

**LOUISIANA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION (LSBA)
LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS (LASS)**

January 20, 2017

TO: Honorable John Bel Edwards, Governor of Louisiana

FR: Louisiana School Boards Association and Louisiana Association of School Superintendents

RE: **Proposal to Cut \$28 Million from K-12 Public Education – Please Do Not Implement
Detrimental to Student Services in Louisiana**

The purpose of this correspondence is to request that no further cuts to K-12 public education be implemented, as any additional cuts to K-12 public education will be detrimental to basic educational services for the over 700,000 public school students across the state of Louisiana, of which we are charged with leading.

The recently publicized proposal to cut \$28M from the LDOE budget does not have any detail as to whether that cut will be to LDOE administration budget items or will it be a cut to the MFP. Certainly if it will be a cut to the MFP, those are dollars for classroom instruction. The MFP base per pupil remained at the same level as the last several years – and, “outside the MFP funding” for K-12 education was cut in half in the 2016-17 budget adopted in June of 2016.

To absorb a further cut in the last few months of the school year would be incredibly difficult. Many of the costs of running our school districts are front-loaded. Decisions on expenses such as instructional materials, school facility improvements, and teacher staffing were made months ago. Further, several of our districts experienced unprecedented flooding that created expenses for which we had not budgeted, and, new costs to simply get school back up and running for our communities. It is also important to note that all of us are transitioning to higher standards and strive to provide a “world-class” education - even with these many challenges.

We have tried to be diligent with our budgeting; however, the state base per pupil funding amount has not been increased for several years now; the 2016-17 budget also effected a real cut in K-12 education funding (\$24 Million); recently local districts were cut approximately 5% in Education Excellence Funds (tobacco settlement money) and the Flood of 2016 presented – and, continues to present - huge additional expenses for several school districts. These years of static state funding (MFP), the general economic downturn that has negatively impacted our local sales and property revenues, and the ever-increasing costs of providing education and funding the State UAL obligation in LSERS and TRSL have all been factors that significantly decrease our ability to maintain the level of education that our children deserve.

Please urge the Legislature to prioritize the education of our children and refrain from additional cuts to public education that would further financially weaken public schools in Louisiana.

Acadia, Allen, Ascension, Assumption, Avoyelles, Baker City, Beauregard, Bienville, Bogalusa City, Bossier, Caddo, Calcasieu, Caldwell, Cameron, Catahoula, Central Community, Claiborne, Concordia, DeSoto, East Baton Rouge, East Carroll, East Feliciana, Evangeline, Franklin, Grant, Iberia, Iberville, Jackson, Jefferson, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, LaSalle, Lincoln, Livingston, Madison, Monroe City, Morehouse, Natchitoches, Orleans, Ouachita, Plaquemines, Pointe Coupee, Rapides, Red River, Richland, Sabine, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. Helena, St. James, St. John, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, Tensas, Terrebonne, Union, Vermillion, Vernon, Washington, Webster, West Baton Rouge, West Carroll, West Feliciana, Winn and Zachary Community School Systems of Louisiana.

LSBA & LASS

[69 Local School Districts, 69 Superintendents and 643 Locally Elected School Board Members]