STATE-APPROVED HOME-ECONOMICS DEPARTMENTS

(Session 1933-1934)

(Name of post office same as school unless otherwise indicated)

Schools marked thus (*) have home-economics cottages.

Acadia—
*Church Point ................................................. Lula Belle Weiland
Crowley ......................................................... Mrs. J. M. M. Baker
*Estherwood .................................................... Ethel Bertheaud
Iota ............................................................... Agnes Allen
*Morse ............................................................. Hilda Harmon
*Rayne ............................................................ Mrs. F. F. Richard

Allen—
*Elizabeth ....................................................... Emma Bruchhaus
*Fairview (Grant, La.) ......................................... Gladys Hanchey
Kinder ............................................................. Lessee Edmonds
Oakdale ........................................................... Chelsea Gates
*Oberlin ........................................................... Ada Wyatt
*Reeves ........................................................... Bonnie Barron

Ascension—
Donaldsonville ................................................... Olivia Rhodes
*Dutchtown ...................................................... Gwendolyn Thomas
Gonzales ......................................................... Noelle Babin
*Oak Grove (Hope Villa, La.) ................................. Elva Allen
St. Amant ........................................................ Louise Johnson

Avoyelles—
*Bunkie .......................................................... Natalie Morris
Marksville ......................................................... Louise Lockwood

Beauregard—
De Ridder ........................................................ Eloise Sanders
Hyatt (Fields, La.) .............................................. Wilma Taylor
*Longville ....................................................... Virginia Coates
*Merryville ...................................................... Lora Kessler
Singer .............................................................. Dorothy Berry

Bienville—
Arcadia .......................................................... Alys Bond
Bienville ........................................................ Mrs. Era Caldwell
Castor ............................................................ Thelma Walker
Gibsland ........................................................ Nita White
*Ringgold ....................................................... Marguerite Harrison
Saline ............................................................. Jewell Woodard
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De Soto—
*Grand Cane ............................................ Cora Westbrook
*Logansport ............................................... Clarice Harris
*Longstreet ................................................ Leah Evans
*Mansfield ................................................ Mrs. Zelma M. Thornton
Oak Grove (Logansport, La.) ......................... Shirley Wren
*Pelican .................................................... Mary Leigh Marshall
*Stonewall .................................................. Lora Lowrey

East Baton Rouge—
*Baker ................................................................ Mrs. C. L. Guice
Baton Rouge ................................................. Mrs. Ruth M. Kean
Central (Baton Rouge, La., R. 4) .................. Kittie Lee Taylor
Istrouma (Baton Rouge, La., R. 1) ................. Mrs. H. P. Overton
Pride ................................................................ Kate Tinsley
*Seventh Ward (Baton Rouge, R. 2) .............. Erith Green
*Zachary ....................................................... Mrs. Berniece C. Row

East Carroll—
East Carroll (Lake Providence, La.) ............... Bess Talbert

Evangeline—
Basile .......................................................... Sophie Muller
Chataignier ................................................. Sophie Bernard
Mamou ........................................................ Ethel Gaty
Pine Prairie ................................................ Mrs. S. Guillory
Vidrine ........................................................ Saddie Magee
Ville Platte ................................................... Elia Fontenot

Franklin—
Baskin ................................................................ Dessie D. Ponder
Central (Delhi, La., R. No. 1) ....................... Arlene Holloway
*Crowville .................................................... Estelle Reagan
*Gilbert ........................................................ Leola Greer
Ogden (Winnsboro, La., R. No. 2) ............... Aline Hogan
*Winnsboro .................................................. Virginia Hower
Wisner ........................................................ Lula Lee Smith

Grant—
*Colfax ....................................................... Bettie Murrell
Dry Prong .................................................... Sada Carey
Montgomery ................................................ Mrs. Herbert Mixon
Pollock ........................................................ Mrs. Dewey Dunn
*Selma ........................................................ Audrey Hendrix
Verda ........................................................ Mrs. Leola Williams

Iberia—
Loreauville .................................................... Marcelite Segura
*New Iberia ................................................... Marian Murphy

Iberville—
Plaquemine ..................................................... Helen Holloway
*Shady Grove (Rosedale, La.) ...................... Frances Ann Cerame
White Castle ................................................ Mrs. Joe Gautreaux
Jackson—
Chatham ........................................... Floy Smelley
Eros ................................................. Lucille Spinks
Jonesboro .......................................... Iva Mae Dowling

Jefferson—
Gretna ............................................... Aline Grace
Westwego ........................................... Virginia M. Cooper
                                    Maida Fulgham

Jefferson Davis—
Roanoke ............................................. Mary Stephens

Lafayette—
*Carencro ......................................... Estelle Melancon
   Judice (Duson, La., R. No. 2) .............. Lula Belle May
   Lafayette ....................................... Marie Louise Comeaux
                                    Gussie Broussard
   Scott .......................................... Hazel Alpha
   *Youngsville ................................... Genoa Thompson

La Salle—
Jena .................................................. Bert Hearn
   *Olla-Standard (Oilla, La.) .................. Floy Thigpen
   *Trout-Goodpine (Trout, La.) ............... Eunice Gray
   *Urania ......................................... Eva Ray Mackey

Lincoln—
Choudrant ......................................... Yvonne Sanderson
   Dubach .......................................... Maurine Hedgepeth
   Hico ............................................. Lois Alexander
   La. Tech. (Ruston, La.) ....................... Bessie Joyce
   Ruston .......................................... Edith Whittington
                                    Ethel Lambert
   Simsboro ....................................... Esther Calahan

Livingston—
Denham Springs ................................. Mrs. J. S. Jackson
   *Live Oak (Watson, La.) ..................... Mrs. G. L. Sellers
   Maurepas ....................................... Mrs. J. B. Hutchinson
   Springfield ..................................... Hettie Easterly
   Walker (Denham Springs, La.) ............. Nancy Summers

Madison—
Tallulah ........................................... Mrs. George M. Fuller

Morehouse—
Bastrop ............................................ Norma Stewart

Natchitoches—
*Ajax (Marthaville, La.) ....................... Ruby Thigpen
*Ashland .......................................... Mary Kathleen Gannon
*Campti ........................................... Mrs. Mary E. Cloutier
   Cloutierville ................................. Emma G. Richter
   Cypress ........................................ Evelyn Williams
   *Flora .......................................... Lucy Aaron
   Goldonna ....................................... Ethel Durham
   *Kisatchie ..................................... Clarice McFarland
Natchitoches—(Continued)
Marthaville..........................Mrs. Marguerite K. Robson
Natchitoches........................Mrs. Ruby S. Dunckelman
Provençal............................Sadie Sibley
*Readhimer (Chestnut, La.)........Mrs. George W. Brown
Robeline.............................Pauline Johnson

Orleans—
John McDonogh (New Orleans, La.)...Ethel Freidrichs
Eleanor McMain (New Orleans, La.)..Jeanne Roy
Martin Behrman (Algiers, La.).......Virginia Ross
Sophie B. Wright (New Orleans, La.)Sophie Cooley

Ouachita—
Calhoun..............................Rupert Perry
Neville (Monroe, La.)................Sara Bres
Ouachita Parish (Monroe, La.).....Mary Louise Klingner

Pointe Coupee—
Innis.................................Shirley Genius
Poydras (New Roads, La.)..........Dorothy Morgan

Rapides—
Bolton (Alexandria, La.)............Lillian Talbot
Boyce..................................Ruth Harrell
Cheneyville.........................Bess Fitzgerald
Forest Hill..........................Florence Rush
Glenmora............................Cleo Brasher
Lecompte.............................Florence Alleman
*Poland (Alexandria, La., R. No. 2)Elizabeth Dalton
*Tioga.................................Lola Tucker

Red River—
Coushatta............................Eleanor Maxwell
East Point...........Audrey Bess Hoffpauir
Grand Bayou.....................Dorothy Readhimer
Hall Summit......................Reba Horton

Richland—
Delhi..................................Nina Gill
Mangham.............................Mrs. Annie W. Childress
Rayville.......................Mrs. W. D. Cotton
Start...............................Bertha Osborn

Sabine—
Alliance (Many, La., R. 4).........Lee McCartney
Florien..............................Nell Addison
*Many.................................Joe Anna Williams
Mt. Carmel (Florien, La.).........Mrs. Ernie M. Robinette
Negreet (Many, La., R. 5)...Clothilde Tuten
*Zwolle..............................Mabel Pearson
St. Charles—
Destrehan .................................................. Catherine Raiche
Hahnville .................................................... Gladys Legendre

St. James—
Lutcher ....................................................... Noellie LeBlanc
Romeville ..................................................... Doris Smith
St. James ....................................................... Lucy Richardson

St. Landry—
*Eunice ......................................................... Marion Irving
*Grand Prairie (Washington, La.) .................... Alma Martin
Melville ......................................................... Maydell Boudreaux
*Opelousas .................................................... Gertrude Sandoz
Port Barre ...................................................... Mrs. J. H. Graves
*Sunset ........................................................ Margaret Dabadie

St. Martin—
Breaux Bridge ............................................... Genevieve Dessens
Cecilia (Breaux Bridge, La., R. 1) ..................... Cecile Angelle
*St. Martinville ............................................... Mrs. Allen Ducrest

St. Mary—
*Centreville ................................................... Mrs. B. B. Kramer
Franklin ......................................................... Nancy Tannehill
Morgan City ................................................... Margaret Fenet
Patterson ......................................................... Mamie Davis

St. Tammany—
E. E. Lyon (Covington, La.) ............................. { Johnie Bowles
| Mrs. Robert Dutsch, Jr.
Slidell .......................................................... Alice Kemper

Tangipahoa—
Amite ............................................................ Clara Morgan
Chesbrough .................................................... Mrs. D. H. Gill
Hammond ......................................................... Hollie White
Independence ................................................ Mrs. J. W. Brannon
Kentwood ......................................................... Myra Cheatwood
Loranger ........................................................ Frances Lee Sanders
Ponchatoula .................................................... Lillian Kemp
Spring Creek ................................................... Hilda Lanier

Tensas—
Jos. M. Davidson (St. Joseph, La.) ..................... Mary E. Sanders
Newellton ....................................................... Mattie E. Anderson
Waterproof ..................................................... Kathryn Gregg

Union—
Bernice .......................................................... Mrs. Guy McDonald
Downsville .................................................... Sue Henry
Farmerville ..................................................... { Coralie Saunders
| Dorothy Terral
*Linville ........................................................ Wilma Tucker
*Marion .......................................................... Marie Tugwell
Spearsville (Lillie, La.) ..................................... Marietta Nelson
Vermilion—
*Abbeville .............................................. Annie Mae Dubus
Erath ......................................................... Mrs. Laura H. Gordy
*Gueydan ...................................................... Luceil Chambers
Indian Bayou ............................................. Lucille Toler
Kaplan ......................................................... Mrs. Mattie P. Cantey

Vernon—
*Evans ......................................................... Mrs. S. A. Hicks
Hornbeck ...................................................... Emily Johnston
Leesville ...................................................... Pearl Peace
Orange (Anacoco, La.) ................................... Lucille Sexton
*Pickering .................................................... Mrs. Jewel D. Brown
Pitkin ......................................................... Irene Delony
Rosepine ...................................................... Mrs. Adeline Heard
Simpson ....................................................... Charlsie Sills

Washington—
Angie ........................................................ Elizabeth Stewart
Bogalusa ..................................................... Adlee Reeves
Harriet Holden
Enon (Franklinton, La.) .............................. Mrs. Elaine S. Hart
Franklinton ................................................ Mrs. Alma W. Magee
*Mt. Hermon ................................................ Martha Bickham
*Pine (Franklinton, La.) .............................. Mrs. Edna Wilkes
*Varnado ..................................................... Brownie Stringfield

Webster—
Cotton Valley .............................................. Mrs. R. K. Self
Doyline ....................................................... Margaret Taylor
*Evergreen (Grove, La.) .............................. Muriel Morgan
Heflin ......................................................... Irene Moncrief
*Minden ...................................................... Helen Pyburn
*Sarepta ...................................................... Mary Simms
Shongaloo .................................................... Rena Wadley
Sibley ......................................................... Clovice Fomby
Springhill ...................................................... Louise Martin

West Baton Rouge—
*Brusly ........................................................ Pearl Eastin

West Carroll—
*Forest ....................................................... Audrey Sutton
Oak Grove .................................................. Bertie Sessums
*Pioneer ..................................................... Melba Robison

West Feliciana—
*Julius Freyhan (St. Francisville, La.) ... Dorothy McClendon

Winn—
Atlanta ..................................................... Annie Cruse
Calvin ......................................................... Gladys Vernon
*Dodson ....................................................... Mrs. J. P. Peters
Gaar's Mill (Dodson, La., R. No. 1) .......... Victoria Sudbury
Sikes ......................................................... Thalia Hearon
Winnfield .................................................... Maude Hopper
SENIOR HOME-ECONOMICS DEPARTMENTS REQUESTING APPROVAL

Sabine—
Ebarb (Noble, La., R. No. 1) .......... Lucille Klotz
Pisgah (Toro, La.) ................. Nettie M. Thigpen
Pleasant Hill ....................... Annie Lites

West Carroll—
Epps .................................. Mrs. Mildred T. Gowan

STATE-APPROVED JUNIOR HOME-ECONOMICS DEPARTMENTS

East Baton Rouge—
Baton Rouge ................................ Mrs. N. J. Swart
                              ................................ Helen Guilbeau
                              ................................ Iris Council
                              ................................ Mrs. Emily F. Wall

Grant—
Georgetown ............................. Lucy Williamson
Rochelle .................................. Nana James

Natchitoches—
Gorum .................................. Eula Lea Newman

St. Mary—
Berwick ................................ Lurline Wilson

Tangipahoa—
Roseland ................................ Mary Vernon
STATE-APPROVED ELEMENTARY HOME-ECONOMICS DEPARTMENTS

Calcasieu—
   Central (Lake Charles, La.)................Bency Eaves

Orleans—
   New Orleans, La.
      Wilson
      Merrick
      McDonogh No. 7
      Beauregard

      Capdau
      Danneel
      Jefferson
      Kruttschnitt
      La Salle
      McDonogh No. 23

      Frantz
      Gayarre
      Washington

      Gayarre
      McDonogh No. 28
      Rogers
      Crossman
      McDonogh No. 15
      McDonogh No. 16
      McDonogh No. 18

      McDonogh No. 1
      McDonogh No. 19
      Palmer
      Pontchartrain
      Semmes

      Davis
      Flower
      McDonogh No. 14

      Flower
      Lafayette
      Irmadale
      Merrick
      McDonogh No. 1
      McDonogh No. 11
      McDonogh No. 15
      Semmes

      Lakeview
      Lee
      Lusher
      Colton
      Davey

      Beulah Barrosse
      Almetta Burdeneve
      Julia Dauenhauer
      Mrs. E. J. de Verges
      Imelda Ernst
      Ollie Hallaron
      Rosalind Hartel
      Laetitia Jackson
      Dolores Kron
      Mrs. Anna McDonald
      Lotta Murphy
      Novalyn Noggerath
Frantz
McDonogh No. 9
McDonogh No. 31
Washington

Howard No. 1
Live Oak

Behrman
Benjamin
Meyer

Allen
Audubon
Dibert
McDonogh No. 10

Gentilly
Gentilly Terrace
Jackson
McDonogh No. 11
Rogers

Beauregard
Rogers

Marie Louise Saliskury
Daisy Sicard
Ruth Thalheim
Madeline Vienne
Lucille Walsh
Virginia Ross
5. The MFP does little to encourage greater local support of public schools. Since the major components of the MFP are state minimum salaries for teachers and other positions, and the number of positions for which the state will pay minimum salaries is based primarily on pupil-teacher ratios, there is constant pressure on state government to raise salaries and lower the ratios.

6. Louisiana’s MFP ignores two fundamental considerations in financing public education—designated programs that constitute a basic education and the actual cost of providing them. Instead, the cost of funding the MFP is a conglomeration of formulas for positions, not programs. There is no analysis of necessary costs to provide a basic education, nor a cost control system to monitor and audit spending to assure that education dollars follow the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The state should initiate a study to determine what programs and factors should be included in a basic education program, and what the cost of such a program should be. To assure that dollars follow the instructional program and the child, the State Department of Education should develop a cost control system capable of monitoring and evaluating how local systems spend their school dollars.

The MFP should be revamped to change the emphasis from positions to students, its various components should be simplified by consolidation, and local systems should be given more flexibility in spending state dollars to allow leeway for diversity and stimulation of students.

To aid in developing necessary information for making good decisions on MFP changes, the state should use the technique of computer simulation. This technique enables masses of data to be handled quickly and efficiently so that proposed changes can be analyzed as to cost and effect on each local system. It also would facilitate tabulation of other necessary data, such as measuring inequities and projecting school enrollments, assessed values and local revenues.

There is not sufficient time to formulate a comprehensive restructuring of the MFP for the upcoming 1982-83 fiscal year, but major changes are possible. It is recommended that there be a two-year phasing in of changes.

Phase I, 1982-83

1. The number of allotted teachers for which the state pays minimum salaries should be determined on a systemwide basis, not school by school.

Local systems receive MFP money in a lump sum—and are not bound to employ teachers at the school for which positions have been allotted. However, allotment by school encourages small schools since more teachers are allotted for them. This prevents consolidation which could offer a wider curriculum and produce savings.

The issue of small schools is of increasing importance in view of declining enrollments which have shrunk the size of many schools.

2. School systems should receive state funds based on the number of positions allotted, whether or not they employ that number.
The requirement that local systems must employ the number of teachers, administrators and supervisors allotted prevents flexibility and curbs the opportunity to develop creative ideas.

The state requirement also limits use of local funds, since most local money must pay for salary increases to personnel whom the state forces the local systems to hire. All but two of the 66 systems (Bienville and Union) supplement the minimum teachers’ salaries paid by the state. According to 1979-80 data compiled by staff of the SDE, 71% of Louisiana’s public education spending is for salaries. Salaries also comprise 94% of the amount spent for the most important function of public education—instruction.

3. The proviso that the position of principal must be allotted for every school should be deleted.

Local school systems can be overburdened with administrative costs which keep rising despite declining enrollments. Small schools are hard to justify, but one way to cut costs would be to assign one principal to more than one small school. The 1982-83 MFP formula approved by BESE includes this change which is now subject to legislative approval.

4. The MFP provision that no parish be allotted fewer administrative positions than were allotted and employed during the 1980-81 year should be deleted.

As enrollments decline in a school system, the freeze on the number of administrative positions increases costs unnecessarily and undermines equitable financing among the local systems.

The MFP formula adopted by BESE for the 1982-83 year includes this change which now requires legislative approval.

5. The state should repeal its requirement that school administrators and supervisors earn tenure in those positions. Certified personnel should retain tenure only as teachers within a local school system. Administrators and supervisors hired in the future should be employed through annual performance contracts.

Local school systems are stymied not only by stringent state controls on how the school dollar must be spent for a stipulated number of positions, but also by state law which grants job protection to top-level persons who may be ineffective, indifferent, incompetent or undesirable for other reasons. As noted in a November 1979 PAR Analysis, “Tenure for School Administrators and Supervisors?”, an enthusiastic superintendent trying to change a lethargic bureaucracy lacks authority to make necessary personnel changes. The school principal is considered the main factor in determining whether a school is good or bad, but those in supervisory or administrative positions who do a poor job are protected by tenure.

6. Statutory limits on the amount of ad valorem taxes school systems may levy with voter approval to operate and maintain their schools should be repealed.

The constitution authorizes up to five mills to be levied by local school boards without voter approval, but all other property taxes must be approved by the electorate. Voter approval is a sufficient restriction; if the people wish to vote more local taxes for their schools, they should be allowed to do so without legal barriers.
7. The state should authorize a study of the "guaranteed tax base or yield" concept as another method that might be combined with the MFP to distribute state equalization funds.

Twenty-two states use the guaranteed tax base or yield concept as an alternative to the MFP in order to equalize public school financing, and 12 states use the guaranteed tax base concept in combination with the MFP.

The guaranteed tax base has the advantage of encouraging more local school support by the state varying the amount of its aid—up to a maximum—according to local tax effort. Louisiana has been cited as one of only six states that require the least local support in its school equalization program.

8. A "School Effectiveness" study being developed by the State Department of Education should be funded.

Research staff of the SDE are seeking to find out why schools of similar size and student characteristics produce students with different achievement levels. The state needs to find out what factors contribute to good schools and students. Sound research could provide needed answers so that ineffective schools might be improved. The 1982-83 recommended budget includes funds for this project.

Phase II, 1983-84

1. The MFP should be revamped to emphasize students, not positions, and its various components should be simplified.

The restructured MFP should be based on the amount of state aid per student, weighted to reflect cost differences among the systems due to (1) density of school population, (2) average minimum teachers' salaries, and (3) grade level.

a. The amount per student should be determined by dividing the number of students into the amount of state aid provided. The number of students should be based on opening fall registration, as is the current policy, so that state aid continues on a current basis. Initially, the amount of state aid should be estimated on the basis of prior trends, with adjustments made during the year. Future costs should be based on predetermined programs and an established cost analysis system. State costs for transportation, teacher retirement, salary increases for school lunch employees and special education should be deducted.

b. The average statewide cost per student should be adjusted.

Weighting factors for differences in size of local systems might be:

- 110% for systems with less than 5,000 students
- 105% for systems with 5,000 to 10,000 students
- 100% for systems with 10,001 to 20,000 students
- 95% for systems with more than 20,000 students

The weighting factor for differences in minimum teachers' salaries would be determined by comparing the average in a system to the state average.

The weighting factors for grade level might be:

- 102% for grades K-6
- 100% for grades 7-8
- 98% for grades 9-12

The following is an example of how the formula might apply, using a
state average cost per student of $1,000.

The weighting factor for size of a school system would be 105 if a system had 9,000 students. The weighting factor for teachers' salaries would be 107 if the system's average minimum teachers' salaries were 7% above the state average. The average of the two weighting factors (105 plus 107 divided by 2) would be 106. The average cost per student of $1,000 would be weighted up to $1,060. This figure would be weighted by grade level: $1,081 for students in grades K-6; $1,060 for grades 7-8 and $1,039 for students in grades 9-12.

c. The number of students multiplied by cost per student would equal total cost of the program.

d. The local support factor would then be deducted. The state should study the feasibility of increasing the amount of local support required to a millage higher than 5.5 mills, or inclusion of a portion of the local sales tax. An increase in the local support factor should not be used to reduce the amount of state dollars, but would provide a greater equalization factor.

e. Special education formulas should be revamped also to place financing on a weighted student cost basis. Financing of Special School District No. 1, which is a separate budget unit and is, in fact, a state agency employing state personnel, should be deleted from the MFP.

2. A formula for school transportation should be developed, for implementation in 1982-83, that sets a maximum cost per student in each local system, based on linear density.

The state's present method of reimbursing local systems for their full transportation costs, based on state minimum salary and mileage reimbursement, has resulted in a system without brakes. There is little incentive for local systems to economize or try to be more efficient. A formula geared to reasonable costs according to mileage routes and density of school population would encourage efficiency. Systems which spent less than state funds provided could pocket the difference.

3. The cost of transporting college and vo-tech students should not be in the MFP formula for funding elementary and secondary education. The colleges and vo-tech schools should have this responsibility, and students should pay for their transportation.

There is little reason for local school boards to be responsible for transporting students of post-secondary and higher education institutions. Better controls and accountability should result if the colleges and vo-tech schools were responsible for transporting their own students.

4. The SDE should concentrate on auditing and monitoring local school systems through development of a cost analysis system. This is the only way the cost of the MFP can be determined with any degree of accuracy and the school programs and costs can be effectively monitored.

CONCLUSION

It is necessary and proper for state government to guarantee equal access to a basic education for all children in the state, regardless of where they go to school. The $1 billion MFP is the state's way of carrying out this re-
sponsibility, and most state spending for elementary-secondary education is controlled by it.

The MFP emphasizes those employed by the schools, not those whom the schools are to serve—the students. This misplaced emphasis puts local school systems in a straitjacket. It freezes the staffing pattern and prevents innovation. A school system, by hiring a different variety of people and using more technology, might do a better job of educating children. Changes in the MFP, such as lowering the pupil-teacher ratios and freezing the number of administrative positions, have resulted in more allotted numbers of positions. Some school systems are having a hard time hiring the allotted number of positions because of a teacher shortage in some areas of the state and in some fields.

If the MFP hypothesis that a minimum basic education is determined by a stipulated number and kind of positions, then systems which fail to employ those numbers—for whatever reason—do not provide a minimum basic education. This would be a logical conclusion based on the present MFP emphasis, but it actually is illogical based on the primary purpose of educating children.

The best way to encourage school efficiency and effectiveness is to leave choices as much as possible to those closest to the schools—local citizens and parents.

Louisiana’s MFP has been changed many times and in many ways since first initiated in 1930—but the basic structure remains the same. Fundamental changes are needed to simplify the formula, place emphasis where it belongs—on the students—and give local systems and the people more opportunity for local decisions. Local systems would, of course, continue to be subject to state education policies mandated by law and BESE, as well as to SDE requirements and accrediting standards. Staff of the SDE should monitor and evaluate local school operations to assure compliance with state policies, rules and regulations.

Public education has been the state’s No. 1 priority in terms of dollars and attention. This is as it should be since no other state or local governmental service has more intrinsic value to the individual, or to government itself. However, in view of declining enrollments, a shortage of tax dollars, cuts in federal funds and increasing demands by other governmental services, the state must find more efficient and effective ways to finance the public schools and educate the children. Changing the way public school dollars are spent by revamping the MFP would be a big step in that direction.