

**PEREBOOM (MARGARET) PAPERS**  
(Mss. #4958)  
Inventory

Compiled by  
Leslie Bourgeois

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections  
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library  
Louisiana State University Libraries  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

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**SUMMARY**

<b>Size</b>	3.5 linear feet
<b>Geographic Locations</b>	Louisiana
<b>Inclusive Dates</b>	1977-1988
<b>Bulk Dates</b>	1979-1982
<b>Languages</b>	English
<b>Summary</b>	The Margaret Pereboom Papers consist of correspondence, legal files, office files, and statistical reports pertaining to Pereboom's tenure as a school board member during the desegregation case, <i>Davis vs. East Baton Rouge Parish School Board</i> , and administrative files and research materials pertaining to Pereboom's role as chair for Louisiana Women in Politics.
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	None
<b>Reproduction Note</b>	May be reproduced.
<b>Copyright</b>	For those materials not in the public domain, copyright is retained by the descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. Copyright law.
<b>Related Collections</b>	Louisiana Health Care Campaign Records, Mss. 4957.
<b>Citation</b>	Margaret Pereboom Papers, Mss. #4958, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
<b>Stack Location(s)</b>	U: 313-316; OS:P

**BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE**

Margaret Jane Gamble was born on May 30, 1928, in Lusk, Wyo. She married Andrew Clinton Pereboom on February 11, 1952, and the couple had two children, Joanne and Drew. Pereboom received a Ph.D. in educational psychology from the University of Texas. After moving to Baton Rouge, La., she became one of the first women in the state to receive a license to practice psychology, with a practice that focused on children. She served on the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board from 1978-1982, when the desegregation case consumed the board. In 1986, she became the chair of a newly formed organization, Louisiana Women in Politics, which focused on increasing the number of women in elective office. In addition to her continued work on behalf of children's and women's issues, she also served as an executive director of the Louisiana Health Care Campaign. Pereboom was selected as a member of the Louisiana Center for Women and Government Hall of Fame at Nicholls State University in 2003. She died on January 18, 2008.

*Davis vs. East Baton Rouge Parish School Board*, more popularly known as the East Baton Rouge desegregation case, was filed in 1956 by black parents who wanted the integration of the school system in the wake of the Supreme Court decision *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954. In 1963, black students began to integrate white schools and the suit was dismissed in 1975. After the appeals court overturned this earlier decision in 1978, U.S. District Court Judge John Parker took over the case in late 1979. In 1980, he declared that the school system remained segregated and instituted a court-ordered desegregation plan the following year. For the next two decades, several desegregation plans were attempted and deemed inadequate. In 2003, both sides reached an agreement, though the case would not end officially until July 2007, fifty-one years after its initial filing.

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The Margaret Pereboom Papers pertain to Pereboom's work as a member of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board and as the chair of Louisiana Women in Politics. The records dealing with the school board consist of correspondence, legal files, office files and statistical reports related to the desegregation case, *Davis vs. East Baton Rouge Parish School Board*, and the effects of court orders on the school district. For Louisiana Women in Politics, the files contain administrative records for the state organization and its Baton Rouge chapter, as well as research materials on the role of women in elected office.

**LIST OF SERIES AND SUBSERIES**

**I. East Baton Rouge Parish School Board, 1977-1982, undated**

**Subseries 1. Correspondence, 1979-1982, undated**

**Subseries 2. Legal Files, 1979-1982, undated**

**Subseries 3. Office Files, 1977-1982, undated**

**Subseries 4. Statistical Reports, 1978-1982, undated**

**II. Women in Politics, 1980-1988, undated**

## **SERIES DESCRIPTIONS**

**Series I: East Baton Rouge Parish School Board, 1977-1982, undated** (3.25 linear feet)

**Subseries 1: Correspondence, 1979-1982, undated** (.25 linear feet)

This subseries consists of correspondence received by Pereboom related to the desegregation case and other administrative matters of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board. The majority of the letters were copies forwarded to all school board members. John F. Ward, Jr., the general counsel for the school board, sent frequent updates on the desegregation case, including a few letters from Judge John Parker (1980-1982). Raymond Arveson, superintendent of the school system, also forwarded copies of his correspondence with both the U.S. Departments of Justice and Education. One letter of interest from the Deputy Attorney General expressed his dissatisfaction with the desegregation plan set forth by the school board (Mar. 4, 1981). A series of letters from the U.S. Department of Education shows the difficulty for the school board in receiving grant money because of the pressure exerted by the Department of Justice due to the desegregation case (1981). Pereboom and her colleagues also received letters from students, parents, school administrators and other community members voicing their concerns over proposed changes to their individual schools and the introduction of busing, as well as their own suggested changes for the plans (1980-1982). Other administrative issues addressed by the school board include the use of school facilities by other parties (1980-1982). Many of the letters contain handwritten notes and underlines made by Pereboom.

Arranged chronologically.

**Subseries 2: Legal Files, 1979-1982, undated** (.75 linear feet)

This subseries contains documents filed with the court in the desegregation case, *Davis vs. East Baton Rouge Parish School Board*, during Pereboom's tenure on the school board. From 1980-1981, the filings deal with the presentation of desegregation plans from both sides. The United States submitted the Foster Plan, which advocated clustering schools and implementing busing (May 14, 1980). A court order on September 11, 1980, established nine criteria for the school board's plan. From October 1980 through January 1981, the school board submitted progress reports followed by their full plan, which focused on the implementation of magnet programs (Jan. 9, 1981). Because of disagreement between the two parties, the court mandated a plan (May 1, 1981). The school board requested to only implement the elementary school portion of the court's plan (June 2, 1981) for the 1981-1982 school year. The court made subsequent amendments to the elementary plan (March 31, 1982) and its results were presented in a minute entry (Aug. 30, 1982). A supplemental and amending order presented the court's new plan for the middle and high schools (March 8, 1982), a counter plan for the middle schools by the school board (March 30, 1982) and its

subsequent acceptance by the court (April 30, 1982). The United States later submitted the Rossell Plan (Dec. 10, 1982).

In addition to the issue of student assignment, the court also dealt with teacher assignment (Mar. 31, 1982), closed school facilities (April 5, 1982), and school maintenance (May 19, 1982). Issues pertaining to individual schools were also addressed, including Scotlandville Middle (May 7, 1982 & Sept. 21, 1982), Scotlandville High (Sept. 3, 1982), Walnut Hills Elementary and McKinley High (Sept. 22, 1982). Another item of note is a "Hinds County Type Report" on the East Baton Rouge School District, which includes newspaper articles related to the changes enacted (July 2, 1981 & August 28, 1981). An oral argument filed by the school board contends that East Baton Rouge Parish runs a "unitary school system" (May 24, 1982). Some exhibits without their original filings are also available (undated).

The majority of these files include handwritten notes and underlines by Pereboom. Many of the major documents also include an extensive history of the case, dating back to its inception.

Arranged chronologically.

**Subseries 3: Office Files, 1977-1982, undated** (1 linear foot)

This subseries consists of plans, proposals, memoranda, meeting agendas, clippings, notes and other documents related to Pereboom's tenure with the school board as it dealt with the ramifications of the desegregation case on the school district.

The plans and proposals include drafts of desegregation plans, which were eventually submitted to the court. Two drafts of a court-ordered staff report examine the implications of a variety of alternative structures for the school system (1979). A draft of "A Desegregation Plan for the East Baton Rouge Parish School System" explores the possibility of incorporating more magnet schools into the system and enacting zone changes while also addressing personnel issues (1980). An alphabetical guide to "A Preliminary Proposal for the Further Desegregation of the East Baton Rouge Parish Schools" provides detailed information on the changes suggested for each school in the parish (1980). Two drafts of the court-ordered "A Proposal for the Further Desegregation of the East Baton Rouge Parish Schools" expand upon the magnet school and special focus program proposals as well as personnel policies and a building analysis of school facilities (1981). Other smaller proposals deal with elementary school and secondary school plans separately (1980-1981). The staff recommendations for new special focus programs are also included (1981).

The memoranda, agendas and minutes pertain to official school board business. The memoranda are principally concerned with keeping members up-to-date on action within the desegregation case and its consequences for the school district, including the establishment of the Superintendent's Advisory Council on Desegregation (Sept. 30, 1980) and the closing of thirteen schools (July 15, 1981). Changes in the elementary school and special focus plans (May 12, 1981) are also mentioned. In addition to the



desegregation case, the minutes discuss the possible reapportionment of the board (Aug. 15, 1979) and Pereboom's disagreement with the 1979 staff report (Oct. 25, 1979). The agendas and information packets from community meetings held to inform the public of the desegregation plan are also included (1980-1981).

The clippings pertain to the East Baton Rouge Parish case, as well as the effects of desegregation on other school districts and the magnet school concept. An article of interest from *American Lawyer* profiles the history of the case dating back to its filing in 1956 (July 1982). An editorial comments on a potential conflict of interest for Pereboom on the school board because of her consulting business, which evaluated students placed into special education classes. (Aug. 19, 1981). *Prejudice and Pride: 25 Years after Brown* also discusses desegregation across the country (1979).

Other items of interest include petitions signed by parents from a variety of schools concerned over the loss of neighborhood schools and busing, while also presenting their own suggested changes to the court's desegregation plan (1981). Another important item is the "Justification for Single Race Schools," which only pertained to a small number of schools in the district (undated). Other documents include a listing of the school board districts and the schools each member was responsible for (undated), the student transfer policy (undated), and a press release from the U.S. Department of Justice describing the Rossell Plan (Dec. 10, 1982). In addition to handwritten notes and underlines on documents, a separate section of Pereboom's notes are also included (1979-1982, undated). The oversize folder contains a hand-drawn map of the school district (undated).

Arranged chronologically.

**Subseries 4: Statistical Reports, 1978-1982, undated** (1.25 linear feet)

This subseries contains statistical reports used by Pereboom and her colleagues in making decisions about the school district in conjunction with their own desegregation plans and those of the court. The majority of the reports consist of enrollment figures for each school broken down by the racial composition of the students (1979-1982). One batch of reports looks at the school enrollment grouped together by clusters (1981). Other reports focus on the racial composition of the administrative staff (1980-1981), teachers (Sept. 21, 1981), substitute teachers (Oct. 16, 1981) and certified personnel and teacher aides (Oct. 19, 1981). One report of interest contains a comparison of enrollment figures against the school board and Justice Department's desegregation plans (Sept. 1980). Some of these reports contain handwritten notes and underlines by Pereboom.

Arranged chronologically.

**Series II: Women in Politics, 1980-1988, undated** (.25 linear feet)

This series contains administrative and research materials for Louisiana Women in Politics, as well as the Baton Rouge chapter of the organization. At the state level, the

1977-1988

bylaws and responsibilities of the officers (1986) are available, as well as meeting agendas and minutes (1986-1987). The programs from two of the annual meetings are also included (1987-1988). For the Baton Rouge chapter, meeting agendas and minutes are also available along with completed questionnaires from candidates running for mayor, the metropolitan council, judge and city constable with information on their backgrounds and policy positions (1988). One item of interest is a listing of the candidates for each office with a handwritten note by Pereboom indicating which candidate the chapter would endorse (1988). The research materials include information on lobbying the Louisiana legislature (1983) and a report entitled "Moving Mountains Past, Present and Future: The Role of Women of Color in the American Political System" (1984). The oversize folder contains a map of the total black population for eleven Southern states broken down by parish or county and congressional district (1980).

Arranged chronologically.

**INDEX TERMS**

**Materials relating to these people, places, and things can be found in the series indicated, as represented by their numbers.**

<b>Terms</b>	<b>Series</b>
Arveson, Raymond, 1922-2008.	I.
Busing for school integration--Louisiana--East Baton Rouge Parish.	I.1, I.2, I.3
Correspondence.	I.1
East Baton Rouge Parish (La.). School Board--Trials, litigation, etc.	I.
Legal files.	I.2
Louisiana Women in Politics.	II.
Magnet schools--Louisiana--East Baton Rouge Parish.	I.2, I.3
Office files.	I.3, II.
Parker, John V., 1928-	I.1, I.2
Pereboom, Margaret, 1928-2008.	All series.
Public schools--Louisiana--East Baton Rouge Parish.	I.
Reports.	I.4
School integration--Louisiana--East Baton Rouge Parish.	I.
Segregation in education--Louisiana--East Baton Rouge Parish.	I.
Ward, John F., Jr., d. 1988.	I.1, I.2, I.3
Women in politics--Louisiana.	II.

**CONTAINER LIST**

<u>Stack</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder(s)</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
			<b>Series I: East Baton Rouge Parish School Board</b>
			<b>Subseries 1: Correspondence</b>
U:313	1	1-7	Correspondence (1979-1982, undated)
			<b>Subseries 2: Legal Files</b>
		8-39	Desegregation Case (1979-1982)
		40-47	Exhibits (undated)
			<b>Subseries 3: Office Files</b>
		48	School District Maps (1977-1980, undated)
		49-53	Magnet Schools/Special Focus Programs (1977-1981, undated)
U:314	2	1-4	Memoranda (1978-1982)
		5-6	Meeting Agendas and Minutes (1979-1981)
		7-31	Plans and Proposals (1979-1982, undated)
		32-33	Notes (1979-1982, undated)
		34	Personnel (1979, undated)
		35	Prejudice and Pride: The <i>Brown</i> Decision after 25 Years (1979)
		36-38	Clippings (1979-1982, undated)
		39-40	Community Meeting Agendas (1980-1981)
		41	Superintendent's Advisory Council on Desegregation (1980)
		42	Public Opinion on Desegregation (1980, undated)
		43	Parent's Directory (1980-1981)
		44	Special Education Classes (1980-1981)
		45-47	Petitions (1981)
		48	Analysis of Gordon Foster Plan (1981)
		49	Resolution Regarding Desegregation (1981, undated)
		50	Budget (1981, undated)
		51	Schedules (1981, undated)
		52	Administrative Goals, School Board Districts (1981-1982, undated)
		53	School Lists (1981-1982, undated)
		54	Test Scores (1981-1982)
		55	Press Releases (1982)
		56	School Maps and Team Learning Appendices (1982)
		57	Student Transfer Policy (undated)

**PEREBOOM (MARGARET) PAPERS**

Mss. #4958

1977-1988

**SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, LSU LIBRARIES**

U:314	2	58	Justification for Single Race Schools (undated)
		59-60	Excerpts from Preliminary Proposal for Further Desegregation (undated)
		61	School Facilities (undated)
		62	Baton Rouge High School (undated)
OS:P		1	Hand-drawn School District Map (undated)

**Subseries 4: Statistical Reports**

U:315	3	1-13	Tables (1978-1982, undated)
U:316	4	1-7	Tables (1979-1981)

**Series II: Women in Politics**

U:315	3	14-15	Research Materials (1983-1986, undated)
		16	Louisiana Women in Politics Membership Information (1986)
		17	Louisiana Women in Politics (1986-1988)
		18-19	Louisiana Women in Politics Convention (1987-1988)
		20	Baton Rouge Chapter (1986-1987)
		21-22	Baton Rouge Candidate Questionnaires (1988)
		23	Campaign Finance Rules (1988)
OS:P		1	Map of Black Population by Congressional District in Eleven Southern States (1980)