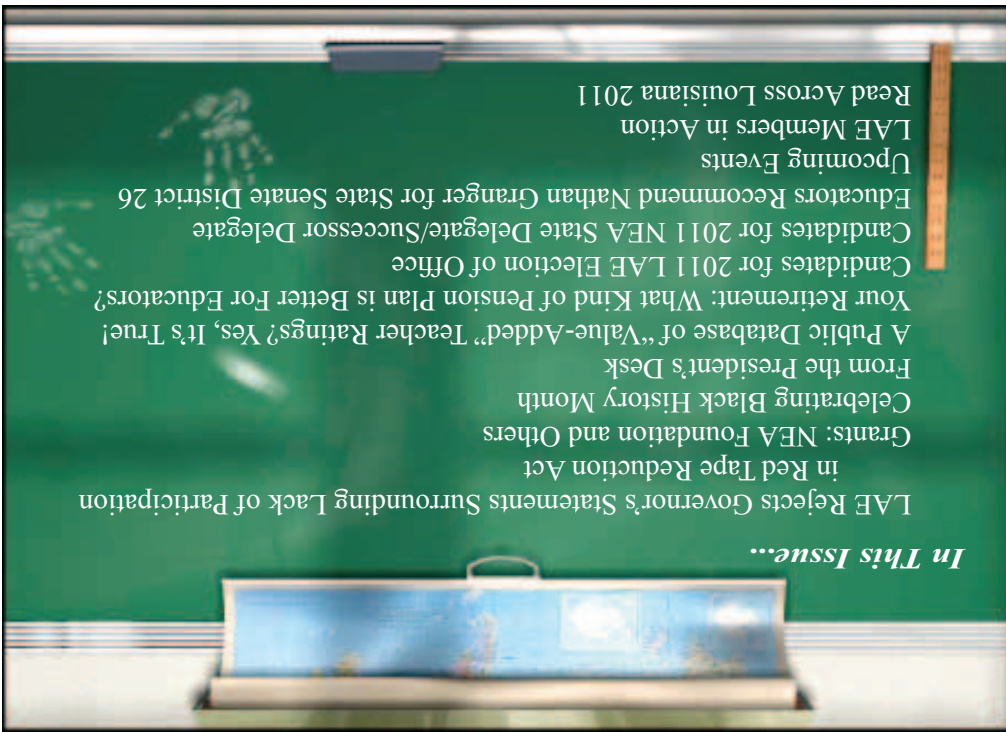


President Haynes has a bit of fun with local presidents at the Winter 2010 presidents training. Pictured above are: Daniel Bourgeois, Mary Carpenter, John Wright, Barbara Naquin, Jessica Aubry, Marcus Broussard, Linda Kaye Paul, Zettie Dorsey, Jerilynn Carrol, Donna Sedevie.



LSUnited members Mike Russo and Pat O'Neill attend a higher education organizing summit in Alexandria.

Want us to highlight your local activities and accomplishments? If you have any association related photographs that you'd like to share with the LAE family, please pass them along to LAE Communications Specialist Ashley Davis (ashley.davis@lae.org). This includes chapter events, community volunteer activities, school board meetings, awards ceremonies, etc. Photos must include an active LAE member that is identifiable and should be accompanied by the member's name, local organization name and a short caption.



LOUISIANA
ASSOCIATION
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Joyce Haynes, President

Robert Eagan, Interim Executive Director