

# The LAE Voice

Official Publication of the Louisiana Association of Educators

Great Public Schools for Every Louisiana Child

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## LAE JOINS THE COALITION FOR LOUISIANA PUBLIC EDUCATION

LAE leaders joined forces with the heads of a number of education groups across the state to voice unified opposition to Governor Jindal and his leadership of public education.

In working with the Coalition for Louisiana Public Education, we openly exhibit our displeasure with the policies that are currently hurting Louisiana's K-12 public schools. Through this initiative, LAE leaders will work closely with the Louisiana Association of School Superintendents, the Louisiana School Boards Association, the Louisiana Association of School Executives, the Louisiana Association of Principals, the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, the Louisiana Association of Chief Technology Officers, the Louisiana Retired Teachers Association, the National Board Certified Teachers of Louisiana, the Louisiana Association of Computer Using Educators, the Louisiana Association of Child Welfare & Attendance Personnel, and the National School Boards Association.

The Coalition will raise awareness on current education issues by initiating crucial discussions with

legislators in an attempt to right the course of public education. The true education reformers in Louisiana are the teachers in the classroom, and we need legislators to listen to the acting practitioners. LAE wants to take back the profession for the teacher and ESP members of the association and the state.

Among the focus areas, the Coalition wants the legislature to delay the implementation of letter grades for schools and to recognize that poverty often drives whether a school is successful. Coalition



Members of the Coalition for Louisiana Public Education hold a press conference on the steps of the Louisiana Department of Education.

members also want to delay the value-added teacher assessment system and restore a growth factor to the public school funding formula.

We stand firm in our push to convince the governor to close loopholes and properly fund the K-12 public education system of this state. Schools can't keep cutting; we cannot continue doing more with less from the state. Stay informed on LAE's work with this new group and become a Facebook fan. Visit [www.lae.org](http://www.lae.org) for more information.



LAE President and Coalition member Joyce Haynes addresses the media.

## BESE MEMBER PUSHES TO ELIMINATE TEACHER TENURE

LAE rejects Board of Elementary and Secondary Education District 6 member Chas Roemer's recent statements pushing for an abolishment of teacher tenure. Mr. Roemer sent letters to all BESE members and state lawmakers in late April asking for a written pledge that they will work to end teacher tenure.

LAE believes that Mr. Roemer is on the wrong track. Believing that education is a simple world of just two variables diminishes the complexities of all schools and undermines the craft of teaching in the midst of a multi-variant system. Tenure is not the guarantee of a job for life; it is simply a right to due process and provides job security for teach-

ers who have successfully completed a rigorous and closely monitored induction process. We challenge Mr. Roemer's proposal to punish thousands of hard-working teachers in Louisiana in order to capture nearly \$115 million in salaries only to redistribute this money to the top 25 percent.

Mr. Roemer should have approached LAE leaders or Louisiana teachers and asked them the question, "Why tenure?" Any educator in the state would have told him that tenure simply guarantees a process of just dismissal; protection from false allegations of wrongdoing; and coercive education practices such as grade altering, as well as protection from political reprisals. This last point is important

because Roemer's missive to eliminate teacher tenure was a political campaign piece paid for by his campaign fund.

We believe - and Roemer seems to agree - that the vast majority of teachers are high quality, but throughout his entire tenure as a BESE member, Roemer has never advocated for even an increase in the MFP.

In a 2008 Time Magazine article, M.J. Stephy wrote, "Abolishing tenure doesn't address problems of underfunding, overcrowding or improving students' home environments." LAE agrees. For more information on this issue visit [www.lae.org](http://www.lae.org).

## WHAT IS TENURE?

### TEACHER TENURE: THE MEASURE OF DUE PROCESS

Article by Shane Riddle, LAE Government Relations Specialist

Effective teaching is critical to assuring student success. Research has indicated that teacher quality and effectiveness are the most significant in-school factors for improving student learning. Moreover, policymakers' discussions of teacher quality and effectiveness often lead to issues of "due process," also known as "tenure" in many school districts. Tenure, more accurately titled "teacher rights to due process for continued employment," is an essential means of protecting teachers from arbitrary and capricious actions on the part of administrators and school boards. However, it is often misunderstood as being a mechanism by which unions and colleagues work to protect the jobs of teachers who are ineffective in helping students learn.

Tenure is about due process, not about guaranteeing a right to "lifetime" employment. In Louisiana, new teachers serve a three-year probationary period. During this probationary period, school officials have an obligation to evaluate those teachers' job performance. If after three years, the local school district grants a teacher tenure, it simply means that the teacher is entitled to a fair hearing if there are allegations of incompetence or wrongdoing.

Tenure is not about protecting "bad" teachers; it's about protecting good teachers. The primary purpose of tenure is actually to protect competent teachers from the arbitrary nonrenewal of a contract for reasons unrelated to the ways in which they execute their professional duties, such as per-

sonal views, political views, union activities, or personality conflicts with administrators or school board members. This goal is accomplished through requiring due process to be observed before tenured teachers are dismissed. Simply stated, this means that teachers have a right to a fair hearing at which the reasons for their termination are explained and substantiated.

Research suggests that many of the sophisticated value-added systems being implemented for teacher evaluation purposes are too volatile and potentially inaccurate to be the sole source of data for making decisions about any teachers' career status or rights to due process. For more information on Teacher Tenure, visit [www.lae.org](http://www.lae.org).



## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Joyce Haynes, President

May is a month to give thanks to the amazing educators of Louisiana. I truly hope everyone celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week and National Teacher Day in a very special way. As another school year comes to a close, I want to make sure you know how much I appreciate you. I am very proud of the LAE members who make a difference for the students of this state and public education. In my eyes, all of you are heroes.

I want to share with you another recent hero of mine – Mr. Don Whittinghill. Mr. Whittinghill works with the Louisiana School Boards Association and recently contributed an article to the Louisiana Voice blog in response to Superintendent Paul Pas-

torek's negative remarks about the newly formed, Coalition for Louisiana Public Education. Mr. Whittinghill called Superintendent Pastorek out on his accusations.

*"The non-educator superintendent apparently can't recognize an educator when he sees one. He claims the burgeoning coalition of public education stakeholders is 'made up of staff and board members from these various groups.' Does he really assume that leaders of the superintendents association, the school boards association, the teachers and principals associations, and the parent teachers associations are so bold as to take a coalition public without broadly based support and authorization?"*

*-Excerpt from Don Whittinghill's article, Voice of a Leader?*

This article inspired me; I hope it will do the same for you. I encourage you to read the entire piece at [louisianavoice.com/2011/04/21/was-pastoreks-rant-indicative-of-leadership-or-vindictiveness/](http://louisianavoice.com/2011/04/21/was-pastoreks-rant-indicative-of-leadership-or-vindictiveness/).

LAE members need to follow Mr. Whittinghill's lead. We must also spread the truth about public education. We must focus on the knowledge and skills needed to be a leader in every part of the education world – from the school house to the White House. Our lobbying efforts alone cannot achieve our goals or our mission. We must convey our message to parents, churches, barber shops, beauty salons, communities, and to all of our legislators. Gather the support of your friends and family to share that message when you can't be there or when they are with us in support. Sign up for the NEA convention in Chicago, the LAE Leadership Conference this summer, and do anything that you can to build knowledge. Sign up for Capwiz, read the President's Corner, seek out members and their advice, read your NEA Today; make sure that you are in the loop when it comes to building your arsenal of knowledge in order to fight the war against public education.

Never forget that we appreciate you more than you will ever know, for you inspire us to be the best that we can be as we stand up for public education, the students and the profession.

Stay strong and have a great summer!  
President Haynes

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR LAE'S 2011 SUMMER LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The LAE team has been hard at work planning this year's Summer Leadership Conference. Events are set to kick off on **Monday, July 25th** and will last until **Thursday, July 28th** at the **Paragon Casino Resort in Marksville, LA** (711 Paragon Place). For a sampling of conference highlights, see the descriptions provided below. Be sure to stay up to speed on conference events by visiting [www.lae.org](http://www.lae.org).



**LAE Summer Conference Keynote Speaker: Pulitzer Prize-Winning Reporter David Cay Johnston:** David Cay Johnston was a reporter for the New York Times and has been recognized as the person who revealed that Enron did not pay taxes; that some companies use a Bermuda mail box to escape American taxes; and that Congress raises your income taxes

if you get seriously ill, using the money to finance tax cuts for the richest Americans. He retired from The Times in April 2008. Johnston will speak at the conference on Monday, July 25th.

**Presidents' Academy:** LAE local presidents and vice presidents are invited to join us for the 2011 Presidents' Academy. Workshops include: *You Are Not Alone, Staying Organized, Leadership Styles, Networking & Lobbying, Relationship Building, Visible, Viable & Valued.* **Presenters:** LAE President Joyce Haynes, LAE Vice President Debbie Meaux, and LAE UniServ Director Greg Mills

**Emerging Leaders:** Are you looking to develop your leadership style and potential? LAE's acclaimed *Emerging Leaders* program promises to nurture and spark your talents in leadership and organizing. Take part in this unique program and learn more about teaming, school laws and policies, leadership styles, social networking and organizing. If you are interested in attending, you must submit a letter of interest to program presenters. Send the letter via email to [thomas.dufreche@lae.org](mailto:thomas.dufreche@lae.org) or [thai.browder@lae.org](mailto:thai.browder@lae.org). **Presenters:** LAE Board Member DeLisa Washington and LAE UniServ Directors Thai Browder and Tommy Dufreche

**Politics & You: How YOU Can Make a Difference & Make Change Happen:** Why do we endorse

candidates? What are the steps required for an endorsement? How can you determine if a candidate can win? During this session, you will learn why the Association is involved in politics and how to recruit candidates to run for office. Attendees will be put through a mock simulation of endorsing candidates and learn how to allocate limited resources. **Presenter:** LAE Uniserv Director Debbie Knapp

**Power & Respect for ESPs:** How do you get the respect you deserve? Would you like to become a stronger force? This workshop will help you achieve these goals. Learn about strategies for communicating your needs, building relationships, organizing around your issues, getting good job evaluations, working with difficult people, and much more. **Presenter:** LAE Uniserv Director Vera Loyd

**Building Stronger, Strategic, Member-Driven Locals:** What would the world of education be like without educators' unions? Learn about the importance of union membership and the need for stronger locals. This presentation offers useful tools and techniques to guide you in your quest of strengthening your local union. **Presenter:** LAE Uniserv Director Terry Holden

**Using Differentiated Instruction to Increase Student Achievement:** An increasing number of teacher evaluation forms assess the teacher's ability to use differentiated instruction. Workshop attendees will learn about a working knowledge of differentiated instruction and create lessons or activities that include the components of differentiated instruction. **Presenter:** CAE member Daryl Gates

**Website Wizardry:** Do you need an efficient means of communication to reach the members of your local? Learn quick tips on how to build an effective website that will help you reach your audience. **Presenter:** LAE Communications Specialist Ashley Davis

**Bully Free: It Starts With Me:** NEA's campaign against bullying, "Bully Free: It Starts With Me," aims to identify caring adults in our schools and communities who are willing to stand out and pledge to help bullied students. Learn about this new campaign and how you can work to prevent bullying in your school. **Presenter:** LAE President Joyce Haynes

## EBRPAE MEMBER NAMED EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

LAE would like to say congratulations to Ms. Brandon Hebert for being named as the 2012 East Baton Rouge Parish High School Teacher of the Year. Ms. Hebert teaches English at EBR Lab Academy in Baton Rouge and is an active member of the East Baton Rouge Parish Association of Educators. Bravo Ms. Hebert!

We are very proud!



LAE Board Member Diane Vickers was on hand to congratulate EBRPAE member Brandon Hebert as she was named East Baton Rouge Parish High School Teacher of the Year.

# 34th ANNUAL LAE REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

LAE representatives from across the state gathered at the Baton Rouge Marriott this spring for the 34th Annual LAE Representative Assembly. The assembly helps to create dialogue between LAE members, addressing current issues facing our schools, students and professions. In addition to discussing, debating and voting on these critical issues and legislative priorities, LAE teachers and education support professionals in attendance also set Association policy for the coming year and recognized some of the organization's finest with the presentation of LAE's Annual Image Awards. Mr. Rodolfo

Espinoza walked away with LAE's coveted Teacher Image Award; Ms. Linda Reynolds was honored with the LAE ESP Image Award; Mr. Donald Fontenot was recognized with the LAE Ancillary Image Award and Ms. Tonya Bolden-Ball walked away with the LAE Human & Civil Rights Trailblazer Award. Each year, President Haynes honors one remarkable individual with the prestigious President's Award. This year, Ms. Barbara Ferguson, founder of New Orleans non-profit, Research on Reforms was honored.

Attendees also took part in a movie night where LAE hosted a screening of the film, "Race to Nowhere." President Haynes moderated a panel discussion afterwards, where several education experts including, Research on Reforms co-founder Charles Hatfield, Louisiana Educator blogger and former LAE Executive Director Mike Deshotels, LSU Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Research Dr. Renee Casbergue, LSBA Executive Director Nolton Senegal and LAE Executive Director Dr. Michael Walker-Jones offered their reflections on the film. The 34th Annual RA was a huge success and we look forward to a prosperous, successful year!



President Joyce Haynes addresses the delegates at the 34th Annual LAE-RA.



LAE delegates "stand up for public education."



Mr. Rodolfo Espinoza accepts the LAE Teacher Image Award from President Haynes and Vice President Debbie Meaux.



Ms. Linda Reynolds smiles as Vice President Meaux presents her with the 2011 ESP Image Award.



Mr. Donald Fontenot takes home the 2011 Ancillary Image Award.



LAE Human & Civil Rights Trailblazer Award winner Ms. Tonya Bolden-Ball accepts her award from President Haynes.



LAE Board members recognized on stage at the RA.



President Haynes moderates a panel discussion at the LAE-RA movie night where "Race To Nowhere" was shown.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

May – June	2011 Legislative Session Continues
May 30	Memorial Day
July 2-5	NEA-RA
July 25-28	LAE Summer Leadership Conference



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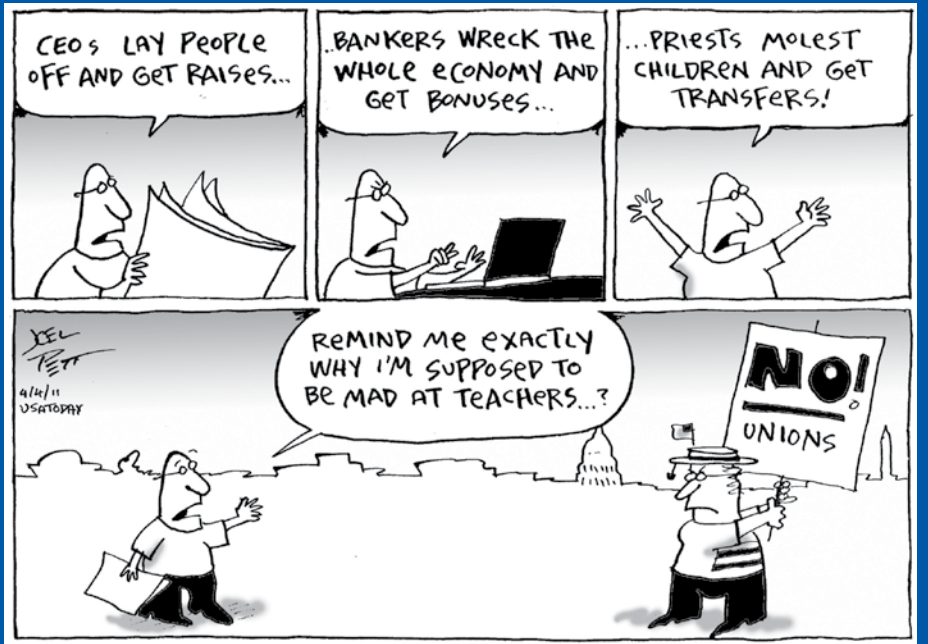
### LAE HELP DESK

1-877-452-3477 • E-mail: [helpdesk@lae.org](mailto:helpdesk@lae.org)

### 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.

## CARTOONING AROUND



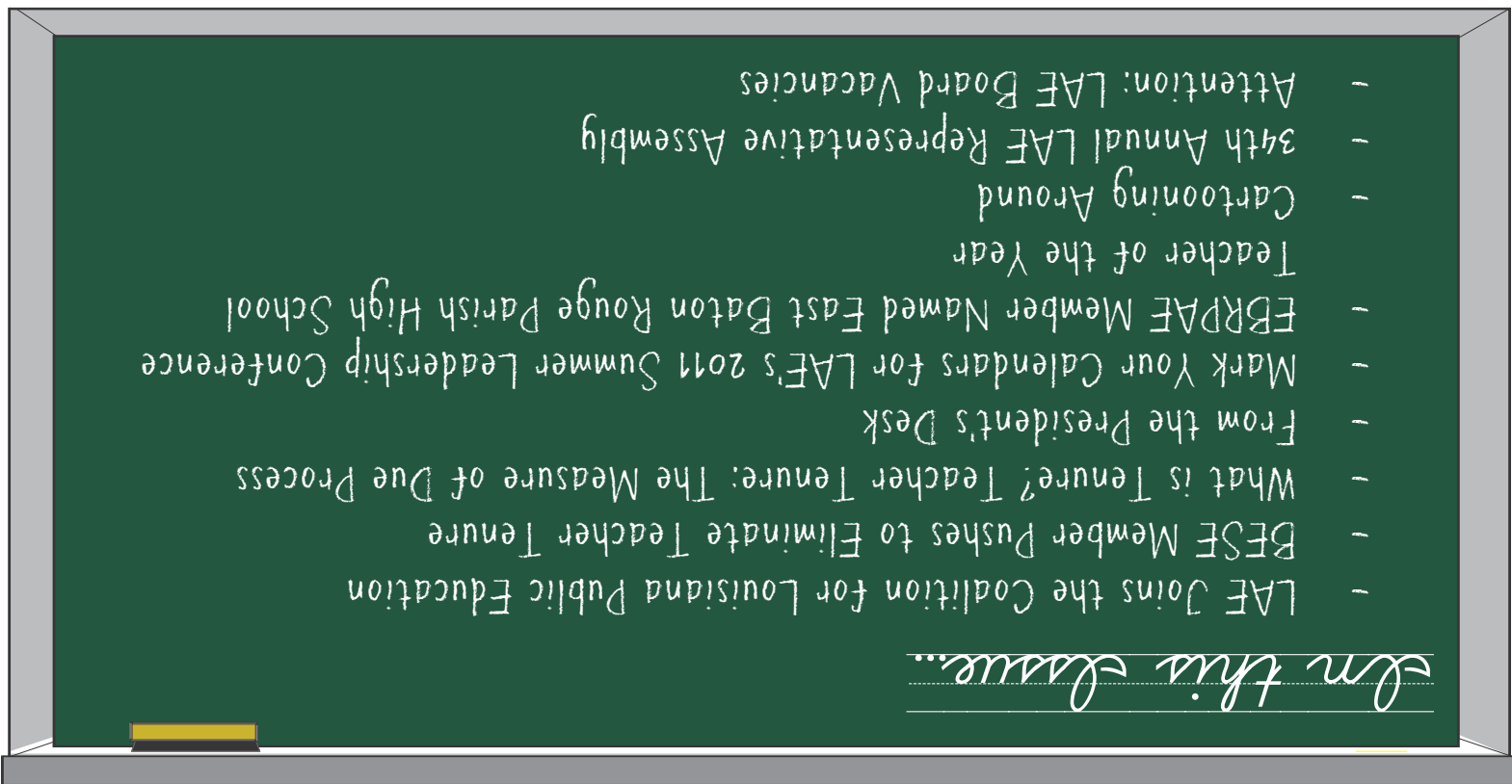
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## ATTENTION: LAE BOARD VACANCIES

**Second Associational District, Seat C:** Avoyelles, Bienville, Caldwell, Catahoula, City of Monroe, Concordia, East Carroll, East Feliciana, Franklin, Grant, Jackson, LaSalle, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Pointe Coupee, Rapides, Richland, St. Helena, Tensas, Union, West Baton Rouge, West Carroll, West Feliciana and Winn.

**Sixth Associational District, Seat A and Seat B:** Jefferson, Lafourche, Orleans, Plaquemine, St. Bernard, St. John, St. Mary, St. Tammany, St. Charles, and Terrebonne.

If you are interested in running for one of these vacant seats, you must submit your resume to Laurie Guillot ([laurie.guillot@lae.org](mailto:laurie.guillot@lae.org)) by June 3, 2011.



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