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Date: December 19, 2011

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## **Regents Receive Core to College Grant to Prepare Students for College**

BATON ROUGE, La – Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors named Louisiana as one of ten states nationally to receive a Core to College grant. **Core to College: Preparing Students for College Readiness and Success**, encourages collaborations between state higher education and K-12 entities to improve student achievement and college readiness ultimately resulting in increased retention and graduation rates. One key strategy is using the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and assessments to establish a statewide common definition of college readiness to signal a student’s preparedness for credit-bearing college courses.

“Receiving these grant dollars for Louisiana is a big win,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Jim Purcell. “We, in higher education, will never be able to reach our goal of increasing the educational attainment of our citizenry to the Southern Regional Education Board’s average by 2025 if we don’t partner with our colleagues in K-12 to ensure more students not only graduate from high school, but do so ready to succeed in college and in a career. In fact, our best efforts at the college level will fail to be enough if we don’t focus on preparing the students in the pipeline immediately.”

Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Oregon and Washington will each receive \$200,000 per year for three years, pending annual reviews of progress against goals. These states were selected based on geographic diversity, assessment consortia membership and demonstrated capacity to undertake this work, including existing collaborations and project plans aligned with the goals of Core to College.

The intent is that these ten states will serve as models for other states, showing how to create connections among educational entities that will strongly support the interest of student success. It is also expected that each state will align its work with implementation plans for the Common Core State Standards and either the Partnership for the Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) or SMARTER Balanced assessments. Louisiana is one of the Governing States that has made a commitment to pilot and implement the PARCC assessments which will replace the existing LEAP and iLEAP assessments in 2014-15.

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The Board of Regents will use the grant funds to provide students with a smoother transition and greater success as they move from PK-12 school environments into post-secondary education and careers. Plans include convening campus leadership teams on all two- and four-year campuses to engage K-12 educators, college arts/science faculty, college of education faculty, other education leaders, and local community members in the alignment/assessment work. The campus leadership teams will help state leaders:

- Create a statewide definition of “college readiness”;
- Establish K-12/postsecondary alignment to Common Core State Standards in academic courses/sequences, data and accountability, and teacher development; and
- Support postsecondary institutions use of the PARCC assessment to determine readiness for credit bearing course enrollment.

Funding for Core to College is provided by the Lumina Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The partners developed Core to College with the assistance of Education First Consulting, which will provide continuing project management. Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, the program’s fiscal sponsor, is responsible for grant decisions and all aspects of ongoing grant administration.

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