

Federation Voice

MONROE FEDERATION OF TEACHERS
& SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

LFT/AFT/AFL-CIO

JANUARY 2010

President's Message...



Blessings To a:

- *New Year
- *New Decade
- *New Board President
- *New Vice President
- *New Superintendent (eventually)



Steve Monaghan, LFT President
Sandie Lollie, MFT/SE President

Your Federation Family and I would like to wish All Employees and their Families the Blessings of New Beginnings. Now is not the time to dwell on the past, but to welcome in the New Year. Congratulations to the new Board President, Mickey Traweek, and the new Vice-President, Rodney McFarland. They were elected at last Thursday's (January 7, 2010) school board meeting.

We are living in a time where finances are difficult and times are hard, however Your Federation is very much committed to working just as hard to bring about a positive change to the district. Interim Superintendent Julian Gray is also committed to doing what is right by all employees. He is trying to find the answer to what happened to the \$2500 MFP money that should have been awarded to all certified employees, and he is trying to find the resources to give all employees, especially support workers, a much needed and deserved pay raise. No definite amount has been established nor a date given. Just Believe.

Again, I would like to THANK YOU for all that you do in spite of sometimes very difficult circumstances. The children are the reason for our season.

My Prayers and My Love are with you.

Sandie

**CRUISE!
ALL ABOARD
MEETING**



**Dr. Martin Luther
King Day
Monday,
January 18, 2010**

**Saturday
January 23, 2010
11 AM
Mark Your Calendars**



The Monroe Federation was recognized with two awards at the LFT convention in Jefferson Parish during the Thanksgiving Holidays.

Is R2T a Game Changer

“Race to the Top” is the federal grant available to states, worth over 4 billion dollars, referred to as R2T.

The federal regulations are vague on details but very clear on certain points. The states must write their grant proposals to mirror the federal guidelines outlined in the application. That leaves some room for interpretation from the states which would bolster the competitiveness of the grant applications.

Some federal guidelines and state interpretations that you need to be aware of are:

- * 50% of teacher evaluations will be based on student test scores (known as value-added compensation).
- * Low performing schools (75 performance score or less) must become high performing schools using one of 4 models – including bringing in charters/a management group, or removing the principal and at least half of the teachers at the school.

The timeline is short. Local districts had to submit to State Superintendent Paul Pastorek their intent to participate by December 18, 2009 in order to be eligible to move to the next step of the process. By Jan. 11, 2010 districts must sign a Partnership Agreement with Supt. Pastorek and the LaDOE indicating they are willing to follow the state guidelines as submitted to the federal grant project. The first round of recipients will be announced in the spring with implementation of the program for the 2010-11 school year.

For our members, the most important aspect of R2T will be changes in the way teachers are “recruited, evaluated, compensated retained and released.” Federal regulations say that student achievement must be a “significant” factor in the evaluation of teachers and leaders. These evaluations must then be used to “inform” pay, promotion, professional development, and retention of teachers and leaders. The LDOE interprets this as requiring 50% of these evaluations to be based on academic achievement (**using a growth or value added model based on standardized tests**). LFT continues to be involved in discussions about this on the state level.

State guidelines say the other 50% of this new evaluation program is to be developed by locals in collaboration with stakeholders, including the teacher unions. It specifically mentions principal evaluations, peer evaluations, self assessments and external observations as possible components. One important LFT contribution is the inclusion in evaluations of a **“learning environment index that identifies obstacles/impediments to achievement and either directly or indirectly triggers corrective action at the appropriate level.”**

The learning environment index is an official priority of the LFT. This learning environment index includes language suggested by LFT. It means that conditions which may not be under the teacher’s control must be included in the evaluation – **issues ranging from the physical condition of the school to discipline issues, to adequate resources such as textbooks and educational materials.**

This shows the direction the federal and state Departments of Education want to take public educationthe removal, or at least dilution, of teacher tenure and the implementation of performance based pay.

So, you – as a professional educator – need to be aware of the changes being proposed. Your state organization, the LFT, is having conversations at the state level and is very involved in the process. You need to be involved in the process at the local level. Be aware of any conversations discussing Race to the Top, tenure, and/or value-added compensation and let the Federation know what is being discussed.

Be assured that The Federation, your professional organization, is gathering information and providing input in these decisions being made because this could definitely be a **GAME CHANGER** for public education and its teachers.



All Aboard With The Federation!



Payroll Deduction Authorization

I hereby authorize the Monroe City School Board to deduct in equal installments, from each of my paychecks, current dues for the local chapter of the Louisiana Federation of Teachers. I understand that dues are set by the constitution and by-laws of the Monroe Federation of Teachers/School Employees (Local 4326).

This authorization shall remain in effect until revoked by me through proper written notice to the Monroe School Board Human Resources and the MFT/SE Local 4326. Dues: Teachers \$36.70 School Employees \$17.00

Name _____	School or Worksite _____
Address _____	Position: <u>Teacher</u> or <u>School Employee</u> (Circle One and List Title) _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	Signature _____
Home Phone (318) _____ E-Mail _____	Social Security # _____ Date _____

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