



FACT SHEET: SB 426: Paid Parental Leave for Louisiana K-12 Employees

Educators are the backbone of our society. However, teachers in many states, including Louisiana, have no guaranteed right to paid parental leave. This lack of access leaves public school employees with no choice but to accumulate any available paid time off or paid sick days in anticipation of welcoming a new child. SB 426 would allow Louisiana K-12 employees to take the time they need to care for a new child without losing their income, savings, or much deserved paid time off.

A paid parental leave program would have positive health and economic benefits for a large number of Louisiana educators and their families.

- In 2021-2022, there were 97,438 public school employees, consisting of 50,218 teachers and 47,220 non-teaching staff members in the State of Louisiana.¹
- Given the data, many teachers and support staff urgently need paid parental leave to feel secure knowing they will have a paycheck while they take time to recover from childbirth and care for their new child.
- Paid parental leave also supports adoptive parents by providing time to handle logistics and bond with a new child while easing the financial burden that often comes with adoption.²
- Studies have shown that fathers who take paternity leave experience greater engagement in their child's life, which in turn has cognitive and developmental advantages for children.³
- When fathers take adequate paid parental leave, it greatly benefits new moms as well, leading to fewer postpartum health complications and improved mental health.⁴

SB 426 will help make Louisiana a competitive state to be an educator, improving recruitment and retention.

- Louisiana is currently ranked 46th in education on the national scale.⁵
- Between 2021-2022, research shows that the turnover rate was 14% for teachers and 17% for school leaders.⁶ Of those who departed, 37% left within 5 years of starting their teaching career.⁷
- The most recent federal data shows that a quarter of teachers who recently left teaching reported “personal life reasons (e.g., health, pregnancy/childcare, caring for family)” as the most important

¹ 2021-2022 Educator Workforce Snapshot, Louisiana Believes, 2023, https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teaching/2021-2022-state-educator-workforce-snapshot.pdf?sfvrsn=40396318_6.

² Adoption Friendly Benefits in the Workplace: It is the Right Thing to Do, National Council For Adoption, July 1, 2018, <https://adoptioncouncil.org/publications/adoption-advocate-no-121/>.

³ The Health Case for Paid Family and Medical Leave, A Better Balance, November 30, 2021, <https://www.abetterbalance.org/resources/the-health-case-for-paid-family-and-medical-leave/>.

⁴ When Dad Can Stay Home: Fathers' Workplace Flexibility And Maternal Health, National Bureau of Economic Research, October 2019, https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w25902/w25902.pdf.

⁵ Kenny Francis and Teresa Falgoust, Paid Leave is the Foundation of a Stronger Louisiana, Agenda for Children, August 2020, p. 2, <https://agendaforchildren.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Paid-Leave-Brief-September-2020.pdf>.

⁶ Louisiana Rankings, U.S. News, 2023, <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/louisiana>.

⁷ 2021-2022 Educator Workforce Snapshot, Louisiana Believes, 2023, https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/teaching/2021-2022-state-educator-workforce-snapshot.pdf?sfvrsn=40396318_6.

⁸ Id.

reason that factored into their decision to quit.⁸

- Research shows that paid family leave helps increase employee retention and decrease turnover,⁹ which would save the state money on hiring and training costs.
- Several of Louisiana's peer states, including Tennessee,¹⁰ Georgia,¹¹ South Carolina,¹² and North Carolina¹³ have already enacted paid parental leave policies for their educators.
- Children's life chances are linked to their quality of education.¹⁴ By providing more supports for educators and enhancing overall productivity and retention, students will reap the long-term benefits.

Paid parental leave helps K-12 employees stay healthy and better able to do their job.

- Without dedicated paid parental leave, educators often have no choice but to use up any sick or vacation days when a new child arrives, leaving them with no paid leave for when they or their child become sick.
- Providing paid parental leave separately ensures that employees can reserve their paid sick days for when they truly need them, resulting in healthier children and less spread of illness amongst the school.
- Paid family leave also helps boost productivity and improve employee morale.
 - 91% of employers surveyed in one state reported that paid family leave had either a positive or neutral effect on profitability.¹⁵ Large majorities of employers also reported positive or neutral effects on productivity (88.5%) and employee morale (98.6%).¹⁶

Paid parental leave is good for the economy.

- By keeping workers with caregiving needs attached to the workforce, paid parental leave decreases reliance on public assistance programs, creating taxpayer savings.
- Women and men who return to work after a paid leave are significantly less likely to receive public assistance in the year after the birth of their child than parents who take no leave at all.¹⁷

**Louisiana has already enacted paid parental leave for state employees.¹⁸
Educators deserve the same benefit.**

⁸ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS), "Former Teacher Data File,"* 2012-13. <https://www.nctq.org/blog/How-many-school-districts-offer-paid-parental-leave#:~:text=The%20most%20recent%20federal%20data,personal%20life%20reasons%20between%20%22very>.

⁹ Eileen Appelbaum and Ruth Milkman, *Leaves that Pay: Employer and Worker Experiences with Paid Family Leave in California*, p. 8, <http://cepr.net/documents/publications/paid-family-leave-1-2011.pdf>.

¹⁰ Tenn. Code. Ann. §§ 8-50-813–814, <https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/acts/113/pub/pc0399.pdf>.

¹¹ Ga. Code § 45-20-17, <https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20212022/201999>.

¹² S.C. Code Ann. § 8-11-151, https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/bills/3908.htm.

¹³ N.C. Gen. Stat. § 126-8.6, <https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2023/Bills/Senate/PDF/S20v5.pdf>.

¹⁴ OECD (2012), *Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*, OECD Publishing, p. 14, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264130852-en>.

¹⁵ Eileen Appelbaum and Ruth Milkman, *Leaves that Pay: Employer and Worker Experiences with Paid Family Leave in California*, p. 8, <https://cepr.net/documents/publications/paid-family-leave-1-2011.pdf>.

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ Linda Houser & Thomas Vartanian, *Pay Matters: The Positive Economic Impacts of Paid Family Leave for Families, Businesses and the Public*, Ctr. for Women and Work (2012), p. 6-7, <http://www.nationalpartnership.org/research-library/work-family/other/pay-matters.pdf>.

¹⁸ State Civil Serv. *Parental Leave*, <https://www.civilservice.louisiana.gov/Parental-Leave/Default.aspx>.