



Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education



Louisiana State Superintendent of Education

Position Specification

Position	Louisiana State Superintendent of Education
Location	Baton Rouge, LA
Reporting Structure	The State Superintendent of Education will report to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). https://bese.louisiana.gov/

THE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education is seeking a dedicated, innovative and experienced leader to become its next State Superintendent of Education. The next Superintendent must deepen the impact of Louisiana’s improvement efforts over the past two decades, support schools and school systems to implement solutions that will accelerate progress, and continue to raise expectations for performance to ensure the state’s more than 700,000 students are on track to college, career and life of their choosing.

Over the course of the past two decades, tremendous progress has been made across Louisiana’s education systems thanks to the hard work of students, families and educators. The state’s improvement on NAEP since 2009 in all subjects significantly exceeds national trends and, in 2019, Louisiana ranked #1 in the nation for improvement in 8th grade mathematics. Since implementing new, standards-aligned tests in 2015, the percent of students achieving mastery has increased 7% points in ELA and 4% points in math. At the high school level, the number of students earning Advanced Placement credit each year has increased by more than 3,800 since 2012, an increase of more than 167%, and more students graduated in 2018 than ever before with a graduation rate of 81.4%. This is an increase of over 5,000 students since 2012, far exceeding the nation’s growth.

We seek a leader who can help continue the state’s forward trajectory and also address the significant challenges that remain. Too many students graduating from high school require remediation for success in college-level coursework. And while academic achievement rises, gaps among student subgroups must be closed. Across the state, disadvantaged students are more likely to attend struggling schools and experience less access to enriching experiences that may spark lifelong interests. Alongside this, Louisiana must continue to strengthen and elevate the educator profession and ensure professional development and supports that allow them to improve their practice in the classroom.

Further, the next State Superintendent must strengthen the implementation of Louisiana’s academic plan and build upon the bold commitment in the state’s ESSA plan to raise student, educator and school expectations to ensure that every student is on track to college or a career, and to support school systems in this process. Additionally, the next State Superintendent must

have an appreciation that diverse school models and allowing students and families to choose what best meets their needs are critical to continuing the path to progress and stronger outcomes for students.

Accelerating the pace of change in our schools and classrooms will mean:

- Raising fundamental expectations for students to be equal with their peers across the country;
- Increasing access to quality early childhood education by unifying childcare, Head Start, and pre-kindergartens in improving and expanding networks and in partnership with public-private community networks focused on high-quality early learning experiences for students and families;
- Continuing to strengthen alignment and coherence in the statewide system of standards, curricula, assessments and professional learning;
- Continuing to strengthen and support diverse school model options that promote parental choice;
- Delivering targeted funding to students and schools who are the most in need;
- Fostering and funding strategies to support persistently struggling schools;
- Providing every student with enriching experiences and a well-rounded education that is recognized in the state's accountability system;
- Ensuring that all educators in Louisiana, from aspiring teachers to school system leaders, have access to high-quality training and career advancement opportunities;
- Placing future teachers in classrooms under a mentor educator for yearlong, classroom-based residencies that prepare them for day one in their own classrooms; and
- Delivering on the promise that Louisiana's graduates have the credentials and funding they need for their next step of education or career preparation.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The next Superintendent of Education will build and execute upon Louisiana's current strategy to lead efforts to systematically improve elementary and secondary education in Louisiana. To do that effectively, the State Superintendent of Education is responsible for leading the Department of Education in its support of schools and school systems to dramatically accelerate the rate of progress across the state. The next Superintendent must deepen the impact of Louisiana's historic improvement efforts over the past two decades, support schools and school systems to design and implement solutions and continue to raise expectations for performance to ensure the state's more than 700,000 students are on track to college or a career. Doing so will require strong executive management skills to lead the Department, outstanding interpersonal and communications skills to build relationships with diverse stakeholders across the state and deep educational expertise to help design the next stage of Louisiana's progress. This individual will collaborate with the other branches of government, local officials, private and nonprofit sectors, the education community, legislative and executive branches and state agencies with related agendas to address key issues and challenges.

Specific responsibilities of the Superintendent will include:

- Serving as chief executive officer of the Louisiana Department of Education
- Representing the Louisiana Department of Education throughout the State as well as nationally and internationally
- Building statewide consensus with diverse stakeholders and communities on strategies to realize the goal of dramatically improving student achievement
- Supporting the work of districts and individual schools with resources and initiatives that will help to close achievement gaps
- Further developing a strong plan to support high school students to have pathways to strong careers and college enrollment
- Advancing statewide strategy to increase access to Early Childhood learning opportunities
- Developing and executing a plan to address the persistent underachievement of the large population of economically disadvantaged students in Louisiana
- Streamlining and distributing data and evidence to districts, schools, teachers, students, parents, and lawmakers, that is easy to understand and use for action-oriented outcomes
- Ensuring that charter schools in Louisiana continue to improve educational opportunities for students
- Supporting and ensuring the continued improvement of the Special School District
- Enforcing all general and special laws relating to the K-12 public education system throughout Louisiana

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE / CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate will have:

- Deep knowledge of K-12 policy and practice and experience working in the field
- Experience building, retaining, managing and growing strong mission-aligned teams
- Experience with and knowledge of strategies, including academic programs, that have been successful in measurably boosting academic achievement for all students and closing persistent achievement gaps
- Demonstrated leadership, administrative, and managerial expertise and success in complex professional environments
- Experience with and knowledge of charter school authorization and oversight
- Experience developing and implementing state and federal policy
- Demonstrated record of successfully implementing multi-year initiatives across multiple, diverse geographies
- Experience managing large organizations and shifting budgets
- Demonstrated evidence of utilizing high quality research and data analytics to support the adoption of innovative strategies for the solution of persistent educational challenges
- Experience building consensus around priorities and goals by engaging diverse and sometimes opposing perspectives
- Skills in working with constituents and policy making partners, including the Legislature, the Executive, other state agencies, and local officials

The successful candidate will:

- Effectively manage the work of the Department of Education
- Have a vision and strategy to achieve educational equity
- Believe in Louisiana's ESSA plan and have the desire to continue and build upon current progress
- Advocate for students' learning, well-being, and social-emotional health
- Communicate skillfully through multiple modes of influence and messaging
- Inspire the system through leadership and setting the right tone through leading by example
- A demonstrated and unwavering commitment to historically disadvantaged student groups
- Demonstrate empathy and understanding of how to navigate and build relationships across diverse communities and demonstrate how they put students and families first
- Listen thoughtfully
- Be a champion for our educators
- Lead with integrity and humility

EDUCATION

A bachelor's degree, as well as an advanced degree in public administration, education or other related area.

COMPENSATION

The compensation package is competitive and will be commensurate with the selected candidate's experience.

SUBMISSION OF INTEREST MATERIALS

To inquire further regarding **general questions**, please contact Shan Davis, BESE Executive Director, at shan.davis@la.gov.

To Apply:

Please email your materials to info+ladoesearch@promise54.org. Materials will be accepted until **5:00pm CT on Friday, February 28th**. ***Submissions should be electronic only, and should include:***

- An updated resume
- A letter of interest, addressed to the Louisiana Superintendent Working Group which addresses what specific experience and background has prepared you for this role, in this state, at this particular time.
- Written responses to the following application questions:
 1. What do you anticipate as Louisiana's greatest opportunity to accelerate progress?
 2. What do you perceive to be our biggest hurdle?

3. In the position description for this role, there are several bullets describing general areas of responsibility for the Superintendent. Here are four responsibilities from that list.
 - a. Serving as chief executive officer of the Louisiana Department of Education
 - b. Building statewide consensus with diverse stakeholders and communities on strategies to realize the goal of dramatically improving student achievement
 - c. Advancing statewide strategy to increase access to Early Childhood learning opportunities
 - d. Developing and executing a plan to address the persistent underachievement of the large population of economically disadvantaged students (69.07%) in Louisiana

Please rank order these activities in terms of which you think you most naturally fit your skill set, such that #1 is the responsibility that you'd be most equipped to address on Day 1 of the job, and #3 is the responsibility with which you'd need the most support, either from staff/cabinet or because the learning curve would be steepest there. Please indicate how you would you rank them and why?

BESE SUPERINTENDENT APPOINTMENT WORKING GROUP CONTACTS

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The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. Females, minorities, veterans, and persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply.

Louisiana Public PK-12 School Demographics At A Glance

Number of School Districts: 80
 Number of Schools: 1401
 Enrollment: 719,812
 Grades Served: PK-12
 Type 2 Charter Schools (BESE Authorized) - 40

Student Race and Ethnicity

African American Students: 306,599 (42.6%)
 Asian Students: 11,523 (1.6%)

Hispanic Students: 60,157 (8.4%)
Native American Students: 4,485 (.6%)
White Students: 315,810(43.9%)
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander Students: 628 (.08%)
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic Students: 20,610

Selected Populations

Limited English Proficiency: 3.99%
Students with Disabilities: 12.4%
Economically Disadvantaged: 69.07

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