

A-SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

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SCHOOL BOARD LEGAL STATUS

The State Legislature is responsible for providing for the education of the citizens of the State through the establishment and maintenance of a public school system.

The State Legislature created parish school boards and provides for the election of persons to serve as members of said boards.

A parish school board shall constitute a body corporate with power to sue and, under certain conditions, to be sued.

Legal References: LSA REVISED STATUES 17.51
Constitution of the State
of Louisiana of 1974

SCHOOL DISTRICT LEGAL STATUS

The Legislature has delegated the authority to parish school boards to create a school district or school districts within each parish according to the procedures established by law. Each school district so created by a parish school board is a political subdivision of the State.

LSA-RS 17:1371

BOARD AUTHORITY

As school boards are the creation of the state legislature, their authority is a delegated one. They may perform only those acts for which authority has been delegated them. This authority may be expressly stated or implied in statutes or established through regulations of the State Board of Education or implementing rules of the State Superintendent of Public Education.

The powers delegated to a school board are delegated to the board as a body. No authority is granted board members acting as individuals. (LSA-R.S. 17:51)

Any policy not specifically spelled out in the Policies and Procedures Manual remains the prerogative of the Board.

BOARD POWERS AND DUTIES

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall provide for the operation, improvement and evaluation of a parish public school system and shall establish general policies in keeping with the needs of the communities of the parish and all applicable state laws.

The responsibility of the Morehouse Parish School Board includes:

1. To serve in a policy making capacity that is in the best interest of all students enrolled in schools under the Morehouse Parish School Board's jurisdiction. When establishing board policies, it shall prioritize student achievement, financial efficiency, and workforce development on a local, regional and statewide basis. When choosing a local Superintendent of Schools, the Board shall select a leader who shall prioritize student achievement and act in the best interest of all students enrolled in schools under the board's jurisdiction. (LSA-R.S. 17:81)
2. Determining the number of schools to be open, the location of school houses and the number of teachers and other school personnel to be employed. (LSA-R.S. 17-81)
3. The board delegates the authority for hiring and placement of all school personnel, including those with state certification, to the Superintendent of Schools. (LSA-R.S. 17:81)
4. Select and appoint a Superintendent and support him in the discharge of his duties (LSA-R.S. 17:54, 17:81, 17:84)
5. Receive notice of appointment of all district personnel selections made by the Superintendent (LSA-R.S. 17:81, 17:84)
6. Receive notice of school staffing and operations as inaugurated by the Superintendent, the professional staff and the principal of each school. (LSA-R.S. 17:81)
7. Receive from the superintendent of schools a report of all resignations of school personnel. (LSA-R.S. 17:81)
8. Establish general policies for a planned program of education as initiated by the superintendent, his staff, the Board and others.
9. Receive, evaluate, and act upon the recommendations and reports of the superintendent.
10. Adopt an annual budget and control expenditures accordingly; review periodic financial reports and modify the budget if and when necessary; submit budget, after approval, to the State Superintendent of Public Education for approval (LSARS. 17:88).
11. Select, by public advertisement and bid, a fiscal agent and deposit with reasonable promptness and without payment of service charges, all funds which are in the name of

- the Morehouse Parish School Board and secured by proper collateral deposited by the fiscal agent for the account of the Board.
12. Select, by public advertisement and bid, a newspaper in which the official minutes of School Board meetings are to be published. Submit all official minutes to this paper for publication.
 13. Adopt a resolution levying annually all taxes authorized by the Constitution the laws of the State of Louisiana, and the voters of the Parish, including taxes to meet the principal and interest on outstanding bonds; forward such resolution to the assessor of Morehouse Parish.
 14. Request legal opinions from the district attorney and the attorney general of the State of Louisiana as needed.
 15. Call special tax elections to vote bond issues to provide adequate school facilities and equipment after approval of the State Bond and Tax Board (LSA-R.S.17: 1373).
 16. Call special tax elections to vote on renewal of existing taxes as well as for additional tax millage for school purposes as provided by the laws of the State of Louisiana.
 17. Advertise for bids and enter into contracts in conformity with Louisiana law (LSA-R.S. 38:2211, et seq)
 18. Provide support for teachers' institutes and meetings for the benefit and professional improvement of teachers and other employees (LSA-R.S.7:24.1).
 19. Provide transportation for students to attend school of suitable grade approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education within jurisdictional boundaries of Morehouse Parish in conformity with the guidelines of the Louisiana Revised Statutes and the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Education (LSA-R.S. 17: 158)
 20. Establish attendance areas and school boundaries (LSA-R.S. 17: 101, et seq.)
 21. Prescribe rules and regulations governing the handling of all funds and employees entrusted with such funds. Require proper bond as stipulated by the laws of the State of Louisiana of all persons who handle large sums of money (LSA-R.S. 17:95 and 17:97).
 22. Sue and/or defend itself in suits at law (LSA-R.S. 17:51).
 23. Consider, revise, and adopt recommendations of the superintendent and members of his staff for providing adequate buildings and equipment for the entire public school system of the Parish of Morehouse (LSA-R.S. 17:81)
 24. Appoint architects and/or engineers, as needed, to design new schools and/or renovations of existing buildings.

25. Inform the public concerning the progress and needs of the schools, the instructional program, and the financial status of the school system, accurately accounting for all receipts and expenditures.
26. Observe and enforce all applicable provisions of the Constitution and the Statutes of the State of Louisiana and all rules, regulations, and directives of the State Board of Education and of the State Superintendent of Education.

BOARD MEMBER LEGAL STATUS

Article VIII, Section 9 of the Constitution of Louisiana, 1974, authorizes the legislature to provide for the election of parish school boards.

A-5.1

QUALIFICATIONS FOR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

A person is legally qualified to become a member of the Board provided:

1. The person is domiciled for the preceding year in the district from which he seeks election except that at the next regular election for members of the school board following reapportionment, an elector may qualify as a candidate from any district created in whole or in part from a district existing prior to reapportionment if he was domiciled in the prior district for at least one year immediate preceding his qualification.
2. The person is a qualified elector
3. The person is able to read and write and,
4. The person is not serving on certain other boards specified in the Constitution of Louisiana
5. The person has resided in the state of Louisiana for two years preceding his qualification.

However, it is desirable that members of the Board have a genuine interest in and devotion to public education, a willingness to give time and effort to the work, a capacity for understanding people, and the ability to work cooperatively with others.

Legal Reference: LSA REVISED STATUTES 17:52
Constitution of the State of Louisiana of 1974,
Article VIII, Section 8 (A)

A-5.2

BOARD MEMBER TERM OF OFFICE

Board members shall be elected for terms of four years. The term of a board member shall begin on January 1, following his election and expire on December 31, four years later.

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

All vacancies in the membership of the Morehouse Parish School Board caused by death, resignation or otherwise shall be filled in accordance with the provisions of La.R.S. 18:602 as it may be amended. When a vacancy occurs the remaining members of the Board shall, within twenty (20) days, declare the vacancy has occurred and proceed to appoint a person who meets the qualifications of the office to fill the vacancy. However, if the deadline for making the appointment falls on a Saturday, a Sunday or other legal holiday, then the next day which is not a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday shall be the final day for making such appointment. If the unexpired term exceeds one (1) year, the Board within the same twenty (20) day period shall issue a proclamation ordering a special election to fill the vacancy and shall specify in the proclamation the dates on which the primary and general election shall be held and the dates of qualifying for the candidates for the special election. If a vacancy is not filled within the time specified or if the School Board fails to issue the proclamation within the time specified after the vacancy occurs, the governor shall fill the vacancy and/or the governor shall issue the proclamation.

REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

Any School Board member who signs, executes, causes, authorizes, or contributes in any manner to the borrowing of money in excess of the amount properly budgeted, for current operation, or beyond the limits and conditions described in Section 17:89 LSA Revised Statutes may be fined and removed from office.

Legal Reference: LSA REVISED STATUTES 17:89

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT LEGAL STATUS

The Board will elect, by a majority of the entire membership of the Board, a parish superintendent of schools, having such qualifications as may be fixed by the State Board of Education, for a period not to exceed four years, which period, however, may extend no longer than two years after the expiration of the term of office of the membership of the board electing the superintendent. The parish superintendent of schools shall not be required to be a qualified elector or a resident of the parish which he is to serve as superintendent. He shall be required to devote his entire time to the office of parish superintendent of schools.

The superintendent of schools shall be employed by the Board pursuant to a written contract. Such contract shall contain but not need be limited to specific performance objectives.

However, for the board of a local public school system that received any variation of a school performance grade of "C", "D", or "F", such contract shall establish performance targets at the school and district level as follows:

- (1) Student achievement;
- (2) Student achievement for schools that have received any variation of a school performance letter grade designation of "C", "D", or "F";
- (3) Graduation rate;
- (4) Graduation rates for schools that have received any variation of a school performance letter grade designation of "C", "D", or "F", and
- (5) The percentage of teachers with an "effective" or "highly effective" performance rating.

The school board shall submit a copy of its current employment contract with the superintendent of schools to the state superintendent of education.

The school board shall notify the state superintendent of education any time it terminates or fails to renew the employment contract with the superintendent of schools, along with the reasons therefor.

If at any time a parish superintendent shall be found incompetent, inefficient, unworthy, or if found to have failed to fulfill the terms and performance objectives of his contract or to comply with school board policy he shall be removed from office by a concurring vote of at least two-thirds of the membership of the entire parish school board at any regular meeting or at any special meeting after due notice, written charges and a fair hearing before the Board.

Among the duties assigned to the parish superintendent by the legislature is to act as secretary and treasurer to the Board.

Legal Reference: Constitution of the State of Louisiana of 1974, VIII: 9
(B)LSAREVISED STATUTES 17:54, 17:91, 17:94, 17:95,17:444
Effective Date: July 1, 2012

SCHOOL DISTRICT

For instructional purposes, the schools of the district shall be organized on an elementary, combination elementary and middle school, middle school, combination middle school and secondary school, and a secondary school basis.

At elementary levels, the grades housed in the various school buildings shall be determined on the basis of the best instructional organization for students possible.

The Board shall approve all changes in instructional organization as it pertains to grade levels accommodated in various school buildings before such changes take effect.

MOREHOUSE PARISH SCHOOLS AND GRADE LEVELS HOUSED

SCHOOL	GRADES	LOCATION
Bastrop High School	7-12	401 Highland Avenue, Bastrop, LA 71220
Beekman Charter (Type 3)	Pre-K-12	15190 A.M. Baker Road, Bastrop, LA 71220
Delta Magnet School of Fine Arts	K-6	7661 Mer Rouge/Collinston Rd. Mer Rouge, LA 71261
Morehouse Jr. High School	K-6	1001 West Madison, Bastrop, LA 71220
Morehouse Magnet School	Pre-K-9	900 Larche Lane, Bastrop, LA 71220

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREAS

The Board shall establish areas within the parish in which students will attend a given elementary school or secondary school.

Attendance zones established shall take into consideration the capacity of each school, prospects for redistribution of population, and enrollment changes. (See statement coded H-2.5a Student Assignment to Schools)

SCHOOL CENSUS

As required by law the Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance (Visiting Teacher) in cooperation with certain designated state agencies will maintain a continuing census of educables in the parish. (LSA R.S. 17:12)

SCHOOL YEAR

The school year, shall be established by the school calendar. The Board may designate certain days as staff days for purposes of inservice training orientation, reporting to parents, etc. and other activities which are deemed appropriate and necessary and as may be required by acts of the legislature and/or the State Department of Education.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar for the ensuing school year shall be prepared by the superintendent and presented for Board approval in the early spring of each year. The calendar shall set forth the days schools shall be in session, holidays and vacation periods, inservice days, and days marking the beginning and end of reporting periods at the elementary and secondary levels.

SCHOOL DAY

School hours shall be in accordance with state law and with time requirements for instruction required or recommended by the State Department of Education.

The length of the school day and the opening and closing hours at the various schools shall be structured to best meet the needs of the students.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

At the discretion of the Superintendent, a school or schools may be closed in the event of any emergency or situation that in his judgment justifies the closing of a school or schools.

SCHOOL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR FIRES, EXPLOSIONS AND BOMB THREATS AND PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

I. INTRODUCTION

Emergencies are unexpected and unpredictable; and they take many forms. No one can be fully prepared for everything that might happen, but some simple measures are helpful **in any emergency.**

THINK OF EVERYONE'S SAFETY FIRST.
USE COMMON SENSE.
ACT QUICKLY AND CALMLY.
BE FACTUAL AND UNEMOTIONAL WITH CHILDREN.

For most major kinds of emergencies, moreover, some preparations can be made. Just knowing whom to call can save time, property, and lives. This policy is intended as a practical outline of what to do in a variety of emergencies, but it requires each school to look up telephone numbers and assign tasks to staff and students **before an emergency** has time to happen if it is to be fully effective.

READ THIS POLICY.
FILL IN NAMES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
BE FAMILIAR WITH FORMS AND CHECKLISTS THAT CAN HELP YOU.
REHEARSE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES.
PRACTICE PREVENTION.
INSURE FACULTY AND STAFF ARE FAMILIAR WITH POLICY.

I. FIRES & EXPLOSIONS

A. If there is a fire or explosion - -

1. Break an alarm station or sound the manual alarm system to evacuate the building.
2. Notify the principal.
3. Call the Fire Department. _____
4. Call the Superintendent of Schools.
5. Call the Maintenance Department.
6. Do not try to extinguish the fire until all pupils are safe.
7. Do not allow pupils to re-enter the building until the Fire Department gives the okay.
8. If the school must be closed, follow Emergency Closing of Schools Policy, Policy A-10.1.
9. Keep the Superintendent of Schools informed of developments.

B. After the fire or explosion - -

1. Notify Maintenance Department of the types and locations of fire extinguishers discharged during the fire.
2. Send an inventory of destroyed or damaged equipment and supplies to:
 - (a) Director of Maintenance Department
 - (b) Superintendent of Schools
 - (c) File copy at school

C. Before the fire - -

1. Keep halls, classrooms, and doorways free of debris and clutter that can fuel a fire or hinder escape.
2. Keep exits and passageways to and from the gymnasium and auditorium unlocked and clear during assemblies.
3. Store gasoline, cleaning compounds, paint, duplicating fluids, and other flammable liquids only in approved containers. Store them in safe, ventilated places, away from paper, oily rags, and other combustible materials.
4. Check electrical wiring switches regularly. Check gas lines. Repair faulty equipment immediately.
5. Maintain fire extinguishers in working order.
6. Make sure all fire exits can open outward and have working release latches.
7. Make sure all faculty and staff know where to find and how to use fire alarm.
8. HOLD MONTHLY FIRE DRILLS AT UNEXPECTED TIMES
- 9.

III. BOMB THREATS

A. The threatening call.

When someone calls saying there is a bomb on school property, try to learn the following:

1. When is the bomb to go off?
2. What is the explosive?
3. What does the bomb look like?
4. Where in the building is it?
5. Why was it set?

B. Immediately after the call:

1. Notify the principal.
2. The principal shall determine whether to activate the alarm to evacuate the building.
3. Call the police. Phone no.
4. Call the Superintendent of Schools. Phone no.
5. Call the Maintenance Department. Phone no.
6. Wait for the police to begin searches.
7. **DO NOT TOUCH ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS** inside or outside the building.
8. Teachers should make a quick visual check of their classrooms and the halls while students file out so that the police can be told of anything unusual.
The police (and head custodian or his/her assistant if requested by police) will search the building. They may search the auditorium and gymnasium first so that students and staff can assemble inside if police and the principal decide that will be the safest and most orderly procedure.
9. Keep the Superintendent of Schools informed of developments during the incident so that inquiries from the press and public can be handled.

C. After the incident:

1. Make a full report to the police.
2. Make a full report to the Superintendent of Schools.
3. Use the attached form to help you remember details.
4. Resume normal activities as quickly as possible.

D. If a bomb is found on school property:

1. Allow no one to touch it.
2. Clear the immediate area and seal it off if possible.
3. Sound the alarm to evacuate the building.
4. Call the police.
5. Call the Superintendent of Schools.
6. Call the Maintenance Department.
7. If the bomb explodes and the school must be closed, contact the Superintendent of Schools and follow the Emergency Closing of Schools Policy, Policy A-10.1.

IV. PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

When a declared public health emergency exists, the School Board grants the Superintendent board authority to develop, implement, and maintain administrative regulations and procedures necessary to protect employees and students from the conditions giving rise to the declared emergency.

In the development and implementation of necessary administrative regulations and Procedures for safety reopening of schools or maintaining the safety of employees and Students when schools are open during a health emergency, the Superintendent and staff Shall review the practices, guidelines, and suggestions of the Louisianan Depaltnent of Education, the Department of Health & Hospitals, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other applicable entities.

Legal Reference: La. R,S. 17:81