

STATE OFFICERS:
BERTHA H. BRELAND
President
1201 N. Columbia St.
Bogalusa, LA 70427

LONNIE E. DUNN, Ed. D.
Past-President
3750 Christy Dr.
Shreveport, LA 71129

NANCY L. QUIGLEY
First Vice-President
5210 Airline Dr.
Bossier City, LA 71111

JANIS M. HERNANDEZ
Second Vice-President
13313 Fleur de Lis Dr.
Gonzales, LA 70737

DISTRICT PRESIDENTS:
First: THEODORE H. GEORGE, Sr.
P.O. Box 15713
New Orleans, LA 70175

Second: BETH PLAISANCE
310 Barrilleaux St.
Lockport, LA 70374

Third: LAZETTE L. WATTERSON
P. O. Box 873
Bogalusa, LA 70429

Fourth: DOROTHY W. WILSON
12341 Shireburk Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70810

Fifth: VELMA D. HENDRIX
P. O. Box 116
Melville, LA 71353

Sixth: WILDA P. CHELETTE
2805 Wilson Dr.
Lake Charles, LA 70607

Seventh: BENJAMIN L. SANDIFER
1001 Oak St.
Jonesville, LA 71343

Eighth: RAYMOND POWELL
P. O. Box 523
Mansfield, LA 71052

Ninth: DOROTHY W. BROWN
1207 Maple St.
Winnsboro, LA 71295

Tenth: BECKY S. SOLLEY
607 Northwood Dr.
West Monroe, LA 71291

Eleventh: JOANN R. WEBB
1830 Venus Dr.
Bossier City, LA 71112

TRSL BOARD OF TRUSTEES:
JERRY J. BAUDIN, Ph. D.
15323 Alma Mater Ct.
Baton Rouge, LA 70810

JAMES A. TAYLOR, Sr., J. D., Ph. D.
8122 Royalwood Dr.
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

OGB BOARD:

AARP LOUISIANA:
BRENDA G. HATFIELD, Ph. D.
301 Main St., Suite 1012
Baton Rouge, LA 70825

LASS-R:
DONALD A. SONGY
37617 Seven Oaks Ave.
Prairieville, LA 70769

Louisiana Retired Teachers Association
9412 Common St., Suite 5 Baton Rouge, LA 70809
Telephone: (225) 927-8837 Fax: (225) 927-8838
www.lrta.net



Executive Director
RODNEY R. WATSON

January 20, 2017

Honorable John Bel Edwards
Governor, State of Louisiana
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Dear Governor Edwards,

I am writing on behalf of the nearly 23,000 members of the Louisiana Retired Teachers Association (LRTA). As Executive Director and lobbyist for LRTA, I represent our organization on matters that affect the retirement benefits of Louisiana's educator community. That includes both active and retired educators, statewide.

We understand the state's burden in addressing the large budget deficit. We also understand that agencies and programs across the state have suffered cuts in an attempt to balance the state budget.

However, it has come to our attention that Representative Lance Harris has submitted a plan for solving the state deficit issues, and this plan includes a proposed cut of 4.2% to the state general fund. Specifically, he has proposed a 1% cut to the Department of Education through the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP).

The Louisiana Retired Teachers Association's Executive Board and membership strongly oppose any additional cuts that would negatively affect public education in Louisiana. School systems across the state have suffered cuts that affect the services of children and reduced the benefits to employees and retirees, statewide. Further cuts would diminish the quality of education in our state by affecting the acquisition and retention of certified school personal within our already struggling districts.

National research shows that teacher retention is one of the most important factors in providing a quality education. The attraction and retention of teachers in Louisiana is already at risk due to lower than national averages on salaries and benefits to educators. Further cuts to the state budget, specifically the MFP, would affect the overall quality of education to the children of our state.

We are asking that our state legislature oppose any further cuts to the state general fund budget as it applies to the Department of Education.

I may be reached for further comment at 225.927.8837 or watson@lrta.net.

Regards,

Rodney R. Watson
Executive Director