



LOUISIANA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION (LSBA)

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LOUISIANA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION: Joins Louisiana Superintendents to Address Common Core Implementation Problems

The Louisiana School Boards Association (LSBA) joins with the Louisiana Association of School Superintendents (LASS) in supporting a majority of the accountability changes State Superintendent John White is slated to advance in next week's Board of Elementary and Secondary Education meeting. In addition, both organizations have made recommendations to address pending national assessments and the establishment of new baseline data for accountability purposes during the transition period to Common Core.

"We totally support raising the bar with higher standards and increasing student achievement," said Scott Richard, LSBA Executive Director, "and we believe that is best achieved through effective, gradual implementation. The rush to implement these broad-reaching changes is one reason some school boards have publicly opposed Common Core. Hopefully, after this week's BESE meeting, we can now work toward a more positive approach." He further noted, "School boards and superintendents also hope to receive favorable consideration by BESE and Superintendent White regarding the additional modifications we are proposing."

The Louisiana School Boards Association also expresses its appreciation to State Superintendent White for his recent dialog with education stakeholders and leaders across the state.

"The most important stakeholders in this process are our students and their families," continued Richard. "Strengthening student achievement is a goal we share. We all want the very best education possible for children throughout Louisiana. Working together, we can do that. The Louisiana School Boards Association is committed to that goal."

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(See recommendations that follow)

The Louisiana School Boards Association and the Louisiana School Superintendents Association support the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and hold a strong belief in increasing student achievement and high rigor. Implementation of CCSS should be gradual to allow time for teacher preparation, curriculum preparation, resource identification, and reduction of gaps in student learning.

We appreciate the continued dialog we have had with Superintendent White in which some of our recommendations have been embraced and look forward to continued cooperation as we make this important transition.

We offer the following recommendations for implementation:

- **Assessment of CCSS:**
 - We have grave concerns about districts' readiness for PARCC in 2015. Delay implementation of PARCC.
 - Fewer number of states remaining in PARCC consortium make national comparisons less robust.
 - We recommend that the current state assessment be used and an appropriate national assessment be determined over time.

- **CCSS implementation:**
 - A strategic/cohesive plan for the development of a state curriculum framework is needed (grade level by grade level, unit by unit, with sample activities and properly vetted resources for teachers). Superintendent White has announced his plan to provide these resources.
 - A listing of electronic and printed instructional resources which support CCSS needs to be made available via state contract in a streamlined process.
 - State plan to assist local districts with technology readiness is needed regardless of PARCC or any other assessments.

Due to lack of above resources and due to the uncertainty of PARCC assessments, a minimum two year period in which to establish a new baseline for teacher evaluation and school/district accountability is critical.

- **Teacher Evaluation**
 - During this two year period, continue to evaluate teachers utilizing the COMPASS rubric but with more flexibility in the use of student growth data for local evaluators. Superintendent White has announced his proposed policy encompassing this recommendation.
 - During this two year period engage stakeholders to refine the COMPASS process/system.

- **School/District Accountability**
 - During two year baseline establishment period, we recommend LDOE run school and district performance scores only without assignment of either letter grades or consequences (voucher eligibility, state takeover of schools-RSD, etc.).
 - Provisions should be made for the department to work with school districts to monitor persistently low performing schools through the department's network structure.
 - Engage stakeholders to work with LDOE regarding the accountability formula as transition occurs to CCSS. Superintendent White has proposed policy tasking the Accountability Commission with this work.

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