

# Regents Recap

Highlights of the Activities and Official Actions of the Louisiana Board of Regents

January 2007

## Regents Convene Expert Panel to Guide Next Master Plan

Governor Blanco and the Louisiana Board of Regents held a press briefing on January 5 to open the inaugural meeting of Louisiana's newly-constituted *Master Plan National Advisory Panel*. The meeting began a process that will ultimately result in a new five-year master plan for Louisiana's public colleges and universities. The task of the panel of nationally-recognized experts in postsecondary education policy will be informed by a focus on what has come to be called Louisiana's "public agenda," a prioritization of the state's most critical social and economic issues and needs (see below). The Master Plan Advisory Panel's work is supported through a grant from the LUMINA foundation.

"Louisiana is adopting a broad-based approach to formulating the next master plan for higher education," said Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco. "This distinguished panel represents the nation's best thinking on higher education policy, and I know that the product of their efforts will guide our state toward an even more effective and responsive postsecondary education system."

The Master Plan National Advisory Council is composed of Brenda Albright, higher education finance specialist (Franklin TN); Patrick Callan, President, National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education (San Jose, CA); Kevin W. Crockett, President, Noel-Levitz (Centennial, CO); Gordon Davies, Director Emeritus, Virginia Postsecondary Education Council (Richmond, VA); Dennis Jones, President, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (Boulder, CO); Paul Lingenfelter,

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## Commissioner Stresses Importance of Student Financial Aid

Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie told the Board of Regents that while Louisiana has made great strides in increasing the overall educational level of its citizens in recent years, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have driven down college enrollment significantly. Moreover, the state's pipeline of high school graduates, which was already on the decline due to overall population attrition, has been further decimated by the 2005 storms. Savoie made the observations at the Regents' meeting January 24 as part of a presentation detailing Louisiana's outlook for producing more college graduates to spur the state's economy.

"Our supply of high school graduates has been steadily declining since about 2000," Savoie said. "That decline was accelerated by the storms, and it looks like it will be several years before high school graduation numbers recover. We have to take measures to make college more accessible – and more affordable – to *more* of the high school graduates that we *do* produce."

Savoie said the state is working on a variety of fronts to accomplish this goal:

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**New Officers Take Oath**  
Regents Pat Strong (top photo, far right) and Scott Brame (center) were sworn in January 4 by Regents General Counsel Connie Koury as 2007 board chairman and vice-chairman respectively. Regent Artis Terrell (bottom photo, right) was sworn in as the 2007 Regents secretary on January 25.

The next  
Board of Regents  
meeting  
will be held  
February 21-22,  
2007



**Pat A. Strong**  
Chair

**Scott Brame**  
Vice Chair

**Artis Terrel, Jr.**  
Secretary

**William "Billy" Blake**  
**Richard E. D'Aquin**  
**Frances Henry**  
**Ingrid T. Labat**  
**Robert W. Levy**  
**W. Clinton Rasberry, Jr.**  
**Mary Ellen Roy**

**William Clifford Smith**  
**Harold M. Stokes**  
**Terry Landry**  
Student Member

**E. Joseph Savoie**  
Commissioner of  
Higher Education

## Board Action - January 24-25, 2007

### Program Approvals

The Board of Regents approved the following proposed new academic programs, distance learning programs, research units, curricular revision, and progress reports on conditionally-approved programs/centers:

#### Proposed Academic Programs:

Baton Rouge Community College - A.S. in Nursing  
Southern University-New Orleans - B.A. in Child Development and Family Studies

#### Proposed Distance Learning Programs:

Delgado Community College - A.S. in Nursing at Louisiana Delta Community College  
Southern University-Baton Rouge - M.S. in Rehabilitation Counseling

#### Proposed Research Units:

University of Louisiana-Lafayette - Institute for Coastal Ecology and Engineering  
Grambling State University - Center for Mathematical Advancement in Science and Technology

#### Proposed Curricular Revision:

University of Louisiana-Lafayette - Request to Terminate the M.S. in Human Resources

#### Progress Reports on Conditionally Approved Programs/Centers:

Southern University-Baton Rouge: Master of Engineering; Master of Business Administration  
Louisiana State University and A&M College: Center for Biomolecular Microsystems  
University of Louisiana-Lafayette: M.S.E. in Engineering-Petroleum; Center for Structural and Functional Materials  
Northwestern State University: B.A. in Heritage Resources; B.S. in Addiction Studies  
Louisiana Technical College-Ascension: A.A.S. in Process Technology  
Southern University-Shreveport: A.S. in Human Services  
Sowela Technical Community College: Associate of General Studies

### Regents Approve RFP for 2006-07 Post-Katrina Support Fund Initiative

The Board approved Requests for Proposals (RFP) for the Primarily Research Subprogram and the Primarily Education Subprogram of the Post-Katrina Support Fund Initiative. Dr. Kerry Davidson, Deputy Commissioner for Sponsored Programs, provided the Board a detailed review of the process which has led to development of the RFPs presented for approval. Davidson noted that a total of \$26.8 million is available for expenditure under the five-year Post Katrina Support Fund Initiative (P-KSFI), and provided details of the two subprograms as follows:

- The Primarily Research Subprogram 1) anticipates support of from one to three multi-year, multi-institutional and multi-disciplinary initiatives; 2) will receive \$4 million per year for five years plus a one-time supplement of \$1.2 million in Enhancement for Severely Impacted Programs (ESIP) monies; and 3) will limit each campus to a maximum of four proposals in which it may serve as the lead institution.
- The Primarily Education Subprogram 1) will allow single-institution or multi-institutional submission; 2) be restricted to campuses which have two or fewer doctoral programs; 3) receive \$1 million per year for five years and a one-time supplement of \$600,000 in Enhancement for Severely Impacted Programs (ESIP) monies; 4) permit only one proposal submission per campus in which said campus is the lead institution; and 5) anticipates awarding from 5 to 10 grants.

### Board Receives Hurricane Recovery Status Update

Rich Griswold, Associate Commissioner for Facilities, provided the Board with an update on campus progress in repairing physical damage caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Griswold reported that because much of the permanent repair and rebuilding work is still in the design phase, progress over the past 45 days was not readily apparent on the written report distributed to the Board. However, Griswold said that several key repair issues have been resolved, particularly in the case of McNeese State University.

As part of the update, Dr. Victor Ukpolo, Chancellor of Southern University-New Orleans, presented to the Board a detailed plan for physical recovery of the SUNO campus, the hardest hit of all Louisiana's public college campuses. Several Board members expressed the desire that steps be taken to ensure that all rebuilding at SUNO is done with regard to the change in size and mission of the institution since the storm. Regents staff was directed to continue to monitor the SUNO recovery process with that intent.

**For more information about these and other  
Board of Regents actions,  
please visit our web site at [www.regents.state.la.us](http://www.regents.state.la.us)**

## **Rebuild Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Program a Documented Success**

Louisiana asked them to “return to learn,” and return they did – in droves. Dr. Larry Tremblay, acting Deputy Commissioner for Academic and Student Affairs, reported to the Board of Regents today that more than 8,100 students displaced last year by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita enrolled at Louisiana public colleges and universities this past fall under the *Rebuild Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Program*. The number of participants was documented in a December report on the program released by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA).

Under the program, qualified current (at the time of the disasters), former and potential college students displaced by the storms were able to receive up to \$1000 to enroll or re-enroll for the Fall 2006 semester as undergraduates at Louisiana colleges and universities. The *Rebuild Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Program*, along with the associated “Return to Learn” campaign web site, was originally announced on April 21.

### **Master Plan (from page 1)**

President, State Higher Education Executive Officers (Boulder, CO); David Longanecker, President, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (Boulder, CO); Richard Novak, Sr. Vice President, Association of Governing Boards (Washington, DC); and David Spence, President, Southern Regional Education Board (Atlanta, GA).

“We are deeply indebted to the Lumina Foundation for providing resources to help us enlist the assistance of this excellent panel in forging a new master plan,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. “The panel’s input will be invaluable as we work to chart the course for Louisiana’s colleges and universities, which will help shape Louisiana’s future.”

While the advisory council may identify additional needs, the members have been asked to consider ways to bring the new master plan to bear on the following goals, identified as part of Louisiana’s public agenda:

1. Graduate more students from high school ready for postsecondary education or work and increase the number and percentage of Louisiana’s citizens with postsecondary degrees/certificates.
2. Narrow educational and economic disparities across regions and racial groups and make college affordable to all who can benefit.
3. Using the assets of colleges and universities to expand & diversify Louisiana’s economy.
4. Raise the educational attainment of the state’s adult population.

The Board of Regents is required by the Louisiana State Constitution to regularly formulate and implement a comprehensive master plan for public postsecondary education. The current plan, which began implementation in 2001, has been the impetus for a broad range of reform measures, including the implementation of minimum admission requirements for all of the state’s public four-year universities and the ongoing development of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS).

### **Financial Aid (from page 1)**

- Aligning high school curriculum with college/workforce preparation,
- Focusing on dropout recovery/prevention at both the high school and college level,
- Expanding dual enrollment opportunities for high school students to take college-credit courses,
- Expanding access to universities, community colleges and technical colleges,
- Expanding adult learning/literacy efforts,
- Developing a financial aid program for needy students.

Governor Blanco’s High School Redesign Commission has proposed strategies to address high school curriculum alignment, dropout prevention and dual enrollment. Savoie said research indicates that the most efficient way for a state to expand access to postsecondary education is to increase its investment in student financial aid. He said that while the details of the Board of Regents’ financial aid proposal have not yet been worked out, it will seek to provide educational opportunity for those who are most economically disadvantaged and will encourage a shared responsibility for the costs of college among the student, his/her family, the college or university and the state.

As a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Louisiana has lost 35,000 college students. In addition, estimates are that there will be 3,000 fewer high school graduates next year than the year before the storms, and more than 58,000 elementary and secondary school students displaced by the storms have not re-enrolled at any public school in Louisiana.

“If Louisiana is to have a competitive economy in the near- and long-term future, we must get larger numbers of our remaining students into and successfully completing college,” Savoie said.