

Louisiana Department of Education

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STATE EDUCATION BOARD NAMES JOHN WHITE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION National, State and Local Leaders Praise Appointment

BATON ROUGE, La.-Today, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) s John White as Louisiana's new State Superintendent of Education. The appointment was r a special called meeting in Baton Rouge. White's term as the state education chief becom immediately.

Governor Bobby Jindal said, "John's done a great job for the Recovery School District and to do a great job as Superintendent of Education. Improving our educational system will re leadership and innovative ideas, such as empowering parents with more choices, rewardin effective teachers, and giving our schools the flexibility to pursue the most effective reform: students in their communities. John is just the type of passionate, competent, and commit we need as Superintendent to build on our record of reform. Our kids only grow up once, a cannot wait for the system to reform itself. I applaud BESE for recognizing John's leaderst entrusting him with the responsibility to prepare our students for success in our schools an workforce."

Jindal's endorsement of White was reiterated by other state and national leaders.

"I want to salute the Louisiana Board of Education for appointing John White as the state's superintendent," U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said. "John is a visionary leade done great things in New York City and New Orleans, and I'm confident he'll do the same f state of Louisiana."

"John White has developed a reputation as a proven leader in reforming education and inc student achievement," said U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu. "He has led successful education efforts in some of the country's most challenging school systems - most recently, as head c Recovery School District. John's knowledge, talents, and commitment to serving the best i

children make him a perfect fit for Louisiana as we seek to advance education in our state.

"Considering the high expectations we've set for our students, Superintendent White is the choice," BESE President Penny Dastugue said. "Specifically, when we look at the strategies he is pursuing - supporting the success of teachers and principals and turning around failing schools - his demonstrated ability to advance similar initiatives in New York City and elsewhere makes him the most qualified. Likewise, as head of the Recovery School District, John has earned a reputation as an honest and straightforward leader, who is genuinely committed to listening, works to resolve contentious issues, keeps his promises, and makes sure we're taking care of our business. His personal qualities are of immeasurable value for our State Superintendent."

White, who began his career as a high school English teacher, is currently the Superintendent of the Louisiana Recovery School District (RSD). Based on student population, the RSD is the fifth largest school district in Louisiana, although the state-run school district provides direct or indirect oversight of 79 of the state's most challenging schools in five parishes; schools are transferred to the RSD if they are failing to meet the state's minimum performance score for four consecutive years.

Prior to becoming head of the RSD in May 2011, White served on the senior leadership team at New York City's Department of Education, the largest school system in the U.S. In his last role at NYC, he served as Deputy Chancellor of Talent, Labor and Innovation, where he was instrumental in the negotiations for the city, as state policymakers and teacher unions debated legislation to boost New York State's bid for Race to the Top (R2T). Additionally, White oversaw implementation of much of New York's R2T plan, including overhauling the city's teacher effectiveness system and launching the Innovation Zone, a network of 100 21st Century schools where personalized learning for students is achieved through new uses of technology. White also served as Deputy Operating Officer, as well as Chief Executive Officer of NYC's Portfolio Division, leading the efforts to turn around more than 100 failing schools and start 500 new schools.

"The growth Louisiana has made over the last several years is unprecedented and represents the greatest potential we have to ensure our next generation succeeds in school and in life," White said. "I'm humbled and honored to serve Louisiana's children, and I thank you for your confidence and support. At the same time, given our charge and what's at stake for our children, I'm eager to work with BESE, the Administration, local communities, and educators across our state so we can focus on improving our schools and the academic success of our students."

State policymakers, education groups, and local officials echoed White's commitment to continue working and pledging to work with the new state education chief.

"Enacting bold education reforms will be a top priority during this next legislative session. I commend BESE for taking swift action to appoint an experienced leader who can hit the ground running," said Rep. Steve Carter, who is expected to be named Chairman of the House Education Committee. "I look forward to partnering with Superintendent White and BESE to enact the reforms that are necessary to ensure our children have a real chance at success."

"We need a leader who can use their expertise in education, who will work well with comm diverse groups, who is committed to Louisiana, and who above all, puts the interest of our first. Based on my experiences with John during his tenure in Louisiana, I feel sure he'll do Senator J. P. Morrell said.

"I wish John White well in his new role with the state," said New Orleans Mayor Mitch Land has committed to maintain a strong focus on improving New Orleans schools and providing resources they need to succeed, and I look forward to working with him in strengthening N stellar reforms."

"I've met with John White. And I sense that he is genuinely committed to working with local provide better educational opportunities for our children and improve academic achieve Mike Faulk, President of the Louisiana Association of School Superintendents. "His appoi BESE today marks an opportunity for Louisiana's education community to begin anew and old disputes. My hope is that other groups will embrace our new State Superintendent, dis preconceived notions they have about John, and give him the benefit of the doubt from the make any other choice, we're only hurting the children we're privileged to serve."

"The Associated Professional Educators of Louisiana (A+PEL) is looking forward to workin White as we strive to serve the needs of Louisiana students," A+PEL Executive Director S Harris said.

"Before coming to Louisiana, John White worked in demanding environments and dealt wit the same challenges we're confronted with in Louisiana," said Eric Lewis, Louisiana State | the Black Alliance for Educational Options. "There are no simple solutions to our problem can do much better. I'm confident John is more than capable of leading Louisiana's public system, largely because he understands the challenges we must address."

By law, BESE appoints the State Superintendent of Education to serve through its term. Bl elected and three appointed members were sworn into office on Monday, January 9, during inauguration ceremony of Governor Bobby Jindal and other newly elected state officials. A thirds (eight members) of the 11-member Board must cast a favorable vote for a candidate the appointment; the Board vote was nine yeas, one nay, and one abstention.

Louisiana's State Superintendent of Education is responsible for recommending and imple public education policy for 70 local school districts, comprised of nearly 1,500 schools, ser approximately 690,000 students. The role also oversees the activities of the Louisiana Dep Education, as the agency's chief administrator.

More About John White

Prior to his tenure in New York City, which began in 2006 at the invitation of former Chanc Klein, White served as Executive Director for Teach For America (TFA) Chicago for three y

White's leadership, TFA-Chicago doubled the number of teachers recruited to work in South West Side schools, and the organization established one of the most innovative principal training programs in the country, matching successful TFA teachers with Harvard University and the Chicago Public School System for training as principals. White also spent two years with TFA in New York coaching and mentoring new recruits. And he served as a lead developer for TFA's national Principal Training Committee.

White received a B.A. in English with distinction from the University of Virginia, and earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from New York University.

To access a full bio on John White, please click [here](#).