

Regents Recap

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

May 31, 2005

Teacher Preparation Accountability Report Shows Results

A report on Louisiana's 2004-05 Teacher Preparation Accountability System shows that the system is successfully addressing all of the priorities originally targeted by the initiative at its inception in 2001. The report, presented to the Board of Regents on May 25 by Jeanne Burns, Regents Associate Commissioner of Academic Affairs for Teacher Education Initiatives, shows, among other indications of the system's success, significant improvement in the number of education program graduates in identified shortage areas such as math, science and special education; an increase in minority education graduates; improvement in the percentage of classroom teachers certified in their teaching disciplines, and higher passage rates on the PRAXIS examination (the test all education graduates must pass to become certified). Overall, Louisiana's public and private teacher training programs had a PRAXIS passage rate of 99%. The report also showed marked improvement in the number of graduates of the state's alternate certification programs.

As a result of this progress, for 2004-05, fourteen of Louisiana's twenty teacher education programs have been designated "Exemplary" (the highest possible designation) by the accountability system, and three as "High Performing." Moreover, none of Louisiana's programs was designated "Low Performing."

"In 2002, there were only two programs that qualified for the "Exemplary" label," Jeanne Burns said. "What this year's numbers tell us is that our accountability system is successfully addressing what it was created to address. The next step is to evaluate this progress and determine how the system should be expanded to address our next set of challenges."



LOUISIANA'S
TEACHER
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Burns said that new priorities likely to be addressed in the next phase of the accountability system include gathering and evaluating trend data to create a "quality index," evaluating retention data for the first three years of teaching to better understand how to keep good teachers on the job, and gathering and analyzing "value added" data, in an effort to correlate elementary and secondary student achievement with the programs from which their teachers graduated.

"These excellent results are of course the product of the hard work of a host of people at our campuses all across the state," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. "I also want to acknowledge the contribution of our Board members. They've made many of the decisions that have made this success story possible, and they're dedication to improving education in our state is paying off for Louisiana."

Louisiana's Teacher Preparation Accountability System was created in response to the Higher Education Act of 1998 to assess the performance of all state teacher preparation programs, public and private. During the first phase (2001-2002) of the accountability system, the performance of regular and alternate certification students on the PRAXIS examination was assessed. In subsequent years, other criteria have been added, including the quantity of program completers at each institution and the performance of regular and alternate certification students on the state teachers' examination and ratings by regular program completers of their satisfaction of their teacher preparation programs.



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Board Action - May 25-26, 2005

Regents Scholars Acknowledged

The Board of Regents received a report on the 2004-05 Regents Scholar Certificate of Recognition program. This year, 391 schools participated in the program statewide, awarding 7,029 certificates. The Regents Scholar honor is afforded to graduates who both earned a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.5 and successfully completed the Regents Core Curriculum, largely the same as the college preparatory courses required for TOPS.

The Regents Scholar program began in 1984 as a way to encourage Louisiana high school students to complete a more rigorous high school curriculum and thereby improve their college readiness. According to the original 1984 Regents publication announcing the program, the Regents Scholar award attests to “the academic achievement of students who are willing to take harder courses in order to better prepare for college level work and who are unwilling to settle for only the minimum.”

Award recipients receive a frameable certificate and a seal of acknowledgment on their high school diplomas. It is estimated that since 1984 over 67,000 Louisiana students have been recognized as Regents Scholars.

Enrollment Management Capital Grants Awarded

The Board of Regents awarded a total of \$1,499,949.36 to 19 colleges and universities across the state to fund capital initiatives that will support strategies to enhance student recruitment and/or improve student retention. Seventy-five proposals, submitted by 35 institutions, were evaluated by a panel of external reviewers.

The institutions receiving funding were: Delgado Community College (\$100,000), L.E. Fletcher Technical Community College (\$100,000), Louisiana State University (\$52,705), Louisiana State University-Alexandria (\$78,695), Louisiana State University-Eunice (\$92,660), Louisiana State University-Shreveport (\$98,500), Louisiana Tech University (\$93,700), Louisiana Technical College-District 1 (\$99,850), McNeese State University (\$96,688), Nicholls State University (\$76,563.50), Northwestern State University (\$9,200), Nunez Community College (\$99,972.87), River Parishes Community College (\$37,315),

Southeastern Louisiana University (\$48,693.11), Southern University (\$96,713.88), Southern University-New Orleans (\$100,000), SOWELA Technical Community College (\$20,852), University of Louisiana at Lafayette (\$97,841), University of Louisiana at Monroe (\$100,000).

Program Approvals

The Board of Regents approved the following new academic programs, academic/research center, letter of intent, curricular revision and program progress report:

New Academic Programs - Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, New Orleans - Doctor of Physical Therapy; Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, Shreveport - Doctor of Physical Therapy; University of New Orleans - B.S. in Entrepreneurship; Louisiana Tech University - B.S. in Geographic Information Science.

Letter of Intent - Louisiana State University at Alexandria - B.S. in Psychology.

Proposed Academic/Research Center - Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, New Orleans and the University of New Orleans - Research Institution for Children (RIC).

Curricular Revision - University of Louisiana at Monroe - Request to Terminate the M.S. in Geosciences.

Progress Report on Conditionally Approved Program - Northwestern State University - M.A. in Heritage Resources.

NASA EPSCoR DART Recommendations Approved

The Board of Regents approved a consultants' report recommending that six of 13 proposals submitted under the NASA EPSCoR Developing Aerospace Research and Technology (DART) program be funded at a total of \$201,249.

For details on the funded proposals, visit the Board of Regents web site and go to “Sponsored Programs.”

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