



# THE BULLETIN BOARD

NEWSLETTER OF CITIZENS FOR EDUCATIONAL CHOICE

Volume 47, No. 2  
March 2014

Danny Loar, Executive Director  
Rob Tasman, Associate Director • Barbara Bovard, Editor

## 2014 LEGISLATIVE SESSION HERE WE GO AGAIN!

The 2014 Louisiana Legislature will get into swing on March 10. In this biannual 12-week regular session there is no limit on the number of bills legislators may file, and more than 2,000 are expected.

CEC staff is reviewing the bills and will track those that impact or potentially impact nonpublic schools.

The Jindal Administration has released its proposed executive budget for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. CEC will seek an increase in *Required Services* funding—which has been frozen for the past five years—when the bill is heard in the House. We'll send an alert via *voterVOICE* when advocacy is needed.

Live broadcasts of legislative proceedings and up-to-date bill tracking are on the internet at the legislature's website <http://www.legis.la.gov>.

## FEDERAL TITLE I PROGRAM MONIES .....REQUIRE FAIR SHARE

It has been brought to our attention that a number of nonpublic schools are not receiving their fair share of federal *Title I* monies from certain local education authorities (LEAs), i.e., local public school systems. At CEC's request, Assistant Superintendent Beth Scioneaux of the Louisiana Department of Education will conduct a joint meeting of nonpublic school leaders with LEA *Title I* administrators to air complaints and address the federal requirement that nonpublic school administrators must be consulted before making arbitrary decisions regarding the allocation of these funds.

## PRIVATE SCHOOLS SAVE TAXPAYERS MONEY .....A LOT OF MONEY!

Each and every year, nonpublic schools provide significant savings to Louisiana taxpayers. The per student cost in public schools is \$8,500 which includes state MFP monies and local education taxes. Multiplied by roughly 120,000 private and parochial school students, the savings to taxpayers is more than \$1 Billion annually, or shown differently, \$1,020,000,000!

## SUBSCRIBE TODAY TO VOTERVOICE!

A quick and easy way to influence your state legislators is through CEC's advocacy alert system *voterVOICE*. It's easy to sign up and use, and you may unsubscribe at any time.

Visit our website at [www.louisianacec.org](http://www.louisianacec.org), click the link to *voterVOICE* and follow the instructions. Periodically, you will receive an email alert urging you to contact your representative or senator on a critical issue we are advocating. *Sign up today!*



## INEQUITIES PENDING IN AWARDING ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY 8(G) GRANTS

Since its inception in 1986, the *Louisiana Quality Education Support Fund*, commonly referred to as 8(g), has helped advance educational programs in both public and nonpublic schools throughout the state. The fund resulted from a constitutional amendment approved by voters dedicating Louisiana's federally-awarded *Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act* proceeds to education.

Grants from the interest on this fund are awarded through a regulatory process of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) which provides for the orderly review, award and administration of grants. Eligible public and nonpublic schools may apply for grant funds.

### Block Grant

### Competitive Grant

In recent years BESE has chosen to put 100% of 8(g) monies into the *Block Grant* program which then are distributed equitably on a per pupil basis. In 2014, however, BESE is moving to a 50-50 split of the monies (50% *Block Grant*, 50% *Competitive Grant*).

The problem with this move is a 1995 judicial decree in the Parker Consent Judgment that declared "pervasively sectarian" schools cannot receive *Competitive Grant* monies. In effect, this means that private schools will see their 8(g) grant monies cut in half. The reasoning in the Parker judgment, however, was overruled by the 1997 *Agostini* and 2000 *Helms* U.S. Supreme Court decisions, which stated private schools can indeed receive these types of state grants because they are being used for secular purposes.

CEC has lobbied BESE extensively on this matter, encouraging the board to take the matter to court to vacate the Parker judgment. At its January meeting, BESE directed their executive director, Heather Cope, to contact the plaintiffs in the 1995 case (the Louisiana School Boards Association and the Louisiana Association of Educators) to find whether they would oppose BESE's potential legal challenge to have the consent judgment vacated. The next edition of *The Bulletin Board* will have an update.

## LHSAA RETAINS SPLIT FOOTBALL PLAYOFFS

In a vote heard 'round the state, the LHSAA membership in January voted to retain the split football playoff system among schools designated *Select* and *Non-select*. Some nonpublic school administrators are considering possible alternative options. Although the Louisiana Supreme Court ruled last year that LHSAA is a private corporation and not subject to action by the Louisiana Legislature, we expect legislation to be filed despite the ruling.



## FY 2013-14 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Enclosed with this newsletter is the current 2013-14 *CEC Membership Roster*. If your school or parent club has not joined this year we encourage you to do so. We appeal for two memberships, e.g., one each in the name of the school and parent organization. The membership year runs concurrently with the school year (July 1 to June 30), not the calendar year. *Thank you for your support!*