

Regents Recap

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

September 2006

Louisiana Outpacing Nation in Developing Capacity to Assess Education Program Effectiveness

Louisiana continues to outpace other states in developing the capacity to assess the comparative effectiveness of universities in preparing new teachers. LSU professor George Noell detailed the state's steady progress toward that capacity for the Board of Regents at its August meeting. The Board funds the work of Noell's team on the Value-Added Teacher Preparation Model research project.

"The nation is closely following the new research being conducted in Louisiana by Dr. George Noell," said Kati Haycock, director of the Washington-based Education Trust. "No other state is as far along in creating a statewide system that examines the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs based upon the actual achievement of children."

Preliminary results from Noell's latest study indicate that 45-50% of Louisiana's teacher preparation programs are preparing new teachers whose contribution to their students' achievement is comparable to the effectiveness of experienced teachers in mathematics, English/language arts, and/or science. These results contradict widely-held beliefs in the education community that new teachers take four to five years to become as effective as experienced teachers.

"Dr. Noell's research is critically important to our continuing efforts to improve teacher effectiveness," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. "When the research is complete we will be able to use our most effective programs as models for improving those that are lagging behind. The education community statewide is committed to seeing it through."

Dr. Noell's study used Department of Education student achievement data from in excess of 200,000 students in grades 4-9 who were enrolled in 66 school districts in Louisiana to examine the effectiveness of 16 universities that prepared new teachers who taught the students. Since only one year of comparison data was available, names of universities were not identified; however, universities will be identified next year once two years of data are available to verify the reliability of the results. An additional year of assessment data is also needed to provide more precise estimates of the university teacher programs' effects. ■

Regents Kick Off Tour to Award \$13.86 Million for Endowed Chairs and Professorships

Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie visited McNeese University in Lake Charles on August 10 for the first of off a statewide series of campus visits in August and September to officially present \$13.86 million in matching funds to public and private colleges and universities across the state. The funds will help create 11 new Endowed Chairs for Eminent Scholars and 200 new Endowed Professorships.

The state-funded portion of these new endowed chairs and professorships will match more than \$20 million in private donations, under the state/private funding ratio provided for in the 1986 constitutional amendment establishing the Louisiana Education Quality Support Fund.

"These events are an excellent opportunity
(continued on page 2)



Bill Thomas, SREB Director of Educational Technology, briefs the Board on the SCORE project. Story on page 2.



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Board Action - August 23-24, 2006

Program Approvals

The Board of Regents approved the following proposed new academic programs:

Southern University New Orleans - B.S. in Health Information Management Systems

Louisiana State University-Alexandria - B.S. in Mathematics

Varied Campuses of the Louisiana Community Technical College System - A.A.S. in Information and Communications Technology - Options in Computer-Networking Support, Computer Network Specialist, Computer Programmer

Louisiana Technical College - Lafayette - A.A.S. in Automotive Technology

Louisiana Technical College - Natchitoches - A.A.S. in Computer Specialist (Applications)

Learning Center Use Growing

Dr. Marjorie Taylor of the Rapides Parish Learning Center in Alexandria Taylor reviewed enrollment comparisons, facility usage, and revenue for the Center for FY 2004-2005. Dr. Taylor reported, among other things, the following:

- Center enrollment continues to increase since Fall 2003.
- A 17% growth in fall enrollment from 2004 to 2005.
- A 25% growth in spring enrollment from 2005 to 200 (largest enrollment to date at 1209)
- Summer enrollment increased 2% from 2005 to 2006
- Facility usage for conferences, meetings, and special events increased from 188 events in fiscal year 2004-2005 to 215 events in fiscal year 2005-2006 (14% increase)

Chairs and Professorships (from page 1)

for the Board of Regents and Louisiana's postsecondary education community in general both to recognize our generous donors and to spotlight our very valuable Endowed Chairs and Professorships Program," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joe Savoie. "The Louisiana Education Quality Support Fund and the generosity of the many private citizens and corporations who understand the importance of investing in Louisiana's colleges and universities are two very significant reasons why Louisiana higher education is continuing to move in the right direction."

Since 1986, the Board of Regents has been able to award some \$270 million in matching grants through the program, creating 261 endowed chairs (including 24 \$2 million chairs) and 1,760 endowed professorships. When matched with private contributions, the value of those chairs and professorships is more than \$400 million.

Funding for the endowment matching funds program is generated through a permanent trust fund approved by voters in a 1986 constitutional amendment. The original \$540 million payment was part of a settlement between the state and federal governments over disputed off-shore oil and gas royalty funds. By 2005, the trust fund (sometimes called the "(8g) money") had risen to approximately \$976 million and had spun off nearly its original value in educational benefits for the state. Twenty-five percent of the interest earned each year is reinvested in the trust fund. The Legislature appropriates half of the remaining interest to the Board of Regents for higher education and the other half to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for grades K-12.

The \$13.86 million in matching funds to be awarded in the Endowment Program over the next two months is funded through the Regents' share of the interest earned by the LEQSF over the past year and supplemental funds provided by the Legislature.

SCORE Initiative Detailed for Board

Bill Thomas, Director of Educational Technology for the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), briefed the Board on the SREB's new Sharable Content Object Repositories for Education (SCORE) initiative.

According to Thomas, the goals of SCORE are to improve teaching and learning and achieve costs savings through a multi-state K-12 and higher education initiative to share digital learning course content among colleges, universities and schools in SREB states. SCORE places reviewed course content in databases to which all participating states have access. These modular pieces of course content — learning objects — are then easy for teachers and faculty to access and use to improve the quality of their courses.

**The next
Board of Regents
meeting will be held
at Louisiana Tech
in Ruston
September 28, 2006**

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

The Culture of Preparedness: Is the State Cultured?

By D.C. Jensen, MPA, CEM, LEM

Master Planner for the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness

In his introductory article, Mike Abbiatti gave an overall look at the Emergency Preparedness process, emphasizing the responsibility of individuals for what happens on their campus. He also gave a summary of the Federal goals in this area. The Federal goals give direction and structure to the field, but each emergency or disaster begins at the personal, neighborhood and parish level.

It does not take a Category 5 hurricane or a terrorist with a weapon of mass destruction to create a crisis. A derailed tank car full of chlorine, a barge leaking benzene, a brush fire approaching a campus, a thunder storm that spawns a tornado or an ice storm that brings tree branches down on power lines can cause an immediate, serious threat to a community. And in a crisis, individuals, however well prepared, may need help.

The help begins at the parish level and continues upward to the Federal Government, according to the magnitude of the emergency. State and parish governments have played a role in emergency preparedness and response since the Civil Defense Act of 1950. In the past 30 years, the state and parish roles have expanded into an all-hazard, functionally-based approach.

The Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act of 1993, as amended, gives the Parish Presidents and the Governor the authority to declare a state of emergency, to put all the governmental resources available to them into action.

At the parish level, parish personnel, equipment and vehicles can assist with evacuations, governmental buildings can be used for shelter and feeding, and the parish can provide law enforcement, public health and welfare services. Louisiana parishes are grouped into nine regions, and the parishes in each region have mutual aid agreements and arrangements, so that they can support one another in emergencies.

At the state level, the Governor's Office of HS & EP monitors conditions around the state in order to be ready when an emergency becomes too big for a parish and its neighbors to handle. When a parish forwards a request for assistance to the state, the request is evaluated and the Governor is advised whether a state of emergency should be declared.

Once the Governor declares a state of emergency, the resources of the state agencies can be deployed to give assistance to the affected parishes. State agencies are grouped in accordance with the State of Louisiana Incident Management System (SLIMS). Sixteen Emergency Support Functions (ESF's) have been designated, which correspond to Federal ESF's. The functions range from Transportation and Communications through Mass Care, Housing and Human Services, Public Health and Medical, Public Safety and Security, to Public Information and Military Support to Civil Affairs. Each ESF has a Primary, or Lead agency, and additional agencies in support.

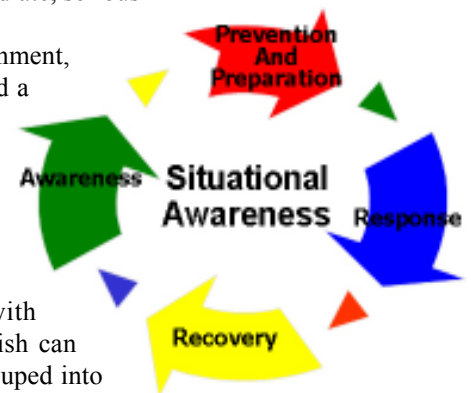
When a task is identified it is directed to an ESF Lead, and the ESF Lead quickly determines whether the task can be accomplished by available resources. If available state resources are not adequate, the task can be referred to the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) or to the Federal Government ESF's, according to the estimated adequacy and timeliness of the response.

EMAC is a cooperative agreement among the states which, in Katrina and Rita, provided law enforcement, security and search and rescue resources from as far away as California, New York, Michigan and The U.S. Virgin Islands. Only ten years old, EMAC has become a vital resource for response operations.

Of course the ultimate resource is the Federal Government. Response and recovery operations are carried out and funded with the full participation of Federal assets. In Louisiana, the Federal assets are well known for their scope and their ongoing, continuous support. We can expect that the Federal Government will continue to be involved in the Katrina/Rita recovery effort for years to come.

Emergency operations can be swift (as in the case of search and rescue, public safety and public health) and long lasting (as in the case of temporary housing and recovery). They encompass the entire range of helping professions. The process of identifying and quantifying needs, and getting and deploying the resources needed, can be monumental. It can be complex, frustrating and rewarding, all at the same time. But when the need arises, the state will be ready to work with the parishes and other governmental agencies to ameliorate the situation.

This series has now provided overviews of both the the structure and workings of the national emergency response system. The next installment of the Culture of Preparedness will move the perspective one step closer to the institution and the individual, addressing the second question of the four posed in the introductory article: What should I expect from the system at the national, state, and local levels? Stay tuned to next month's *Regents, Recap* for the next installment of this very important series. In the meantime, it is strongly recommended that stakeholders and participants in the preparedness process log on to <http://www.learningservices.us/FEMA/LMS/>, register, and complete the following recommended, no-cost courses in order to better understand the Culture of Preparedness: IS-100 - Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS); IS-200 - ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents; IS-700 - National Incident Management System(NIMS); IS-800 - National Response Plan (NRP). ■



Preparedness (from page 3)

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