

JEFFERSON TEACHER/PSRP



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Message from JFT President Kesler Cameese Jones & Staff



One day you were providing services for your students or teaching them, and in the blink of an eye, you were told to stay at home with your families because your very life and theirs depended on it. You became a distant learning educator with little warning.

School buildings are closed, but learning is still taking place thanks to our dedicated teachers and staff! Even during these uncertain times, we know that you are working hard to continue to provide quality instruction and support to your students. I know that you would love to

have 100% participation from them, but we know that is not the reality. Whether 5 or 25 participate, continue to document the services and outreach you are providing. We know that you are still dedicated more than ever to our students!

Even though you may be coping with your own fear, anxiety or even illness, we just want you to know, that no matter how isolated you may feel, JFT is with you! We can't wait to see you again, but in the meantime, we would love to see you in your new "classroom/workspace." Please send a picture of you in your new space to sandra@jft.org.

Thank you for all that you do!

Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL)



TRSL is the state's largest public retirement system, providing services and benefits to more than 160,000 individuals. TRSL is a governmental defined benefit plan qualified under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code as a public trust fund to provide retirement benefits for its members. TRSL is funded by member and employer contributions and earnings from investments and is governed by a seventeen-member board of trustees.

COVID-19 update: TRSL states that benefit payments will not be impacted. Members will continue to receive their monthly benefits and DROP withdrawal payments without interruption. Additional information and resources can be accessed with the following link: https://www.trsl.org/covid_19.

Transfers



The window for employees to apply for a transfer is March 2-May 15. The last day to reach mutual consent and transfer is June 5.

According to the 2024 Infrastructure plan, start times for schools will shift. Please be aware of this when making your school selection. Continue to check the school system's website for updates on school start times.

Stay in Touch



We know that these are difficult times. We are with you. JFT has reached out to over 1800 members, including retirees via text, and is in the process of making individual calls to each member. Please make sure that we have your most recent contact information. We are asking all JFT members to take a moment and email sandra@jft.org with your current mailing address, personal email address, and cell phone number.

Teacher Supply Reimbursement

- Please submit your teacher reimbursement via email to the account clerk and principal by May 8, 11:59 p.m. CST.
- Your email should include the following:
 - Employee ID No.
 - Second semester only or both semesters
 - Grade Level and Subject
 - Place of Purchase/Description of item(s)/Amount
 - Dollar amount requesting for reimbursement (including sales tax)
 - Attach a copy of the receipt to the email (please keep your original receipts)
- At some point, teachers will be returning to campus in some capacity to pack up classrooms and/or "check out" with the principal/administrator. During this "check out" time, at the school, you will produce your original receipts in exchange for your teacher reimbursement check.
- Checks will not be distributed without the original receipts. Original receipts are required. If your receipts are in your classroom; fill out the required information to the best of your ability and email your account clerk and principal prior to May 8th, explaining that your receipts are in your classroom.
- Any items purchased *after* March 14, 2020 should be utilized for your distance learning instruction.

If you have questions about this process, please contact your account clerk and principal. If you still require assistance; JFT members should send an email to all three of these email addresses and a representative will contact you: mona@jft.org, kesler@jft.org, sandra@jft.org.

Closed/Consolidated/Prek-8 Transition Schools

Employees affected by schools that will close, consolidate, or transition to a Prek-8 school for the 2020-2021 school year will be assigned by May 31, 2020.

LFT Action Network



The LFT Action Center is your best source of education information in Louisiana! Signing up is FREE, it is EASY, and it is FAST!

You will receive monthly newsletters and up to date reports about our profession and colleagues in the classroom. Get tips on everything from classroom management to lesson plans, with a healthy dose of amusing and interesting articles about teachers and teaching.

Each week during the legislative session we will update you about all the legislation that has the potential to impact your life in the classroom.

Take action! The LFT Action Center is your direct pipeline to congress, the legislature, state school board and the Governor's office. We will let you know when it is time to send an email, make a call or even show up in person. Our power comes from the collective strength of each member, so make your voice heard with a simple mouse click.

Be among the first to get the news when the Louisiana Federation of Teachers weighs in on important issues. You will get press releases and media alerts at the same time as journalists, as well as, exclusive insights from your elected leadership team.

Get the news that is important to teachers and school employees and make your voice heard.

Join the LFT Action Center today! <http://la.aft.org/join-union/get-updates>.

LFT State Superintendent Survey

BESE has narrowed their search for State Superintendent to SIX finalists. *What do you think?* Please take a few minutes to complete the survey - <http://la.aft.org/bese/choosing-next-state-superintendent>.

Membership Has It's Priviledges!



Membership in JFT also affords you membership in our state union, the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, and our national union, the American Federation of Teachers. As a member, you are eligible for many benefits. Here are just a few:

- AFT is offering information and coronavirus support on their website. You can access information about coronavirus resources/support here: <https://www.aft.org/coronavirus/educators>
- If you are looking for academic resources and ideas during these times, check out AFT's lesson plan and resource platform. Everything is totally free. <https://sharemylesson.com/>
- AFT is offering a new, free benefit—Trauma Coverage—to provide help and healing for our members, whenever needed, wherever a member may be. These services are free and available to all active working members, including those on leave status — learn more here: <https://www.aft.org/benefits/trauma>

Also, as JFT members, you are eligible for discounts, benefits and free counseling through UnionPlus. They offer financial tips/management on credit, bankruptcy, debt management and home foreclosures that may be relevant during this time. <https://www.unionplus.org/>

TEACHER LEADERS PROGRAM



Have you ever seen a news report or talk show discuss issues around teaching and learning and thought to yourself or said to your colleagues, "Why don't they just ask a real educator about the impact of class size on learning?"

The AFT Teacher Leaders Program is a union-sponsored program designed to help prepare YOU to be that person: facilitating discussion of the issues that affect our profession both here in Jefferson Parish and nationally.

The JFT is seeking JFT members (teachers/paras/ed diagnosticians/social workers/etc.) who are interested in collaborating with colleagues across the district and nation on:

- Increasing understanding of the major challenges facing the teaching profession
- Improving leadership skills
- Representing our profession as spokespersons
- Becoming members of an influential and supportive network of educators
- Conducting research on a topic that interests YOU!

This program will take place one Saturday per month from September - April. Modest stipends will be offered. This program is open to any teacher/ed diagnostician/para/social worker/etc. who is a JFT union member.

For additional information about the Teacher Leader Program and/or to request an application, please contact Rosamund Looney at t1p.rosamund.looney@gmail.com.

JFT Teacher Leader Graduates 2019-20

Congratulations to the upcoming graduates of JFT's 2019-2020 Teacher Leaders Program. Despite school closures and the challenges of distance learning and research, our participants persevered! They will present their work via a Zoom Research Showcase in May, and we couldn't be prouder or more impressed with their dedication.

Congratulations to: Abraham Pena, Benjamin Lewis, Bonnetta Franklin, Gregory Rachal, Janelle Montalvo, Kimberly Rutherford and LaTonya Morel.

Spring Gas Card Raffle

The JFT organizers were in the middle of a spring raffle when the Governor declared the stay at home mandate do to COVID-19. JFT is committed to completing this endeavor. If your school was not visited; your organizer will contact you with the details for a virtual school visit.

AFT Webinar

Preventing Summer Learning Loss:
Strategies for Educators, Districts and Parents

Webinar
3:30 pm EDT, May 7



<https://sharemylesson.com/teaching-resource/preventing-summer-learning-loss-strategies-educators-districts-and-parents-322203>