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STATE OF LOUISIANA

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October 24, 2023

The Honorable John Bel Edwards
Governor, State of Louisiana

Dear Governor Edwards:

Act 400 of the 2018 Regular Legislative Session calls for action relative to the statewide master plan for postsecondary education. The Board of Regents is charged to submit an annual report on the status of postsecondary education, to include all master plan revisions since the last report.

Attached please find a copy of the Master Plan Year Four Review, which was released at the September 20, 2023 Board of Regents meeting. Also linked for reference are copies of the Master Plan Year [Three](#), [Two](#) and [One](#) Reviews as well as the full original Master Plan for Higher Education, "[Louisiana Prospers: Driving Our Talent Imperative](#)," adopted by the Board of Regents in August 2019.

This Master Plan established an ambitious educational attainment goal for Louisiana: 60% of Louisiana's working-age adults holding a degree or credential of value by the year 2030. The attached Year Four Review notes 49.5% of our adult population with a postsecondary credential, the highest-ever credential attainment for Louisiana and a strong advance toward our goal.

To succeed on our *Pathway to 2030* and ensure access and success for every population in Louisiana, Regents has identified a clear three-part formula. First, Regents is introducing a coordinated set of strategies that create widened education pathways to enable more people to begin or resume pursuing their higher education aspirations; second, Regents is promoting new proven strategies to increase student success; and third, Regents is recognizing and counting all postsecondary education degrees and credentials of value.

In the Year Four Review, you will find a series of major accomplishments, including first-in-the-country improvements of dual enrollment and admission policies as well as the implementation of *Louisiana's Meaxumentum Approach*. Built on successfully implemented policies and practices and the latest research from across the country, the Meauxmentum Approach uses an evidence-based framework to significantly improve student success and close equity gaps across the state. In addition, we launched a new kind of degree – Louisiana's Nexus Degree – to prepare students to join the rapidly evolving 21st-century workforce.

As we celebrate the accomplishments in Year Four, we will continue to push the pace on our Pathway to 2030. This year we will focus on better understanding the decline in college-going, addressing the mindsets of those who see postsecondary education as a risk without a reward and further strengthening our education-to-employment pipeline. Despite the profound disruptions in Louisiana and nationally since 2019, higher education stakeholders are confident that by moving forward on our Pathway to 2030 the state's wise investment in expanded higher education opportunities will achieve a more innovative, entrepreneurial, and prosperous Louisiana for all her people.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me concerning this response or any other matters relating to higher education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kim Hunter Reed".

Kim Hunter Reed, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Higher Education

Attachment

cc: The Honorable Patrick Page Cortez, Senate President
The Honorable Clay Schexnayder, Speaker of the House
Yolanda Dixon, Secretary of the Senate
Michelle Fontenot, Clerk of the House
Poynter Library (DRPLibrary@legis.la.gov)

2023
YEAR FOUR
REVIEW



BOARD of REGENTS
STATE OF LOUISIANA



MEAUX
MENTUM

Louisiana Board of Regents Master Plan Update

Year Four Review

The fourth year of Master Plan implementation was defined by answering the question – how do we reach our 2030 goal of 60% of our population holding a credential of value by 2030 and grow prosperity for all Louisianians, given the profound disruptions since 2020 including massive hurricanes and a global pandemic? This year, the Board of Regents focused on mapping our successful **Pathway to 2030** and doubling down on our efforts to ensure access and success for every population in the state. Our approach to achieving the 2030 attainment goal is three-fold: first, to introduce a coordinated set of strategies that create widened educational pathways that enable more people to begin or resume pursuing their higher education aspirations; second, to introduce a new approach to ensuring student success; and third, to recognize and count all postsecondary education degrees and credentials of value.

We have made significant strides along this journey, reversing some negative trends accelerated by the years of major disruption and putting into place mechanisms to yield stronger results in the coming years.

With first-in-the-country changes to dual enrollment and admissions policies, we are opening up new opportunities for more Louisianians to join the Prosperity Pipeline early. Together with our institutions and systems, we have adopted a comprehensive approach to increasing student success – **Louisiana’s Meauxmentum Approach**. Built on successfully implemented policies and practices and the latest research from across the country, the Meauxmentum Approach uses an evidence-based framework to significantly improve student success and close equity gaps across our state.

Our 60% goal, shaped by the projections for the Louisiana economy from the Georgetown Center, is rooted in the reality that this shared vision for our state is not about meeting the numerical goal, but about the real benefit to Louisiana of greater attainment: building new opportunities for and improving the social mobility of our people. It is about moving Louisianians to the prosperity that a well-paying, meaningful career can provide. It is about giving everyone across the state, regardless of background, the keys to their success. And it is about building the prosperity of our communities and our state. But reaching that goal requires that 60% of our adults hold credentials that reflect the education and skills to achieve their own goals while meeting the needs of the state’s economy, both today and tomorrow.

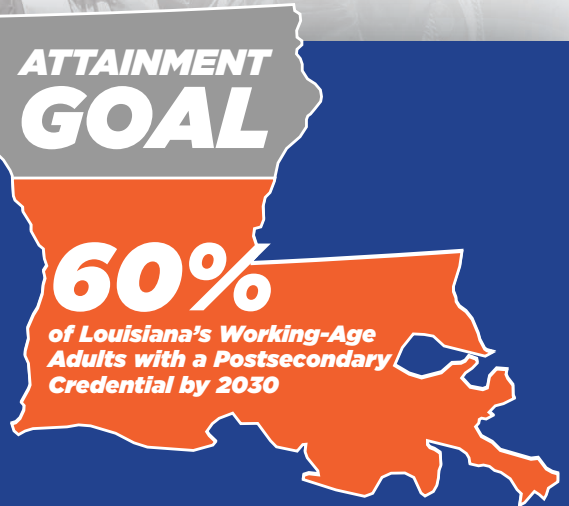
We know that higher education is a crucial element in our future, encompassing a vast breadth of offerings. Yes, our institutions offer the traditional associate’s, baccalaureate and graduate degrees that have stood the test of time, but they also offer technical diplomas and short-term industry-based certifications that provide training essential to maintaining a skilled and adaptable workforce. However, this year we adopted a new kind of degree – **Louisiana’s Nexus degree**. Initially developed in Georgia, the Nexus degree, the first new degree type created in the U.S. in more than a century, is specifically designed to prepare students for the rapidly evolving 21st-century workforce.

As we continue along the Pathway to 2030, our steadfast commitment remains to align the credentials offered by our institutions with the current and future workforce demands in our regions and state. We are confident that by moving forward on our Pathway to 2030 the state’s wise investment in expanded higher education opportunities will achieve for all our people a more innovative, entrepreneurial, and prosperous Louisiana.

ATTAINMENT
GOAL

60%

**of Louisiana’s Working-Age
Adults with a Postsecondary
Credential by 2030**






We know that budgets reflect priorities – and we are proud that this one speaks volumes about the Governor’s and Legislature’s shared commitment to the prosperity of our people.

**Dr. Kim Hunter Reed
Commissioner of Higher Education**




\$164.4M
Largest Base Funding Increase



\$492.3M
Largest Capital Outlay Allocation



\$15M
GO Grants Funding Increase



\$33.7M
Faculty Pay Increase

Major Year Four Accomplishments

NEW PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE ADMISSION

- Collaborated in statewide, cross-sector efforts to build Dual Enrollment Pathway to College for Louisiana HBCUs, regional, statewide and flagship institutions
- New pathways to HBCU admission
- “Promoting College-Going” high school outreach pilot
- Expanded Postsecondary Inclusive Education programs

STRENGTHENING THE EDUCATION-TO-EMPLOYMENT PIPELINE

- Launched the M.J. Foster Promise Adult Financial Aid Program aligned with high-demand fields
- Implemented the Geaux Teach Scholarship program
- Expanded cyber education programs
- Created Regional Healthcare Innovation Partnerships to address health workforce shortages
- Implemented the new Academic Planning process tied to state and regional workforce needs
- Hosted the inaugural Untapped Talent Summit focusing on justice-involved population

RECOGNIZING ALL CREDENTIALS OF VALUE

- Included all credentials from independent, proprietary, and public institutions, and out-of-state academic degree-granting institutions in the Pathway to 2030

SECURING FEDERAL FUNDING FOR UNIVERSITY-BASED STEM RESEARCH

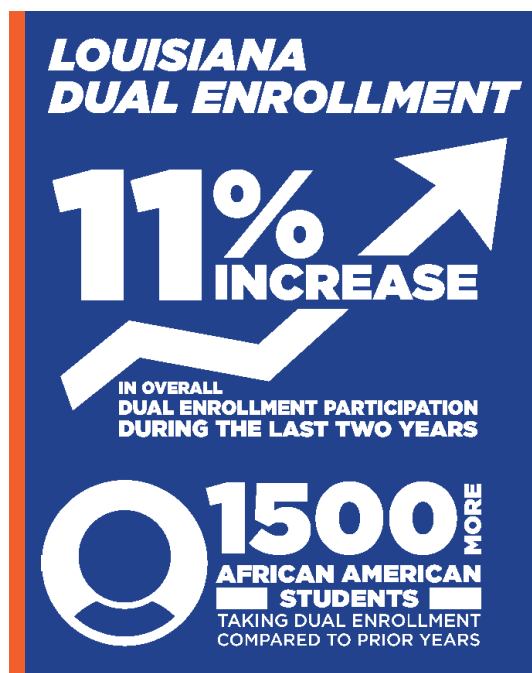
- Secured millions of dollars in competitively awarded STEM research grants from NSF, NIH, NASA, Department of Energy, and other funding agencies
- Collaborated in statewide, cross-sector efforts to build Louisiana’s new energy economy

Strategies and Opportunities

INCREASE COLLEGE-GOING

Over the first four years of Master Plan implementation we have expanded, in more ways than ever before, the avenues for Louisianians to enter the Prosperity Pipeline. Through the first major changes to college admissions criteria in more than 20 years, we have created a new admissions pathway that brings students into Louisiana’s public postsecondary institutions using those college-level credits earned in high school, as an alternative to traditional measures such as standardized test scores and high school academic performance.

These early college credits may be earned through dual enrollment, or through AP, IB, and CLEP exams, for which standardized statewide score thresholds have been established. We have also expanded access to dual enrollment courses through adoption of eligibility criteria that recognize multiple ways to demonstrate readiness to participate, including using standardized test scores or a high school counselor recommendation.



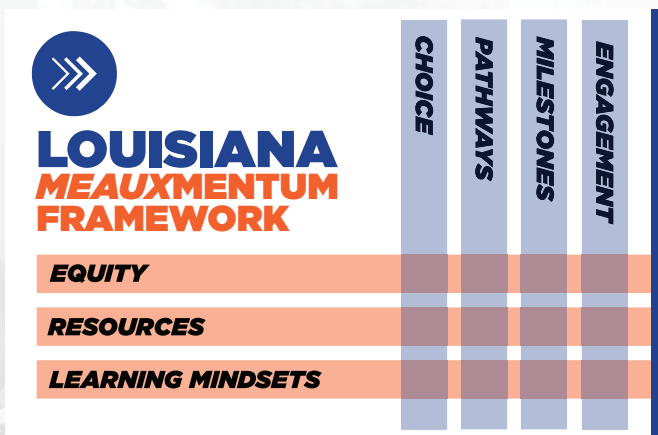
Year four also saw the initial launch of Louisiana’s adult financial aid opportunity, the M.J. Foster Promise program, geared toward recruiting to postsecondary education adults seeking to advance their opportunities and skills. In just its first year, the program provided support to more than 1,000 adult students seeking industry-based certifications or workforce-aligned degrees and diplomas.

IMPROVE COLLEGE SUCCESS

Last year we introduced the Louisiana Meauxmentum Framework, a refinement of work done in several other states, designed specifically to enable Louisiana’s public colleges and universities to improve student success. This updated framework allows all of our institutions to craft initiatives that impact

critical areas of the student experience within four structural threads - choices, pathways, milestones, and engagement - and considered through a lens shaped by three foundational strands: equity, resources, and learning mindsets. The strength of the new model lies in braiding together these powerful drivers to propel forward student success transformation at scale.

In February of this year, Regents brought together over 300 members of Louisiana’s higher education community at our inaugural Meauxmentum Summit, the first such event in the state’s history. Each of the twenty-eight public undergraduate institutions sent cross-functional executive teams, including student leaders, to engage in two days of intensive, campus-specific workshops, allowing them concentrated time for designing plans to implement the Louisiana Meauxmentum Framework at their institutions by fall 2024.





RECOGNIZE ALL CREDENTIALS OF VALUE

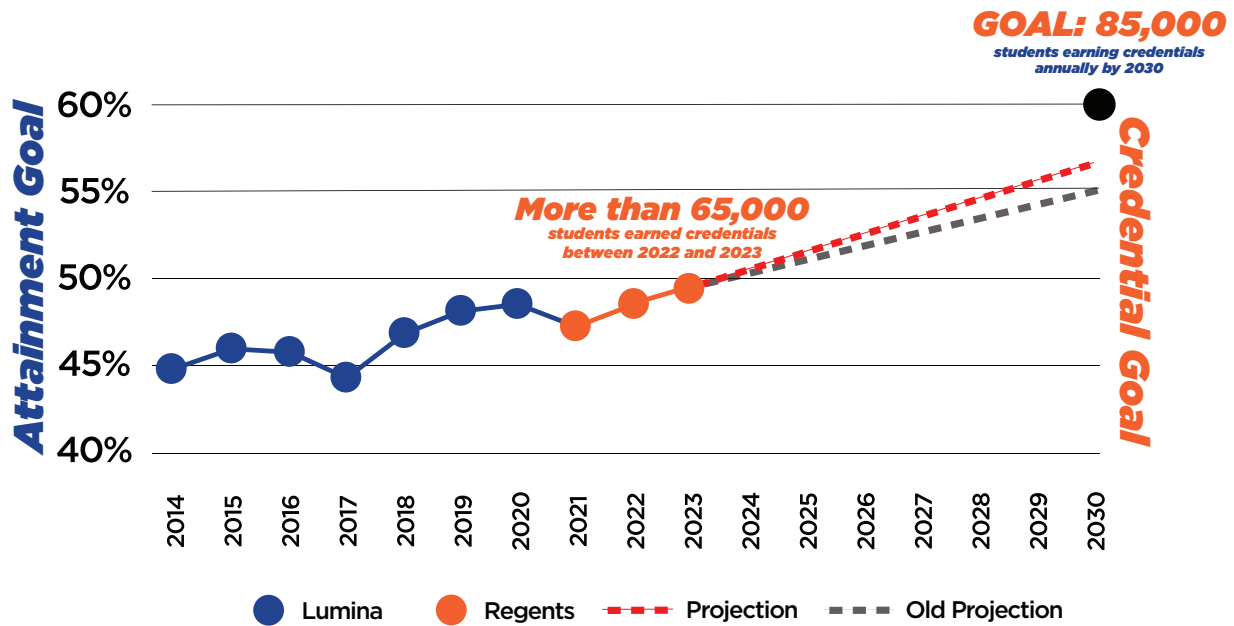
The Year Three Master Plan Update recognized that, in addition to the degrees, diplomas, and certificates awarded by Louisiana’s public colleges and universities, students also choose to earn credentials from Louisiana’s independent, proprietary, and out-of-state academic degree-granting institutions. In fact, many students seek industry-based certifications across these institution types, which can allow them to be better prepared for Louisiana’s world of work. To recognize their achievement and alignment with our goal of prosperity for all, we created mechanisms to gather data for the first time on credentials earned at all levels, from all of Louisiana’s postsecondary providers. In total in 2023, more than 65,000 students earned credentials that further progress toward our attainment goal.

In year four we also recognized that there are Louisiana students who, through work experiences or awarded college credits from multiple colleges and universities, have already met the requirements for their degree. So, we built the policy and procedural mechanisms required to award **Reverse Transfer Degrees** to these students. By fall 2023 we are sending the first letters sharing that good news with these potential degree recipients.



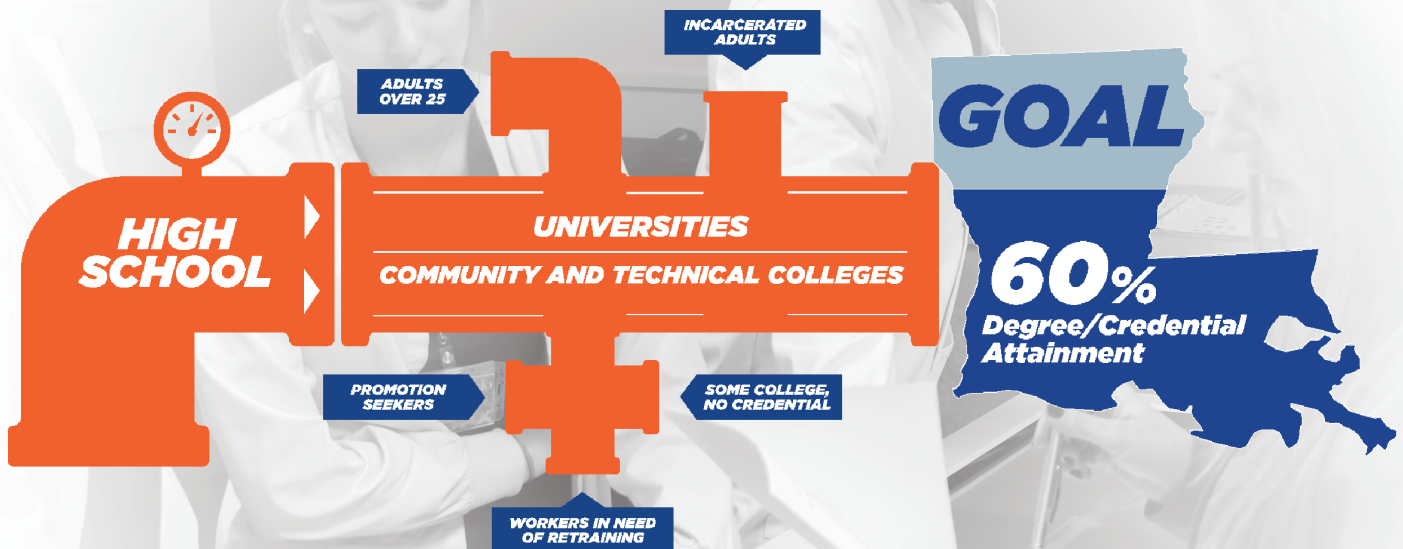
Progress to 2030 Goal

60% of Louisiana's Working-Age Adults with a Postsecondary Credential by 2030



Sources: Lumina Stronger Nation Report and Board of Regents

Those new credentials took Louisiana to a highest-ever 49.5% of our adult population with a postsecondary credential.



Next Steps

As we continue to push the pace on our Pathway to 2030, this year we will focus on better understanding the decline in college-going, addressing the mindsets of those who see postsecondary education as a risk without reward, and further strengthening our education-to-employment pipeline. Success this year will require us to move the attainment agenda from a state vision to regional and local ownership and engagement and to capitalize on the significant federal investments to improve Louisiana’s infrastructure, build our human capital and bridge the digital divide.



INCREASE COLLEGE-GOING

- Expand the “Promoting College-Going” high school pilot
- Implement Choice Credit Modality Dual Enrollment
- Launch the Dual Enrollment High School Teacher Credential Program
- Expand bookend pathways to college through early college high school programs and adult education
- Implement the National Guard Patriot Scholar Program



IMPROVE COLLEGE SUCCESS

- Support campus implementation of Meauxmentum plans and align policies and the funding formula to support and accelerate the work
- Fully implement corequisite math and advance corequisite English courses
- Implement the first 24 Universal Transfer Pathways and build more to clarify the academic journey to completion by discipline
- Expand work-based learning opportunities



RECOGNIZE ALL CREDENTIALS OF VALUE

- Support the awarding of the first Reverse Transfer Degrees
- Link Strategic Academic Planning with real-time employment demand data to strengthen the education-to-employment pipeline
- Create a statewide portfolio of industry-based certifications available at Louisiana’s universities and colleges
- Create an ROI report that measures the return on the state’s financial investment in higher education
- Further expand the sources for recognized credentials to include registered apprenticeships



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