



# LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

September 12, 2014

The Honorable David Vitter  
United States Senator  
Hart Senate Office Building  
Suite SH-516  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Vitter:

Thank you for your letter regarding unaccompanied alien children (UAC) who have been relocated with sponsors in Louisiana. You inquired about the impact of their relocation on the state's education system. Below please find the information requested:

*1. For the 2014-2015 school year, what is the average state contribution that will be given to school districts to assist in the cost of educating students?*

The State's funding formula provides \$5,185 per student, on average, in 2014-15. This includes a base per-student amount plus weights (additional funds) associated with meeting students' individual needs.

*2. For the same year, what is the total average cost of educating students in East Baton Rouge, Jefferson, Lafayette, Orleans, and St. Tammany Parishes?*

The State's funding formula estimates total average cost to be \$8,854. The costs estimated for each of the affected districts is as follows:

	State Cost Allocation	Local Cost Allocation	Total
East Baton Rouge	\$4,165	\$4,719	\$8,884
Jefferson	\$4,261	\$4,786	\$9,047
Lafayette	\$3,832	\$4,319	\$8,151
Orleans	\$4,335	\$4,523	\$8,858
St. Tammany	\$5,721	\$3,614	\$9,335

*3. Will each of these students be taken into account when calculating the amount of state funding that will be give to each impacted school district for the 2014-2015 school year?*

Yes. The State's funding formula requires a count on February 1 and October 1 of each year. Funding is adjusted to reflect an increase or a loss of students based on those enrollment counts. If students are enrolled and attending school, the districts in which they are enrolled may count those students for funding purposes.

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*4. Will the state or local education agencies receive additional Federal funding to assist in educating these students?*

While Louisiana receives federal funds to support Limited English Proficient students, the state is not anticipating any increased federal funds for unaccompanied alien children in the 2014-2015 school year. The Department is examining if funds not yet allocated by the state are available within the existing federal Title III, English Language Learner program in order to assist these districts in serving these students.

*5. What is the additional cost in providing English as a second language to these students? Particularly to students who speak neither English nor Spanish?*

The Jefferson Parish School System estimates the total cost associated with educating these students to be \$4.6 million. The district will receive an estimated \$2.2 million toward this cost through the state funding formula based on the October 1 enrollment count adjustment (\$533 students x \$4,261 per student). The other affected districts are calculating their estimated costs and will report them to the state next week.

*6. How will the addition of these students affect class sizes in each of these districts?*

In Jefferson Parish, additional staff will be required to serve the additional students without impacting class size. School systems have the ability to request a waiver of state class size regulations through the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. To date, no such waiver requests have been received.

*7. Will the addition of these students necessitate hiring of an additional faculty member so as not to heavily impact class sizes?*

The Jefferson Parish School System has indicated that in order to serve the additional 533 students, the district will hire 27 new English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, 20 new ESL para-educators, 19 regular education teachers, and 3 special education teachers.

I hope this information is helpful to you and your staff as you seek to address this issue.

Sincerely,



John White  
State Superintendent of Education

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