

THE LAE VOICE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS

Great Public Schools for Every Louisiana Child

Volume 22, No. 1 February 2026

THIS IS YOUR OFFICIAL NOTICE REGARDING VOTING IN LAE'S LEADERSHIP ELECTIONS

*ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ONLINE VOTING PROCEDURES
AND REQUESTS FOR PAPER BALLOTS*

Please let the candidate information provided within this newsletter serve as reference when voting in LAE's 2025 elections.

Our neutral, YesElections, will send elections notifications to those LAE members who've provided a valid email address. To update this information, contact the LAE Membership Department at membership.processing@lae.org.

The elections portal will open March 10 and run through March 31, 2025. During that period, online voting will be available 24-7. You can expect to receive an email to your personal email address notifying you when the online election portal is open. This email

will provide you with a link to the elections website site, along with your LAE member ID and your voting code that you need to access your online ballot.

To avoid any confusion, you may want to make sure you're able to accept emails from [YesElections.com](https://www.yeselections.com). If you do not receive this email, please be sure to email mcarpenter@lae.org between March 10 and March 31. To vote, you will need your LAE member ID number and your voting Code that will be sent to you by YesElections.



PROCESS FOR COLLECTING A PAPER BALLOT

Voting will be by online ballot method. For any member who would prefer to receive a paper ballot, you can request that one be mailed to you by contacting the neutral via help+LAE@YesElections.com or 1-866-384-9978. You will need to have your LAE member number on hand for voter verification purposes. Again, this number can be found on your LAE membership card or in the address section of this newsletter. All ballots must be received by the neutral by no later than March 31, 2026.



From the PRESIDENT'S DESK

D'Shay Oaks, President

WE NEED EVERYONE TO HELP MAKE PUBLIC EDUCATION BETTER IN LOUISIANA!

Mardi Gras Season is upon us, which means legislative session is here. The 2026 legislative session will run March 9th to June 1st. You may ask yourself, what can I do? Here are three ways you can advocate for yourself, your students, and your school.

- **Call and email your State Senator and Representative.**
(www.legis.la.gov, Who Are My Legislators?)
- **Tell your stories to state legislators.**
- **Encourage colleagues, family, friends to contact their representatives.**

COMING TO A TOWN NEAR YOU!

I will be traveling across the state to hear directly from you about important issues to you! Be on the lookout for details in your email or text. I'm looking forward to seeing each of you! In the meantime, don't forget to take care of yourself mentally, spiritually, and physically!



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

Happy New Year!

LAE's Leadership team is so thankful for your dedication, activism, and support. As we continue to fight the unprecedented attacks on public schools and our students, I'd like for us to remember as a Union, we are stronger because we are unified, working together for the benefit of our students and their future. I am confident that this New Year will bring back to our Union "revitalized members," who have honed the skills they need to become stronger association leaders. I encourage you to reach out to leaders in your local. We cannot fight in isolation, our future is bright, don't give up. Don't ever give up!

In solidarity,
Cynthia



CANDIDATES FOR 2026 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 "..."

NAE DIRECTOR



Valencea Johnson

Louisiana educators, your strength, resilience, and unwavering commitment inspire me daily. I'm Valencea Johnson, and I'm ready to carry our voices to the national stage as your NEA Director. Together, we can shape a brighter future for our students and our profession. I humbly ask for your vote.



Rachel Gifford

I am asking for your support and vote for LAE's NEA Director. I have been an active member my entire career and have served in multiple leadership roles. I bring to the table a wealth of experience and the desire and capacity to learn. Let me be your voice.



Vickie Jacquet

Greetings, I'm asking for your support to be elected as NEA Director. I've worked as an Education Support Professional, a Teacher, and now an Administrative Professional. I would like to put my 27 years of experience, training, and knowledge to work for all employees and students. Please vote, Vickie Jacquet!

NEA ADMINISTRATOR/DELEGATE/NEA SUCCESSOR



Jonathan Loveall

Dr. Loveall serves as a local president and district leader in East Feliciana Public Schools. He wants to serve on the LAE Board of Directors because our unions drive progress and create opportunity in Louisiana and rural educators should have strong voice within our state's most important union.



Vickie Jacquet

Greetings, I'm a committed leader seeking your support to continue advancing public education. I've had the opportunity to lobby alongside some of the best leaders within LPAE, LAE, & NEA. I would like to put that experience, training, and knowledge to work as your LAE Administrator. Please Vote, Vickie Jacquet



Almetra Stansbury

I would like to represent you at the 2026 NEA Representative Assembly. Thanks in advance for your vote and support.



Montrell Marshall

Montrell D. Marshall is a middle school principal, instructional leader, and former classroom teacher committed to equity, academic growth, and student voice. His work centers on empowering educators, engaging families, and building school cultures where excellence, accountability, and opportunity thrive.

ADMINISTRATOR (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)



Vickie Jacquet

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FIRST ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT

Seat A - Open

SECOND ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT



LaChina Clay

Seat C - Elected Unopposed

La'China Clay is a Lead Social Studies Teacher and Athletic Director at Richwood Middle School in Ouachita Parish. She is the President of the Ouachita Association and Louisiana Council for the Social Studies and works hard to advocate for teachers and students.

THIRD ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT

Seat A - Open

FOURTH ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT



Candita Belona Sims

Seat C - Elected Unopposed

My name is Candita Belona Sims. I have been an educator for 19 years, active member of LAE and Vice-President of EBRPAE. I am currently serving as the Fourth Associate District Representative for Seat C. I am asking for your vote to continue to represent the educators of Louisiana.

FIFTH ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT



Julia Reed,

Seat B - Elected Unopposed

Please select me to represent you at the 2026 NEA RA. I have previously served as a state and national delegate. I currently serve as the president of my local and on the LAE Board of Directors. I bring lots of experience to handling the business of the association

Seat C - Open

SIXTH ASSOCIATIONAL DISTRICT



Derron Cook

Seat A - Elected Unopposed

Derron Cook is St. John AE President, a CBA local, who champions educational rights and proudly promotes social justice reform within education. Determined to "Lift Every Voice" of educators and students in Louisiana's education system, it would be his honor to continue representing District 6 on LAE's BOD.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL AT-LARGE REPRESENTATIVE (BOARD OF DIRECTORS)



Cheryl Shirley
Seat C - Elected Unopposed

I want to represent ESP's on the state level. I am going to back to school to become a teacher. I am currently on our local board of directors as well as state elections committee. Elect Cheryl Shirley for ESP board of directors.



Angela Matthews
Seat D - Elected Unopposed

Angela Mathewa, long standing resident, community leader in Ascension Parish and a proud mother of two. Angela has been a school bus driver for twenty-five years, served as bus leader union vice president and president. She intends to bring that into the role for the betterment of all Louisiana students.

NEA STATE DELEGATE/NEA SUCCESSOR DELEGATE



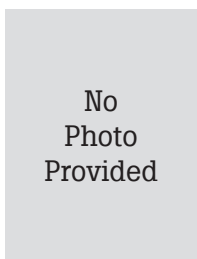
Cheryl Shirley

I want to represent ESP's on the state level. I am going to back to school to become a teacher. I am currently on our local board of directors as well as state elections committee. Elect Cheryl Shirley for ESP board of directors.



Dr. Tia Mills

As a state delegate, I've served as caucus chair in addition to numerous other capacities (NBI, Resolutions, Secretary, Treasurer). Currently, I represent you on the NEA Executive Committee. With your support and vote, I can continue my efforts and enforce the best interests of the membership.



A'Issa Fowler

No Bio provided



Anita Green

I am Anita Green, asking for your support as a state delegate in Denver, Colorado at the NEA RA. I will represent you wholeheartedly at the assembly. I am an experienced educator that will advocate for you. A vote for me is a vote for you



Donella Washington

My name is Donella Washington. I have been in the educational field 25 years now. I worked my way up from a substitute to special education teacher. I believe that all students can learn even if it happens at a different pace. I would love another opportunity to represent and fight for you at the state and national level. Our fight is one that is far from won.



Craig Bilbrew

My name is Craig Bilbrew, and I am a veteran educator with over 20 years of experience as a Secretary, Substitute, Paraprofessional, Teacher, and After-School Director. I previously served on the EBR PAE Board of Directors and am ready to advocate for our educators and students again.



Angela Matthews

Angela Mathewa, long standing resident, community leader in Ascension Parish and a proud mother of two. Angela has been a school bus driver for twenty-five years, served as bus leader union vice president and president. She intends to bring that into the role for the betterment of all Louisiana students.



Robin White Clark, NBCT

I am a National Board Certified Teacher, published author, and educational consultant with over 25 years in the education profession. I believe in professional excellence, equity in education, safe workplaces, and advocacy. Public education is vital in our city, state, and nation. So, we must prioritize it and protect it.



Dawn Jordan

I have attended several NEA RA's and love getting to work with others across the states to do the work of the association. I have served as a member of the NEA elections committee and LAE's. I have served as local president and LAE Board member. Elect Dawn Jordan.



Katrice Antoine

I am an experienced STEM educator specializing in physics and chemistry, with 27 years of leadership as a mentor teacher and science department chair. I am an active member of the Louisiana Association of Educators, advocating for policies that strengthen public education and support both students and teachers. .



Katina Thompson Givens

Currently, I serve on the LAE Board of Directors and EBRPAE Board of Directors as Treasurer. In 2025, I was elected as the Treasurer for LAE for the NEA Representative Assembly



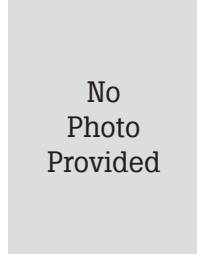
Valencea Johnson

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Tamara Ross

Tamara Ross is a dedicated educator with over 23 years of experience in teaching, instructional leadership, and student support. She is currently the President of the Monroe City Association of Educators and member on LAE's Board of Directors. She brings passion for learning, leadership, and service to every educational setting.



Jema Lefevre

No Bio provided



Rachel Gifford

Please elect me as one of your representatives to the NEA RA. I am a strong advocate for public education and would appreciate you letting me serve as your voice at the national level.



Sherleen Sanders

Candidates wishing to have biographical information and/or a picture included in the February issue of the LAE Voice must include these materials with the nomination form. Biographical sketch must not exceed 50 words.



Delisa Washington

I am asking for your support in electing me as an LAE State Delegate to the NEA Conference this summer. As a school counselor, I am committed to advocating for all members and strengthening public education. Please vote for DeLisa Washington.



Julia Reed

Please select me to represent you at the 2026 NEA RA. I have previously served as a state and national delegate. I currently serve as the president of my local and on the LAE Board of Directors. I bring lots of experience to handling the business of the association



Gwendelyn Hill

I have been a member on LAE for over 30 years. I am on the Board of Directors, also i am the treasure for Livingston Parish Local. I am asking for your vote. So I can come back and tell my members about what was voted on and passed



Milton Gholar

My name is Milton Gholar and I am running for NEA State Delegate. I'm a Vocal Music educator in St. Tammany parish and a graduate of Dillard University. I've previously served as President of Bogalusa Association, LAE BOD and Excutive Committee. I am respectfully asking for your vote.



LaChina Clay

La'China Clay is a Lead Social Studies Teacher and Athletic Director at Richwood Middle School in Ouachita Parish. She is the President of the Ouachita Association and Louisiana Council for the Social Studies and works hard to advocate for teachers and students.



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**BORED
TEACHERS**

**IS IT
FRIDAY
YET?!**

COMEDY TOUR



**ENTER
TO WIN**

Would you like a chance to win tickets to the Bored Teachers Comedy Show? Additional information will be sent to your email. So be on the lookout. If your email needs to be updated send your information to membership@lae.org by March 1, 2026

**ALL NEW
MATERIAL!**

**SHREVEPORT, APRIL
LA 16**

7:30PM AT THE STRAND THEATRE

**NEW ORLEANS, APRIL
LA 19**

3PM AT ORPHEUM THEATER

TIME-SENSITIVE
LAE ELECTIONS
INFO INSIDE

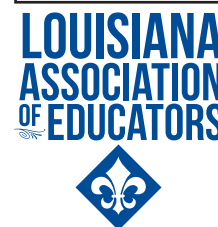
THE LAE VOICE

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D'Shay Oaks, President
Jeff Sherels, Executive Director

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb. 2-3
LAE Retired Meeting
Paragon, Marksville, LA

Feb. 16-17
Mardi Gras
Office Closed

March 10-31
LAE Elections

March 2-3
NEA Retired Meeting

March 7-June 1
Legislative Session

March 19
Retired Teachers Day

April 3
Good Friday
Office Closed

March 27-29
NEA ESP Conference

April 5
Easter

April 10
Virtual Board Meeting

April 11
Virtual LAE RA

April 6
Holiday
Office Closed

April 27-May 2
Super Week