



LINK

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POLICY PRIMER: PERSONNEL FILES AND YOU



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- > **Electronics Communication Policy.**
- > **Charter School Charter**
- > **Testing in the spotlight**
- > ***Dude, Where's My Lunch?!?***



CONGRATULATIONS TO TEACHER AWARDS FINALISTS

**SCOTTY WALKER-
LAFAYETTE HIGH**

**CHRISTINE
MCCRORY-
LAFAYETTE HIGH**

**BRIDGET BEGNAUD-
J. WALLACE JAMES**

**LISA RICHARDS
FLEMING-
KATHARINE DREXEL**

**ANDRE DESHOTEL-
JUDICE MIDDLE**

The implementation of public education "reform" across Louisiana in recent years has generated numerous questions about the process of teacher evaluation. A frequent concern of employees involves personnel files. State law specifies several employee rights concerning the administration of personnel records—locally **LPSS Policy File GAK**

First, only ONE official personnel file may be kept on an employee. Principals may keep records or notes on their personnel, but the **official file** is kept in the Central Office.

Second, you have the right to inspect your personnel file. The district asks that you submit your request in writing and allow suitable

time for record retrieval. A general rule has been roughly three business days for the district to comply with your request. LPAE recommends that you review your personnel file once every school year to insure that information is correct.

Third, before any information concerning your job performance is filed, you must be given the opportunity to see the document and respond in writing. Furthermore, you are afforded the right to a written rebuttal to ANY comment on an observation, evaluation, or reprimand. Once the document with your rebuttal is filed, your written comments become a part of the record, and may NOT be

used without the employee response attached.

No one wants misleading information on a document that becomes the basis for subsequent evaluation of your performance. Amidst the challenges of current education policy, we must strive to become more aware of our rights as employees, and then stand firm in exercising them.

LPAE

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Regina Bourgeois, Assistant



Have a dependent son, daughter or spouse at UL? Are they majoring in education? Will they be a Junior or Senior in the Fall of 2017? Could they use extra money? Answered YES to all of the above? Call 231-0010 for an LPAE UL Scholarship application.



**All scholarship applications must be submitted
LPAE office by January 30, 2017**

UL Scholarship Department determines winner.

Thank You!

LPAE would like to extend a warm thank you and hearty congratulations to our very own Regina Bourgeois for a lifetime of service to the students and teachers of Lafayette. Regina began her affiliation with our organization as a building rep. Eventually she served in every elected and appointed position within our local. After her retirement from Youngsville Middle where she served as Librarian, Regina became active with LAE-Retired. She also spent many years managing our local office.

I have been blessed to know Regina during my own journey as classroom teacher and advocate for public education. I recall with great fondness our numerous conversations about the state of education in Lafayette and what we can do to make things better.

Regina plans to enjoy a well-deserved retirement with family and friends in Louisiana and Texas.

We here at LPAE can safely say that Regina gave us some of the best advice about working to improve our profession and the students we work with-

"No one can do EVERYTHING, but EVERYONE can do something."

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS : A REMINDER

Louisiana state law and LPSS policy strictly regulate electronic communications between staff and students. In a world that is increasingly online, it is important to remember that the safety of everyone is of the utmost priority.

Revised Statute 17:81 requires that school districts establish policies relative to electronic communications between staff and students.

School districts broadly group electronic communication into two categories: direct and indirect. Direct communication includes text messaging, phone calls, instant messages, and video conferencing. Indirect communication uses an intermediate method

such as the bevy of social networks (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) currently found online.

If you wish to contact students for the purposes of posting assignments, homework, and announcements, you **MUST** use a school provided method such as LPSS monitored email or educational platforms such as Edmodo or Schoology.

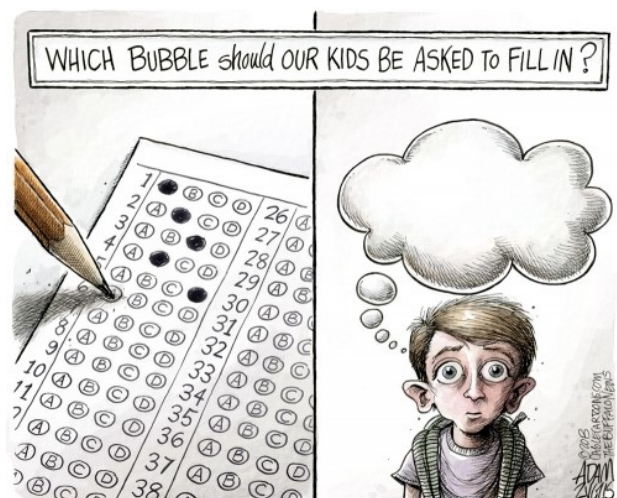
Protect yourself and your students.

Do NOT contact students on social media.

Do NOT contact students through your personal email address.

Be aware that what you post online can be shared far and wide.

Fair or not, teachers are held to a higher standard of behavior by the community at large.



LUNCH BREAKS DUTY ASSIGNMENTS AND PLCS! OH MY!

Long a point of contention for school employees and staff, teacher duty and lunch breaks are no laughing matter. In recent years, Bulletin 741 §911 has outlined the expectations of break periods for classroom teachers as follows:

Subject to the availability of state funds for this purpose, LEAs shall provide a minimum of 45 minutes daily planning time, or its weekly equivalent, AND

a minimum of 30 minutes for lunch each day which shall be duty-free for every teacher actively engaged in the instruction and supervision of students in the public schools. Implementation of planning time and lunch periods for teachers as required in this Section shall not result in a lengthened school day.

Many teachers report that what is written on paper is not the reality at worksites. Duty has forever been a part of the education profession. However, duty, like all job tasks, must be reasonable and conducive to a professional work environment. What is reasonable at one site may not be appropriate at another. Therefore, reporting of matters related to lunch breaks and duty assignments are con-

tingent upon individual employees and schools. LPAE suggests that you contact our office to report your duty and lunch assignments for data collection purposes so that we can approach district staff with suggestions to assist LPSS in complying with state regulations.



CHARTER SCHOOL CHATTER

Today more than 50,000 Louisiana students attend over 130 charter schools operating across the state. Dating back to 1991, charter schools were developed to provide alternative sites for decentralized, locally controlled schools to offer experimental education programs to families.

We have come a long way since the first charters opened their doors twenty-five years ago. Charter schools are now operated by large education management companies that exercise significant authority over local and state tax dollars. Many charters, including those

in Lafayette, are managed by out of state for-profit corporations. Many charter schools do not provide bus transportation, libraries, and special education settings. Charters can profit by cutting these “expenses” while receiving the same per pupil amount as traditional public schools.

Charters receive their funding from Louisiana taxpayers through the state’s block grant, the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP). While the idea that the money, about \$10,000/student per school year, “follows the

student” is a popular one among politicians, it is not true because the cost does not follow the child. LPSS’ chief financial officer estimates that there is only a 25% cost reduction/student when he/she leaves for a charter school. The costs of operating school buildings, driving bus routes, providing for special education services, and meeting our obligations to legacy costs remain.

There are three charter schools in Lafayette Parish. These companies applied and were denied approval by the Lafayette Parish School Board. They appealed and were approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary

Education (BESE) in Baton Rouge in 2013, transferring to private, unelected boards each year \$20 million, half of which are local tax dollars that are specifically dedicated to public education. Our contention is that if BESE is going to override our elected school board, then the BESE charters should be funded without our locally generated education tax dollars.

LPAE Past-President Rodolfo Epsinoza contributed to this report.



TESTING In the Spotlight

Annette Samec, LPSS Chief Academic Officer, responded to an LPAE email concerning the RTI program known as Fast ForWord. At the November LPAE-AR Meeting, teachers from several schools across the district expressed concern about the program and its effectiveness.

What is Fast ForWord?

It is a brain retrain using a computer. The program involves repetitive sounds, cognitive skills, vocabulary development, grammar development, and phonemic awareness. Fast ForWord improves hearing, memorization, and attentiveness. Scientific Learning Fast ForWord: www.scilearn.com

LPAE has received numerous reports from elementary schools concerning the Fast ForWord program- primarily dealing with the way the program is implemented. Teachers and Computer Lab Facilitators report that the implementation of the program varies drastically from school to school.

This is accurate. Last year we had many non-negotiables, this year we allowed for more individualization. Middle school had too many constraints to fit a fifty minute protocol into their day and requiring the lab to be filled all day did not allow Lab Facilitators time to review data and make appropriate interventions.

Most schools are doing a forty minute protocol which means forty actual minutes logged in. Students can do extra time but not meeting the forty minutes is not as productive.

Every elementary school principal I spoke with is using Fast ForWord for targeted instruction for RTI students or a whole grade level like all Kindergartners or all 2nd graders. Almost all elementary schools extended their regular thirty minutes of RTI to 40 or 50 minutes. Fast ForWord is not only for Tier 2 or 3 interventions. It is for all students at any grade level. Gifted and advanced students benefit from it as well. Parents at schools that do a whole grade level will often ask how they can do Fast ForWord at home when their child does not have access to it at school.

Are schools allowed to pull students out of reading classes for programs like Fast ForWord?

I am not aware of this and did not hear this stated during our conversations in November. We do not endorse pulling students out of reading classes!

One school requires all students to go to the lab even if they are not in need of RTI because the students needing the services don't want to leave the class.

Fast ForWord is for all students, Tier 1 as well. It can be used for enrichment during RTI.

What is your experience with Fast ForWord? Do you find the program, and others like it, useful? In a continuing effort to catalog and communicate standardized testing in our schools, LPAE wants to hear from YOU!

Contact us at: lafayettepae@gmail.com

All messages and comments will remain anonymous.