

OPINION

Teacher has questions for Pastorek

Based on state Superintendent Paul Pastorek's letter to the editor on March 12, I have two questions:

1. The superintendent stated that the proposed budget for the state included cuts because of "the reality of our financial circumstances" which is his reason for forcing the school districts to pay the National Board stipend, but later stated that "we must acknowledge that districts are struggling with declining revenue, budget reductions and growing retirement costs." How is Mr. Pastorek acknowledging this if he is forcing the districts to cover the National Board stipend?

2. Also, Mr. Pastorek stated, that we must "consider this issue from a broader perspective." I would think that, if we were looking at the bigger picture it might be important to note that (based on information provided by the Louisiana Department of Education's Web site) the cost per pupil in the Recovery School District (created by the state to run "academically unacceptable" schools) is more than twice that

of the average public school. Specifically, it costs an average of \$23,486 per pupil for the RSD and costs East Baton Rouge Parish only \$11,453.

Has Mr. Pastorek looked at these differences in these costs? Has he noted any huge improvements in School Performance Scores of schools in the RSD? Based on data provided by the LDOE Web site and having taught in a school that was taken over by the state, I do not see any improvements at all, let alone enough to constitute such a huge gap in per pupil costs.

Lastly, I would like to mention that our appointed superintendent, based on the short biography provided on the DOE Web site, like you does not understand or appreciate the hard work that goes into becoming a National Board Certified teacher because he has never been a teacher — he's an attorney.

KRISTIN ALFAIDRE
EBRP high school English teacher
and NBC candidate
Denham Springs