FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 10, 2025

Community Townhall Meeting to Address Leadership, Board Vacancies, and Accountability at Louisiana Special School District

Baton Rouge, LA — Louisiana Association of the Deaf (LAD) will host a Townhall Meeting to address urgent concerns raised by community members, parents, alumni, educators, and advocates regarding leadership instability and unfilled Board vacancies within the Louisiana Special School District (SSD). The meeting will take place on Wednesday, October 22, 2025, at 6:00 PM at the Liberty Deaf Church, located by the SSD campus on Brightside Dr.

The SSD Board has failed to appropriately fill multiple vacant seats with the needed experts, and has stalled the formal search for a permanent Superintendent, even suggesting a local search. This prolonged inaction has left some of Louisiana's most vulnerable students without the stable, qualified leadership and clear educational vision they deserve. Community members have expressed growing concerns over a lack of transparency, governance lapses, and the potential long-term impact on specialized education for deaf children.

"This is not just a procedural delay—it's a leadership vacuum affecting real students, families, and educators," said Jay Isch, Executive Director of LAD. "Our children deserve competent leadership, and our community deserves open communication and decision-makers who are present and accountable."

Mr. Isch, who has long championed SSD reform, alongside other community advocates including working alongside Fmr. Senator Sharon Hewitt and Fmr. State Representative Scott McKnight in 2022 to pass legislation establishing SSD's own governing Board, separating itself from the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the LA Department of Education.

The Townhall will serve as a platform for open dialogue, community testimony, and coordinated action. LAD and community partners will call for:

- Immediate action to fill all SSD Board vacancies with individuals who meet the required expertise for each seat.
- A transparent, community-inclusive Superintendent search process through Innivee Strategies.
- A clear timeline with accountability measures for state leadership.

Community members, organizations, members of the press, and state officials are strongly encouraged to attend.

Event Details:
Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2025
Time: 6pm - 8pm
Location: Liberty Deaf Church, 1438 Harwich Dr, Baton Rouge, LA 70820

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