



News Update

Week of October 4, 2021 NSBA Update

LSBA Response to NSBA's Request for Federal Intervention

The National School Boards Association (NSBA) issued a letter last week to President Biden requesting federal assistance regarding threats and disruptive incidents occurring at school board meetings across the nation. Typically, the Louisiana School Boards Association (LSBA) does not address action by the NSBA nor Washington D.C. politics but feel it necessary to update our membership about NSBA's recent request.

The LSBA was not consulted about the content of the letter. The LSBA does not agree with NSBA's action. Our concern is that NSBA's request and description of events is not a universal occurrence at all school boards, it fails to align with the standards of good governance, and it discourages active participation in the governance process. The NSBA's request represents a huge step backwards in the collective advocacy efforts carried out by LSBA and other state associations in protecting and preserving openness, transparency, and local autonomy.

Local school boards should encourage and make every effort to enhance public participation and engagement during school board meetings. There are times when discourse may be challenging to navigate but open discourse is a necessary course to chart in public service. However, threats are never an appropriate response. Such threats should always be taken seriously and reported to the appropriate authority. If you are concerned with personal safety or safety at school board meetings, please reach out to local law enforcement for guidance and/or assistance.

The LSBA, along with other state associations, is now evaluating the future of our affiliation with NSBA. The LSBA has long been a member of the NSBA but has not yet paid membership dues for the 2021-2022 year. The LSBA team will meet with its Board of Directors to determine how to best address this situation and reevaluate the benefits of continued membership in the NSBA.

The LSBA thanks our school board members for their public service and for working on behalf of students, parents, and communities across our state. Thank you for allowing the LSBA to advocate on your behalf. We look forward to continuing to work together to move public education forward in Louisiana.



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