

Regents Recap

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

March 2007

Governor's Budget Proposal Acknowledges Economic Value of Colleges and Universities

Citing the need not only to rebuild Louisiana but to rebuild the state *stronger and smarter*, Governor Kathleen Blanco has proposed a 2007-08 budget appropriation for public postsecondary education that provides unprecedented support across a broad range of critically-important funding areas. Among other features, the 2007-08 Executive Budget Proposal provides for faculty and employee salary increases, a financial aid initiative for low- and moderate-income students, and full coverage of mandated (non-controllable) cost increases for such items as insurance rate hikes and civil service employee salary increases. Moreover, the proposed appropriation provides general operating expense funds sufficient to bring all of Louisiana's public colleges and universities up to a funding rate at least commensurate with the average of their peer institutions across the south – a level of financial support Louisiana's institutions have not enjoyed for more than 25 years.

"We in higher education are delighted and gratified that Governor Blanco's executive budget proposal acknowledges the fundamental economic value of our state's colleges and universities," said Louisiana Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. "The governor understands that a vibrant economic and social future for Louisiana depends on improving the educational attainment of our citizens. We applaud this bold proposal and pledge our commitment to making her educational vision for this state a working reality."

Commissioner Savoie Honored by CASE

Louisiana Commissioner of Higher Education Dr. E. Joseph Savoie has been chosen as the recipient of the 2007 *Chief Executive Leadership Award* by District IV of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). The award is the highest given by CASE District IV and recognizes an institution president, chancellor, or system head for extraordinary service and visionary leadership in higher education. The honor took on even more meaning for Savoie when CASE announced that henceforth the award would be known as the *E. Joseph Savoie Executive Leadership Award*.

"I am deeply honored," Savoie said. "I am proud of my long association with CASE, and I commend the organization for their tireless work in supporting college advancement professionals around the world."

Headquartered in Washington, DC, CASE supports educational institutions by enhancing the effectiveness of their alumni relations, communications, marketing, fund raising, and other advancement professionals. CASE District IV encompasses Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, and Mexico.

Governor's Executive Budget Highlights, FY2007-08 (millions of dollars)

Mandated Costs		\$33.2
Faculty Pay Plan		\$30.0
Enhanced Operational Funding:		
Full Formula Funding	\$98.1	
3% for Over-Formula & Non-Formula	\$16.9	
Total Operational Enhancement		\$115.0
Faculty Recruitment, Retention and Recovery for Storm Impacted Institutions		\$10.0
Community College Accreditation & Program Development		\$2.0
Non-faculty Pay Plan @ \$1,500 Per Employee		\$21.8
Library & Scientific Acquisitions into Operating Budgets		\$7.5
Workforce Development for Construction & Healthcare		\$7.5
(In addition to \$5.5 in continuing Construction Initiative funding)		
Dual Enrollment Expansion		\$1.0
ULM Pharmacy Accreditation Plan		\$1.0
Pennington Biomedical Research Center Initiatives		\$3.0
Louisiana Immersive Technologies Enterprise (LITE)		\$3.2
LSU Fireman Training Institute		\$.5
Need-based Student Aid		\$15.0

The next Board of Regents meeting will be held April 25-26, 2007, at LSU Health Sciences Center - New Orleans



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Board Action - March 21-22, 2007

Regents Endorse “GO Grant” Need-Based Aid Proposal

The Board of Regents unanimously endorsed in concept a proposal to create a statewide need-based financial assistance program for Louisiana college students. The “Louisiana GO Grant” initiative, as the program is called, is part of Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco’s 2006-07 education budget package and addresses a concern for the plight of low- to moderate-income college students that has long been expressed by the Governor as well as members of the state legislature. In particular, Senator Cleo Fields introduced a resolution last year calling for such a program.

The *Go Grant* initiative is aimed at bridging the gap between the amount of financial aid a needy student is awarded through the federal Pell Grant aid program and the actual cost of attending a Louisiana college or university. The plan is expected to impact 10,000 students in its first year, at an estimated cost of \$15 million.

“Louisiana’s recovery and long-term economic future are tied to improving the educational attainment levels of our citizens,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. “Unfortunately, when Louisiana was already facing a declining supply of high school graduates, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita decimated enrollment at both our colleges and high schools. So maximizing college access is more important than ever, especially for those students who have not traditionally been financially able to go to college. This plan gets at the heart of Louisiana’s dilemma. It not only will help increase college enrollment, but it will also help ensure that many of those who have long been deprived of a chance for college now have the opportunity to earn a postsecondary credential.”

The plan will be presented to the legislature for approval and funding in the upcoming regular session.

Regents Approve Proposal for Community College Services for CENLA

The Board of Regents has set in motion a plan that will provide access to community college services for citizens of central Louisiana. The Board of Regents approved a staff recommendation to accept a proposal submitted by Louisiana State University - Eunice to provide community college services at the Board of Regents’ Learning Center for Rapides Parish (LCRP) in Alexandria. The LSU-E proposal was submitted in response to a Request for Proposals (RFP) issued in January by the Regents. The Board of Regents, charged by Louisiana’s Master Plan for Public Postsecondary Education to provide community college services for all regions of the state, issued the RFP in an effort to fill the community college access void created when LSU-Alexandria converted to a four-year university.

“Research suggests that over two-thirds of the new jobs created over the next decade will require some level of education beyond high school,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. “Community colleges are a key component of Louisiana’s plan to address our 21st-Century workforce needs, and it is critical that citizens in all regions have access to these services. The plan approved today combines LSU-E’s resources and expertise with LCRP’s conveniently-located facilities to provide these services without the expense of duplication of establishing an additional community college campus.”

The LSU-E plan, which was recommended by a panel of evaluators composed of both Regents staff and postsecondary education experts retained from outside Louisiana, could be in place at LCRP as early as this summer, but no later than Fall 2007. Among its key components are the following:

- delivery of developmental education courses to prepare students not ready for college-level studies (both day and evening courses will eventually be offered);
- delivery of associate degree programs, to begin with the associate of general studies with a concentration in business;
- provision for administrative and student support services at LCRP, including staff located on site, library services, and internet access.

For more information about these and other Board of Regents actions, please visit our web site at www.regents.state.la.us

The Culture of Preparedness: Benefits of a University Emergency Operations Center

By Ricky Adams
Chief of Police, Louisiana State University

Note: This article is the fourth installment in a series on emergency preparedness.

The question “Why should a university have an Emergency Operations Center?” is beginning to be asked by universities and colleges throughout the United States. The primary function of any EOC is to coordinate and manage resources in an emergency, and a university’s EOC serves the same purpose. By establishing a campus EOC, a university will have greater control of its resources. Without its own EOC a university could easily find itself in the position of being overtasked and overcommitted by a local or state EOC. University personnel are more familiar with what is available and useful on its campus. An example would be housing. A local and/or state EOC may decide that housing first responders or evacuees in campus dorms is a great idea but be unaware of exactly how many rooms the university may actually have available. A campus EOC can interpret information, coordinate a response with both internal and external entities, and provide the university administration with the information necessary to make critical decisions.

After the decision to create a campus EOC has been made, the university must decide where it will be located. There is no “best” place for a campus EOC. The decision on location should be made after considering many factors: campus layout, age of facilities, available space, power sources, etc. Necessary equipment for an EOC includes

computers, telephones, printers, fax machines, video feeds, and communication equipment.

Because most emergencies may have associated power outages, it is prudent to have back-ups and redundancies to the second or third level for EOC equipment. Along with the physical equipment, the university must develop a thorough but flexible operations plan. In order for the EOC to be effective, the EOC staff needs to be trained and certified in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NIMS certification is also necessary for funding and re-imbursement purposes.

Some may wonder how a university EOC fits into the NIMS/ICS structure and the answer is that it fits very well. Most campus and government organizations are structured very similarly with their own public works (facility maintenance), staff, police departments, and some universities even have their own HazMat unit. Given its familiar government organizational structure, NIMS is fairly adaptable to the campus environment.

Even though most universities have specific hazards that are more likely to occur than others – hurricanes in the Southeast, tornadoes in the Midwest, and fires and earthquakes on the West Coast – a university should develop an EOC to manage *all* hazards. Universities may find themselves facing emergencies ranging from an unexpected natural disaster to acts of terrorism, so the key is to focus upon the EOC as a tool for any emergency. The benefit of relating to NIMS is ensuring the organizational compatibility and uniform communication with local, state and federal emergency management personnel.

Finally, by establishing its own EOC, a university will have more input into the use of its resources and personnel in an emergency. It is important that the campus EOC maintain contact and communicate with the local and state EOCs in order to stay current on what may be expected of them in a crisis. By establishing an operations plan, the university will be able to determine its role in emergencies and be prepared to inform others of what it can offer.



A calm moment at LSU’s Emergency Operations Center