

# THE LAE VOICE

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Great Public Schools for Every Louisiana Child

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## From the PRESIDENT'S DESK

D'Shay Oaks, President

"Education breeds confidence.  
Confidence breeds hope.  
Hope breeds peace."  
– Confucius



Welcome Back! I hope you had a restful summer and took some time for yourself. I want to thank all of you for the great work you do each day for the students of Louisiana!

I am D'Shay Oaks, a middle school librarian and teacher from Concordia parish, who currently serves as your Louisiana Association of Educators President. I am a twenty-eight-year veteran teacher who taught at Vidalia Junior High. Some activities I enjoy outside of work are painting, playing board games, and playing games on my phone. I love animals, especially dogs. I have a spoiled rotten fur baby, named Buttons!

### My why?

As a teacher – to make a difference and wanted my students to become productive citizens.

As LAE President – advocate for all educators around the state especially our members.

### Four Things to Remember

1. **Every student wants to know that you care about them.**
2. **Have a trusted colleague to ask questions too.**
3. **Take care of yourself (Self-Care).**
4. **LAE is here for you.**

If you have an event or meeting, don't hesitate to invite me and I will come if my calendar allows. As you start this school year, remember LAE is here for you!

Praying you have a great school year,  
D'Shay Oaks



## A Message from LAE Vice-President, Cynthia Henderson of Caddo:

Looking ahead, I am filled with hope and determination. The challenges we face as educators are real, but our collective strength, compassion, and unwavering commitment will see us through. Let us remember the incredible impact we have—not just on our students' academic success, but on their lives and futures. By standing together, empowering each other, and rising to every occasion, we will build a brighter tomorrow for Louisiana's children. I am proud to walk this path with you, and I pledge to continue striving for respect, resources, and recognition that every educator and student deserves.



## **PASSION, PURPOSE, DEDICATION AND LEADERSHIP**

Dr. Tia T. Mills previously served as Louisiana Association of Educators State President for the past 6 years. While attending the NEA 2025 Representative Assembly in Portland, Oregon, Dr. Mills was elected by thousands of educators to serve on the NEA Executive Committee. This significant achievement emphasizes Dr. Mills' reputation as an insightful educator and union leader on both state and national levels. As a new Executive Committee member, Dr. Mills will help set national priorities for education, equity and labor rights. Her election will help build a more inclusive future for public education and representation from diverse communities, especially in the South.

Congratulations to Dr. Tia T. Mills!

## **WELCOME BACK EDUCATORS!**



## **TOGETHER AGAIN TO INSPIRE AND LEAD!**



As the new school year begins, LAE would like to extend a warm and heartfelt welcome to all educators. The start of the school year is a fresh opportunity to inspire, connect and grow for both you and your students. This year will bring new challenges and new goals. Together, we can build a learning community where EVERYONE can thrive.

**Welcome back and thanks for all you do.**







We did it! House Bill 293 — a dangerous piece of legislation aimed at silencing the voices of union members — has been defeated.

This victory would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of so many.

A heartfelt thank you goes to:

- **Peter Robins-Brown and the Louisiana Unity Table** for standing in solidarity with us
- **Louisiana Legislators** who stood on the side of working people
- **LAE Members** who contacted their state representatives and made their voices heard
- **LAE Staff** for mobilizing and engaging directly with legislators
- **LAE Board of Directors** for their steadfast leadership
- **Interim Executive Director Karla Owens** for guiding our advocacy efforts
- And our **parent association, the National Education Association**, for their continued support

Although we have successfully defeated HB 293 again this year, our work is far from over. We remain committed and energized as we move forward with our broader campaign to protect and strengthen union rights in Louisiana.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this important win. Together, we are a force!  
In solidarity,



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**Stand up to anti-public education politicians** with LAE AutoPay.

**SWITCHING  
IS EASY!**

Anti-public education politicians want to weaken the Louisiana Association of Educators by ending payroll deduction for your membership dues. Switching to LAE AutoPay protects our union—and it takes just a few minutes!

## STEP 1

Head to [lae.org/autopay](https://lae.org/autopay)

## STEP 2

Type in your membership number, ZIP Code, and account information, such as your bank account and routing numbers or credit card info.

Please reach out to Robin Bender at [rbender@lae.org](mailto:rbender@lae.org) if you don't know your NEA Member ID.

## STEP 3

Spread the word to your fellow LAE members.  
**Together, we can protect our union.**



Dear NEA Team,

On behalf of the Louisiana Association of Educators, we want to extend a heartfelt thanks for your hard work, dedication, and unwavering support during our Summer Autopay campaign. Your partnership through the Shared Staffing program was instrumental in helping us move the needle in a critical area of our membership efforts.

When our payroll deduction was threatened by legislatures, NEA didn't hesitate. You heeded the call without delay and stood shoulder to shoulder with us helping to mobilize, organize and flip our members to Autopay. Your swift action and support during such a critical time spoke volumes about the strength of our union family.

From school visits to pop-up events, door-knocking in the scorching heat, phone banking, and one-on-one conversations, your energy, professionalism and commitment to our collective goals have made a significant impact. You integrated with our team and helped us not only to meet challenges head on but also build meaningful relationships with members across the state.

We are grateful for the time you spent away from your duties, locals, and families, to help us strengthen ours. Your efforts have helped lay a stronger foundation for long-term membership growth.

Thank you again for being such valuable partners in this work. We look forward to continued collaboration and victories in the future.

Deepest Appreciation,  
LAE Family



#### Member Savings Include:

- Up to 75% off ODP Business Solutions regular prices on Best Value List of preferred products.
- Shop online and get free next-business-day delivery\*\* on qualifying orders of \$30 or more.
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[odpbusiness.com/lae](https://odpbusiness.com/lae)

\*\*Free Delivery: Minimum purchase required after discounts and before taxes. Orders outside our local delivery area and most furniture, oversized, bulk items, cases of bottled water and other beverages and special order items do not qualify. Non-qualifying orders incur a delivery charge (minimum charge of \$9.99). Many orders can be delivered next business day (between 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM) if placed online or via phone by 5:00 PM or via fax by 3:00 PM, local time (in most locations). Other restrictions apply.



# GETTING TO KNOW YOUR LAE UNISERV DIRECTORS

## MEET YOUR LAE UNISERV MANAGER AND DIRECTORS



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Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Caldwell, Catahoula, City of Monroe, Claiborne, Concordia, DeSoto, East Carroll, Franklin, Grambling, Grant, Jackson, LaSalle, Lincoln, LSU Shreveport, Madison, Morehouse, Natchitoches, Northwestern St Uni, Ouachita, Red River, Richland, Sabine, Tensas, Union, Webster, West Carroll, Winn



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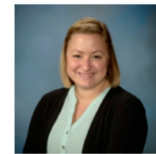
Acadia, Allen, Assumption, Avoyelles, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Iberia, Iberville, Jefferson Davis, St. James, St. John, St. Martin, St. Mary, Terrebonne, Vernon, West Baton Rouge



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Ascension, Central, City of Baker, City of Bogalusa, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Jefferson, Lafourche, Livingston, LSUnited, Orleans, Plaquemines, Southern, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Washington, Zachary



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Evangeline, Lafayette, Pointe Coupee, Rapides, St. Landry, ULL, Vermillion, West Feliciana

As a member and educator one of the most important things you should do is Get to Know Your UD. The UD serves as your advocate and support system. UDs are trained to build membership, assist members with workplace concerns, contracts and grievance procedures. Whether you're negotiating your rights, or seeking professional development resources, your UD is there to ensure you are informed and supported. Union strength depends on active and engaged members. Your UD can help you find ways to get involved, whether through committees, lobbying efforts, or community outreach. By building a relationship with your LAE UD you ensure your voice is part of a collective effort to shape the future of education in Louisiana.

## LAE STAFF AND MEMBERS STANDING UNION STRONG!

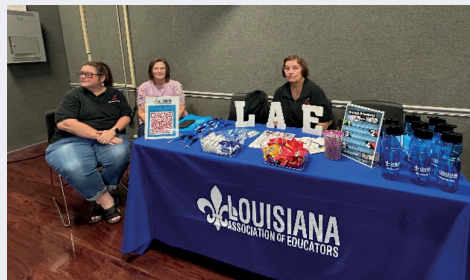
The strength of the Louisiana Association of Educators is the members. Union staff and members across the state are working hard to build a stronger, more unified organization that advocates for educators, students and public schools.

Hard work starts at the local level, moves to the state and rises to the national level. LAE staff along with members are leading the fight for better pay, improved working conditions and fully funded

public education. Both support working behind the scenes through coordinating campaigns, negotiating contracts, and ensuring every member's voice is heard.

Together they are defending the rights of educators but are also shaping a better and brighter future for Louisiana's students. Their efforts prove that when we stand together, we can make lasting changes.

**Stronger Educators Build Stronger Schools that Creates a Stronger Louisiana!**







## “RESILIENCE, GUIDANCE, POWER AND RESPECT”

Among nearly 7000 educators from across the nation, Louisiana’s delegation brought passion, determination and unity to one of the largest democratic conventions for public education advocates.

Louisiana delegates engaged in caucus sessions focused on racial and social justice, equity in public education, educator pay and bringing insights on local needs and conditions back home. Honoring NEA RA first, delegates participated in advocacy training sessions. These sessions offered tools and training in how to run a campaign, engage legislators and mobilize peers.

NEA President Becky Pringle called on delegates to unite in defense of public education. Throughout the four-day conference, discussions centered on protecting schools from legislative threats, ensuring equitable funding and elevating the voices of historically underrepresented educators.

The LAE delegation headed home with empowered voices and new strategies. In the coming weeks they’ll be meeting with school districts, legislatures and their local union chapters.

Thank you delegates for the job well done.



*Milton Gholar – Bogalusa*



*NEA Vice-President, Princess Moss and EBRPAE Member Robin Clark-White*



*Livingston Parish Delegate – Gwen Hill*



*Vote for Dr. Tia Mills for Nea Executive Committee*



*Caddo and EBR Delegates*



*EBR, Caddo and Bogalusa Delegates*



*NEA RA Delegates representing California and Louisiana*





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## OPEN BOARD OF DIRECTOR SEATS

The following LAE Board of Director seats are open. If a member is interested in serving on the board, they must meet the following criteria. If you have any questions let me know.

Must be an LAE member for 3 years.

Must submit a letter of interest and resume by 4:30 p.m. on August 28, 2025.

Send letter of interest and resume to [mcarpenter@lae.org](mailto:mcarpenter@lae.org)

## OPEN DISTRICT SEATS:

**District 3 - Seat C** | **District 5 - Seat C** | **District 6 - Seat A**

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

September 1st  
Labor Day  
Office Closed

September 7th  
Board of Directors  
Meeting

September 13th  
LAE Committee  
Meetings

October 13th  
Columbus Day/Indigenous  
People Day  
Office Closed