

From: [Patricia Levesque \(patricia@excelined.org\) <patricia@excelined.org>](mailto:patricia@excelined.org)

To: [Barresi, Janet <jcb@sde.ok.gov>](mailto:jcb@sde.ok.gov)
[Barresi, Janet Asst Becky Woodie <becky.woodie@sde.ok.gov>](mailto:becky.woodie@sde.ok.gov)
[Barresi, Janet Comm Dir Damon Gardenhire <damon.gardenhire@sde.ok.gov>](mailto:damon.gardenhire@sde.ok.gov)
[Barresi, Janet COS Jennifer Carter <jennifer.carter@sde.ok.gov>](mailto:jennifer.carter@sde.ok.gov)
[Bennett, Tony <tb@doe.in.gov>](mailto:tb@doe.in.gov)
[Bennett, Tony Asst Debbie Downing <d Downing@doe.in.gov>](mailto:d Downing@doe.in.gov)
[Bennett, Tony Asst Jennifer Outlaw <joutlaw@doe.in.gov>](mailto:joutlaw@doe.in.gov)
[Bennett, Tony COS Heather Neal <hneal@doe.in.gov>](mailto:hneal@doe.in.gov)
[Bowen, Stephen <stephen.bowen@maine.gov>](mailto:stephen.bowen@maine.gov)
[Bowen, Stephen <stephenbowen@myfairpoint.net>](mailto:stephenbowen@myfairpoint.net)
[Bowen, Stephen Schedule Sandra Moreau <sandra.moreau@maine.gov>](mailto:sandra.moreau@maine.gov)
[Cerf, Chris <cdcerf@gmail.com>](mailto:cdcerf@gmail.com)
[Cerf, Chris Asst Helene Leona <helene.leona@doe.state.nj.us>](mailto:helene.leona@doe.state.nj.us)
[Cerf, Chris DepComm Sp Asst Mamie Doyle <mamie.doyle@doe.state.nj.us>](mailto:mamie.doyle@doe.state.nj.us)
[Cerf, Chris Special Asst Andrew Smarick <andrew.smarick@doe.state.nj.us>](mailto:andrew.smarick@doe.state.nj.us)
[Gist, Deborah <Deborah.Gist@ride.ri.gov>](mailto:Deborah.Gist@ride.ri.gov)
[Huffman, Kevin <Kevin.S.Huffman@tn.gov>](mailto:Kevin.S.Huffman@tn.gov)
[Huffman, Kevin COS Emily Barton <emily.barton@tn.gov>](mailto:emily.barton@tn.gov)
[Pastorek, Paul <pastorekpg@gmail.com>](mailto:pastorekpg@gmail.com)
[Pastorek, Paul Asst Christina Rose <christina.rose@eads-na.com>](mailto:christina.rose@eads-na.com)
[Robinson, Gerard <gtr924@aol.com>](mailto:gtr924@aol.com)
[Robinson, Gerard Scheduler Nyla Benjamin <nyla.benjamin@fldoe.org>](mailto:nyla.benjamin@fldoe.org)
[Skandera, Hanna <hanna.skandera@state.nm.us>](mailto:hanna.skandera@state.nm.us)
[Skandera, Hanna COS Cathie Carothers <cathie.carothers@state.nm.us>](mailto:cathie.carothers@state.nm.us)
[Skandera, Hanna Policy Leighann Lenti <leighann.lenti@state.nm.us>](mailto:leighann.lenti@state.nm.us)
[Skandera, Hanna Scheduler Bernadette Tennyson <bernadette.tennyson@state.nm.us>](mailto:bernadette.tennyson@state.nm.us)
[Smith, Eric <drericjsmith@gmail.com>](mailto:drericjsmith@gmail.com)

CC: [Christy Hovanetz \(christyh@excelined.org\) <chovanetz2@meridianstrategiesllc.com>](mailto:christyh@excelined.org)
[Deirdre Finn \(dfinn@excelined.org\) <dfinn@excelined.org>](mailto:dfinn@excelined.org)
[Erin Price \(Erin@excelined.org\) <Erin@excelined.org>](mailto:Erin@excelined.org)
[Fonda Anderson \(fonda@excelined.org\) <fonda@excelined.org>](mailto:fonda@excelined.org)
[Jaryn Emhof \(jaryn@excelined.org\) <jaryn@excelined.org>](mailto:jaryn@excelined.org)
[Joanna Hassell \(Joanna@afloridapromise.org\) <Joanna@afloridapromise.org>](mailto:Joanna@afloridapromise.org)
[John Bailey \(john.bailey@dutkoworldwide.com\) <john.bailey@dutkoworldwide.com>](mailto:john.bailey@dutkoworldwide.com)
[Mandy Clark \(mandy@excelined.org\) <mandy@excelined.org>](mailto:mandy@excelined.org)
[Mary Laura Bragg \(MaryLaura@excelined.org\) <MaryLaura@excelined.org>](mailto:MaryLaura@excelined.org)
[Matt Ladner \(ladner55@gmail.com\) <ladner55@gmail.com>](mailto:ladner55@gmail.com)
[Matthew Ladner \(Matthew@Excelined.org\) <Matthew@excelined.org>](mailto:Matthew@Excelined.org)
[Paula Noor \(Pnoor@excelined.org\) <Pnoor@excelined.org>](mailto:Pnoor@excelined.org)

Date: Wed, 10/5/2011 8:47:30 AM

Subject: FW: Louisiana: Races for BESE seats heat up

Chiefs,

An article on Louisiana state board of education races – that will impact selection of next chief in Louisiana. Gov. Jindal wants John White as next state chief. Governor Bush is lending his support/endorsement to the candidates Gov. Jindal is supporting for the State Board of Ed.

Patricia

From: Christy Hovanetz (christyh@excelined.org)

Sent: Wednesday, October 05, 2011 8:19 AM

To: Patricia Levesque (patricia@excelined.org); Deirdre Finn (dfinn@excelined.org); Mandy Clark (mandy@excelined.org); Mary Laura Bragg (MaryLaura@excelined.org); Matthew Ladner (ladner55@gmail.com); Nadia Hagberg (Nadia@excelined.org); Alexis Franz (Alexis@excelined.org); Jaryn Emhof (jaryn@excelined.org)

Subject: Louisiana: Races for BESE seats heat up

Races for BESE seats heat up

Candidates may spend \$250,000

Will Sentell

Advocate capitol news bureau

[0 Comments](#)

Twenty candidates are running for Louisiana's top school board in the Oct. 22 primary election that will help decide the direction of public schools for the next four years.

The prize is an unpaid seat on the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, or BESE. Paid or not, this year's seven races have drawn unusual attention, and candidates plan to spend up to \$250,000 to win one.

Gov. Bobby Jindal has endorsed five of the candidates as part of a bid to put his imprint on public schools. The panel sets policies for an estimated 668,000 public school students statewide.

BESE will also pick a new state superintendent of education in January, one of the key figures in state government.

The board has 11 members, including three named by the governor and eight picked by voters. Any runoffs would be held on Nov. 19.

Walter Lee of Mansfield was re-elected when no one filed against him.

But the seven other races, including two in the Baton Rouge area, feature major splits among the candidates over the direction of public schools.

One is the District 6 slot held by Chas Roemer, who has Jindal's endorsement.

The district includes much of East Baton Rouge and Ascension parishes as well as Livingston, Tangipahoa and Washington parishes.

Roemer, a 41-year-old businessman, said he wants a second term on BESE because there is major work still to be done, noting that about one in three public school students perform below grade level.

"I think we are either going to have to decide to push forward and be more aggressive for change or we are going to turn back the clock," he said.

Donald Songy, 60, former superintendent for the Ascension Parish public school system, said Roemer needs to be replaced.

"I don't think that he supports public schools to the extent that he needs to or the extent that I would," said Songy, who is associate executive director of the Louisiana Association of School Superintendents.

And typical of this year's divisions, Songy and Roemer are backed by groups with radically different agendas.

Songy was endorsed by the Coalition for Louisiana Public Education, which includes teacher unions, school board members, superintendents and others.

Roemer is backed by Jindal and a self-styled reform group called the Alliance for Better Classrooms, or ABC, which includes Baton Rouge contractor Lane Grigsby and other business leaders. The group plans to spend more than \$1 million on the BESE races.

Also running in the District 6 race is Elizabeth "Beth" Meyers of Denham Springs, a 48-year-old retired educator.

Meyers said she wants a seat on the state school board because some of the current policies designed to improve schools "are not giving us a return on investment."

She noted that, despite major spending on tests, public school students rank near the bottom nationally in academic achievement.

Jindal favors John White, 35, who is now superintendent of the Recovery School District, to become the next state superintendent of education.

Roemer, a Republican, said he would back White “unless I’m given a better candidate.”

Meyers, also a Republican, said she would not back White, who is former deputy chancellor of the New York City school system.

“If you look at his record in New York City it hasn’t been a positive one,” she said.

Songy said he would like to see other candidates reviewed for the job and that he has “a lot of reservations” about White.

Songy said he plans to spend \$10,000 to \$20,000 on the race.

Meyers said she plans to spend up to \$10,000.

Roemer said he has no idea what his campaign budget will be.

Meanwhile, four candidates hope to succeed Linda Johnson of Plaquemine, who holds the District 8 seat and is not seeking re-election.

They are Democrat Domoine Rutledge of Baton Rouge, Democrat Russell Armstrong of Baton Rouge, Democrat Carolyn Hill of Baton Rouge and Jim Guillory of Plaquemine, who has no party affiliation.

The district, which is in south central Louisiana, includes parts of East Baton Rouge and Ascension parishes as well as West Baton Rouge, West Feliciana, East Feliciana, St. Helena and Avoyelles parishes.

Rutledge, 42, is general counsel for the East Baton Rouge Parish school system and has been endorsed by the Louisiana School Boards Association.

Rutledge said public schools have been his “life work” for the past nine years and that his two children attend public schools.

Armstrong, 27, is a district support coordinator in the state Department of Education.

“In Louisiana we have the chance to have the best public schools in the nation and we just need to push ahead to get the resources to do that,” said Armstrong.

Guillory, 68, is a retired businessman said his eight years on the Avoyelles Parish school board prepared him for service on BESE.

Guillory said he is especially concerned that state budget problems have caused problems for local school districts.

“Many don’t have the financial base to deal with that,” he said.

Hill, a 29-year-old certified social worker, said she wants to make sure students have the proper education conditions to succeed. Hill said she plans to spend up to \$80,000 on the race.

Guillory said he plans to spend about \$15,000 on his bid.

Rutledge said he does not know how much he will spend.

Armstrong declined comment on his financing plans.

None of the candidates would commit to White for state superintendent of education.

P.O. Box 10691
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Phone: 850-212-0243

Email: ChristyH@ExcelinEd.org

Website: <http://www.ExcelinEd.org/>