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**AGENDA**  
**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**  
Wednesday, December 13, 2023  
11:20 a.m.

Claiborne Building, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Thomas Jefferson Rooms A&B 1-136  
1201 North Third Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Legislative Reports
  - a. TOPS Annual Report
  - b. Governor's Military and Veteran Friendly Campus Annual Report
  - c. Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council Annual Report
- IV. Approval for Submission of Legislative Reports
- V. Other Business
- VI. Adjournment

Committee Members: Phillip R. May, Jr., Chair, Terri P. Sterling, Vice Chair, David J. Aubrey, Blake R. David, Randy L. Ewing, Robert W. Levy, Samuel T. Gil, (*Student Member*), LCTC System Representative, LSU System Representative, SU System Representative, UL System Representative

Staff: Brianna Golden, Policy Advisor for Strategic Planning and Student Success

## AGENDA ITEM III.A.

### 2023 TOPS Report (as Required by R.S. 17:5067)

#### **Background Information**

Act 1375 of the 1997 Regular Legislative Session	Created TOPS awards
First class to receive TOPS awards	Entering freshman class of 1998
Act 1202 of the 2001 Regular Legislative Session	Prescribed BOR to prepare a yearly report analyzing the program
Act 227 of the 2015 Regular Legislative Session	Modified and clarified specific data points without making substantive changes to the report
Act 665 of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session	Eliminated the inclusion of parental income data in the report
Act 447 of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session	Added Geometry as a core curriculum requirement for TOPS <i>Tech</i>
Act 502 of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session	Added specific computer science courses as an alternative to the foreign language requirement for TOPS <i>Opportunity</i> , <i>Performance</i> , and <i>Honors</i>
Act 267 of the 2023 Regular Legislative Session	Added Financial Literacy as a required, one-unit core curriculum course for both the TOPS OPH and TOPS <i>Tech</i> core curricula. For TOPS <i>OPH</i> , it adds one core curriculum course, bringing the total courses required to 20. For TOPS <i>Tech</i> , it reduces the math electives to one course instead of two and adds Financial Literacy as the third required math.

#### **STAFF SUMMARY**

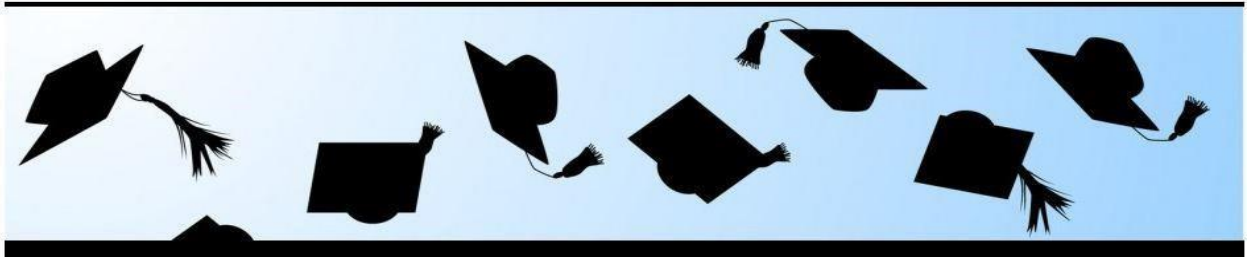
- From 2012-2013 to 2021-2022, 85.4% of students deemed eligible for a TOPS award accepted the award by enrolling in a postsecondary education institution in Louisiana.
- The proportions of eligible students who accept their award differ by award level. The proportion of eligible students for Opportunity, Performance, and Honors awards who choose to accept their award is declining.
- The average ACT score of all TOPS recipients between 2013-2014 and 2022-2023 was 24, and their average core GPA was 3.50.
- The average ACT composite for TOPS recipients for 2022-2023 was 24, and their average core GPA was 3.71.
- From 2012-2013 to 2021-2022, the majority of TOPS recipients were disproportionately white (71.0%) and disproportionately female (57.2%).
- Despite the racial gaps among TOPS recipients, the number of minority students receiving TOPS has generally increased over time, but not at the rate needed to erase the equity gap. This year, all minorities

saw modest increases in eligible students receiving TOPS. However, overall, the pool of eligible students has been declining, a trend reflected in ACT scores at the national level.

- Students who begin college with a TOPS award persist and graduate at higher rates than non-TOPS students.
- The average time-to-degree for TOPS recipients pursuing an associate's degree is 3.7 years, compared with 6.1 years for non-TOPS.
- The average time-to-degree for TOPS recipients pursuing a baccalaureate degree is 4.4 years, compared with 6.2 years for non-TOPS.
- From 1998-1999 through the 2022-2023 fiscal years, the state provided approximately \$5.10 billion in funding for the TOPS Program.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Senior Staff recommends approval of the "TOPS Report: Analysis of the TOPS Program from 2013-2022" and authorizes the Commissioner of Higher Education to submit the report to the appropriate legislative committees on behalf of the Board of Regents.**



TOPS Report:  
Analysis of the TOPS Program, 2013-2023

Louisiana Board of Regents

December 2023



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## **Executive Summary**

The Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (subsequently renamed the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, also known as TOPS) was created by Act 1375 of the 1997 Regular Legislative Session. The first college freshman class to receive TOPS awards entered postsecondary education in the fall of 1998.

Act 1202 of the 2001 Regular Legislative Session requires the Louisiana Board of Regents (BOR) to provide a report analyzing various aspects of the TOPS Program. Act 227 of the 2015 Regular Legislative Session modified prior law to clarify and specify data points without making any substantive changes to the program.

In accordance with Act 227, this report includes:

- An analysis of the relationship between high school courses taken and the student's American College Test (ACT) score;
- The number of high school graduates who are eligible for TOPS and subsequently enroll in college;
- Persistence (retention) rates of TOPS recipients;
- The number of and reasons for students losing award eligibility;
- Graduation data; and
- TOPS time-to-degree and degree attainment information.

Act 587 of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session added new reporting requirements to the TOPS report, including:

- Demographic information of program award recipients (race, gender, parents' income);
- High school GPA and ACT scores of program award recipients grouped by mean; and
- Average high school GPA and average ACT scores of students who lost the award.

Act 227 requires that this report be submitted annually by December 1 to the Senate Committee on Education and the House Committee on Education. The report includes current and historical data on TOPS students (students receiving an *Opportunity*, *Performance*, or *Honors* award) and, where appropriate, non-TOPS students to allow for comparison.

Overall, the findings indicated that:

- From 2012-2013 to 2021-2022, 85.4% of students deemed eligible for a TOPS award accepted the award by enrolling in a postsecondary education institution in Louisiana.
- The proportions of eligible students who accept their award differ by award level. The proportion of eligible students for Opportunity, Performance, and Honors awards who choose to accept their award is declining.
- The average ACT score of all TOPS recipients between 2013-2014 and 2022-2023 was 24, and their average core GPA was 3.50.

- The average ACT composite for TOPS recipients for 2022-2023 was 24, and their average core GPA was 3.71.
- From 2012-2013 to 2021-2022, the majority of TOPS recipients were disproportionately white (71.0%) and disproportionately female (57.2%).
- Despite the racial gaps among TOPS recipients, the number of minority students receiving TOPS has generally increased over time but not at the rate needed to erase the equity gap. This year, all minorities saw modest increases in eligible students receiving TOPS. However, overall, the pool of eligible students has been declining, a trend reflected in ACT scores at the national level.
- Students who begin college with a TOPS award persist and graduate at a higher rate than non-TOPS students.
- The average time-to-degree for TOPS recipients pursuing an associate degree is 3.7 years, compared with 6.1 years for non-TOPS.
- The average time-to-degree for TOPS recipients pursuing a baccalaureate degree is 4.4 years, compared with 6.2 years for non-TOPS.
- From 1998-1999 through the 2022-2023 fiscal years, the state spent approximately \$5.10 billion on the TOPS Program.

## **Introduction and Background**

### **TOPS Legislation**

**Act 1202** of the 2001 Regular Legislative Session charged the Board of Regents (BOR) with developing a uniform TOPS reporting system for policy analysis and program evaluation to provide accurate data and statistics relative to the program's impact on the state and students (Appendix A). To satisfy the reporting requirements, BOR staff developed interfaces between the major systems needed to identify and track TOPS students through the postsecondary education enrollment cycle. In addition to mandating the development of a TOPS reporting system, Act 1202 also required the BOR to prepare a report on various aspects of the TOPS Program. According to Act 1202, the "TOPS report" should include:

- An analysis of the relationship between high school courses taken and students' scores on the ACT;
- The number of high school graduates who are eligible for TOPS and subsequently enroll in college;
- Persistence (retention) rates of TOPS students by award level;
- The number of and reasons for students losing award eligibility;
- Graduation rates by award category (within 100% [4-year] and 150% [6-year] of time); and
- The number of students eligible for TOPS by award category, school, and parish.

**Act 587** (Appendix B) of the 2014 Regular Legislative Session added reporting requirements to the annual TOPS report, including:

- Demographic information of program award recipients;
- High school GPA and ACT scores of program award recipients grouped by mean, median, and mode; and
- The average high school GPA and ACT scores of those who lost the award and those placed on probationary status.

Act 587 mandates that this report be submitted to the Senate Committee on Education and the House Committee on Education no later than December 1 each year. Therefore, data on 2022-2023 TOPS recipients are not included to comply with the Act's established deadline.

**Act 227** of the 2015 Regular Legislative Session amended Act 1202 (Appendix C) for statutory clarity. The new law reorganizes, renumbers, and recodifies existing law without making substantive changes to the program beyond requiring additional data points to assess TOPS recipients' time to degree.

The **Acts of the 2016 Regular Session** of the Louisiana Legislature that impact TOPS are as follows:

- **Act 18** sets a floor for the TOPS award amount and provides that the qualifying ACT score shall be truncated to a whole number rather than rounded to the next whole number. These changes were effective beginning with the fall semester of 2016.



- **Act 388** increases the *core* grade point average (GPA) requirement to qualify for a TOPS *Performance* award from 3.0 to 3.25 and the GPA requirement for a TOPS *Honors* award from 3.0 to 3.50. These changes are effective for high school graduates of 2022 (per Acts 245 and 346 of the 2020 Regular Legislative Session).
- **Act 503** changes the methodology for eliminating students' TOPS awards in the event of a budget shortfall. When there is a budget shortfall, each student's TOPS award -- including *Performance* and *Honors* award stipends -- is subject to a reduction; National Guard stipends and TOPS *Tech* Early Start are not reduced. TOPS Awards will be distributed to all students according to a pro-rata distribution of the available funds. Under Act 503, students can "opt out" of receiving their TOPS Award during a budget shortfall. This change was effective beginning with the AY 2016-2017 award year.

The **Act of the 2017 Regular Session** of the Louisiana Legislature that impacts TOPS is as follows:

- **Act 44** clarifies Act 18 of the 2016 Regular Session that the award level shall be the TOPS award amount charged to students during the AY 2016-2017.

The **Acts of the 2018 Regular Session** of the Louisiana Legislature that impact TOPS are as follows:

- **Act 671** changes certain TOPS initial eligibility requirements and provides relative to sharing specific student data.
- **Act 583** establishes the TOPS Income Fund as a special treasury fund. Monies in the fund can be combined with other funds; however, all monies in the TOPS Income Fund shall be used solely to fund the TOPS Program.

The **Act of the 2019 Regular Session** of the Louisiana Legislature that impacts TOPS is as follows:

- **S.R. 10** requires the BOR to study the feasibility of updating TOPS reporting requirements to include data on scholarship recipients' employment outcomes and other relevant information.

The **Acts of the 2020 Regular Session** of the Louisiana Legislature that impact TOPS are as follows:

- **Act 346** modified qualifications for the TOPS scholarships and continuing eligibility requirements for the 2019-2020 academic year.
- **Act 245** charges the administering agency to adopt rules to provide waivers and exceptions to initial eligibility requirements and continuing eligibility requirements for students impacted by the public health emergency declared by the governor in response to the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

- **Act 17** declared exceptions for Hurricane Laura-affected students and applied to students who had a home of record in an affected parish or enrolled in an eligible college or university in an affected parish.

The **Acts of the 2021 Regular Session** of the Louisiana Legislature that impact TOPS are as follows:

- **Act 334** adds African-American History as a core curriculum social studies requirement for TOPS.
- **Act 407** adds race and ethnicity data that may be collected and shared with BOR and LOFSA for assessment, evaluation, and policy development.

The **Acts of the 2022 Regular Session** of the Louisiana Legislature that impact TOPS are as follows:

- **Act 665** eliminates the requirement that parental income data be included in the report.
- **Act 447** adds Geometry as a core curriculum requirement for TOPS *Tech* beginning with 2027 high school graduates.
- **Act 502** adds specific computer science courses as an alternative to the foreign language requirement for TOPS *Opportunity*, *Performance*, and *Honors* core curriculum beginning with 2027 high school graduates.
- **Act 681** provides exceptions to the initial and continuing eligibility requirements for students impacted by Hurricane Ida.

The **Acts of the 2023 Regular Session** of the Louisiana Legislature that impact TOPS are as follows:

- **Act 267** adds Financial Literacy as a required, one-unit core curriculum course for both the TOPS OPH and TOPS *Tech* core curricula. For TOPS *OPH*, it adds one core curriculum course, bringing the total courses required to 20. For TOPS *Tech*, it reduces the math electives to one course instead of two and adds Financial Literacy as the third required math.
- **Act 224** provides that any student who receives a tuition waiver due to being a 100% disabled veteran will not receive a TOPS Award. Note that the House Floor eliminated the stipend of \$600 per academic year and the enhanced book stipend for TOPS *Performance* and *Honors* recipients.
- **Act 405** amends the definition of Louisiana Resident to allow graduates of 2023 and later to meet the residency requirement if their parent or court-ordered custodian was a Louisiana resident for at least the 24 months preceding the date they moved out of the country, provided that they remain a Louisiana resident as demonstrated by ownership of property, maintenance of a home, payment of Louisiana taxes, etc. during the entire time the parent or custodian was living out of the country.

### **Brief History of the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)**

The Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (subsequently renamed the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students, also known as TOPS), Louisiana's merit-based student aid program, was created via Act 1375 of the 1997 Regular Legislative Session. The first freshman class to receive TOPS awards entered postsecondary education in the fall of 1998. Although the founding legislation does not directly document the goals of the program, the four generally accepted purposes of TOPS are to:

- Promote academic success by requiring completion of a rigorous high school core curriculum;
- Provide financial incentives as a reward for good academic performance;
- Keep Louisiana's best and brightest in the state to pursue postsecondary education with the hope that they will remain in the state and become productive members of Louisiana's workforce and
- Promote access to and success in postsecondary education.

### **Eligibility Criteria, Levels of Award, Renewal Requirements, Distribution of Awards**

Four TOPS awards are available to students enrolling at Louisiana's colleges and universities: TOPS *Tech*, *Opportunity*, *Performance*, and *Honors*. Trend data for the TOPS *Tech* Award can be found in Appendix D. Act 230 of the 2015 Regular Session changed the TOPS *Tech* program. Under Act 230, students graduating from high school during the 2016-2017 school year and thereafter can use the TOPS *Tech* Award to pursue an associate's degree or other shorter-term training and education credential, including skill, occupational, vocational, technical, certificate, and academic, that the Workforce Investment Council and the Board of Regents have determined is aligned to state workforce priorities.

The eligibility criteria for the *Opportunity*, *Performance*, *Honors*, and *Tech* Awards include completion of a defined high school core curriculum, with a minimum grade point average (GPA) in core courses and a minimum ACT composite score. Table 1 lists all TOPS awards' current eligibility criteria and award components. Currently, the TOPS Core Curriculum consists of 19 units. The specific course requirements of the TOPS Core Curriculum can be found in Appendix E.

Historically, the administration of TOPS was statutorily assigned to the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission (LASFAC). However, Act 314 of the 2016 Regular Session abolished LASFAC and transferred its duties to the Board of Regents. Therefore, the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) has been administering the TOPS Program under the BOR, as directed by the acts of the Louisiana Legislature since that date. Program eligibility is determined using the high school transcript from the Louisiana Department of Education's Student Transcript System (STS) and official composite ACT scores. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or TOPS Online Application are the mechanisms for applying for TOPS.

**Table 1**

<b>TOPS Eligibility Criteria and Award Components</b>				
<b>Award</b>	<b>Core Units</b>	<b>Core GPA</b>	<b>ACT Composite</b>	<b>Duration</b>
<b><i>Opportunity</i></b>	19	2.50	Prior-year state average, currently 20	4 years or 8 semesters
<b><i>Performance</i></b>	19	3.25	23	4 years or 8 semesters
<b><i>Honors</i></b>	19	3.50	27	4 years or 8 semesters
<b>TOPS Tech</b>	21 Jumpstart Career Path Core Units	2.5	17 or higher or a silver- level score on the assessments of the ACT WorkKeys system	2 years

Source: LOSFA website - TOPS Brochures & Flyers

Achievement of the required GPA must occur within one year for TOPS *Tech*.

To maintain eligibility, TOPS and TOPS *Tech* recipients must be continuously enrolled as full-time students, earn at least 24 semester hours each academic year (fall, spring, and summer), and maintain satisfactory academic progress as demonstrated by the cumulative grade point average. Continuing eligibility is determined by LOSFA based on data from the postsecondary institution in which the student is enrolled. Table 2 lists the minimum renewal requirements for each award.

**Table 2**

<b>Minimum Renewal Requirements</b>			
<b>Award</b>	<b>Hrs. Earned /AY</b>	<b>Cumulative GPA for Continuation</b>	<b>Award Reinstated* (Upon recovery of req. GPA)</b>
<b><i>Opportunity</i></b>	24	2.30 after 24 credit hours earned 2.50 after 48 credit hours earned Maintain steady academic progress at the end of all other terms (2.00 TOPS cumulative GPA)	Yes
<b><i>Performance</i></b>	24	3.00 after 24 credit hours earned Maintain satisfactory academic progress at the end of all other terms (2.00 TOPS cumulative GPA)	Yes, <i>Opportunity</i>
<b><i>Honors</i></b>	24	3.00 after 24 credit hours earned Maintain satisfactory academic progress at the end of all other terms (2.00 TOPS cumulative GPA)	Yes, <i>Opportunity</i>
<b><i>TOPS Tech</i></b>	24	2.5 after 24 credit hours earned Maintain satisfactory academic progress at the end of all other terms (2.00 TOPS cumulative GPA)	Yes

Source: LOFSA website - TOPS Brochures & Flyers

\*Achievement of the required GPA must occur within two years *for Opportunity, Performance, and Honors* and one year for *Tech*.

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of TOPS awards across systems for AY 2022-2023. This year, one-half (50.0%) of TOPS awards went to students attending a UL System campus. Of students with the highest level of award, the *Honors* Award, 44.9% attended an LSU System campus, followed closely by UL System campuses at 44.5%. Data also indicate that most students (42.3%) with TOPS awards had an *Opportunity* Award.

**Table 3**

Distribution of Award Types Across Systems, AY 2022-2023							
Award	LSU System	Southern System	UL System	LCTC System	Private Institutions	Proprietary Schools	% of all Awards
<i>Opportunity</i>	29.5%	2.5%	54.6%	7.1%	5.6%	0.8%	42.3%
<i>Performance</i>	33.9%	0.8%	55.7%	3.2%	6.1%	0.3%	28.1%
<i>Honors</i>	44.9%	0.2%	44.5%	0.7%	9.5%	0.1%	24.7%
<i>TOPS Tech</i>	9.2%	0.8%	4.8%	73.4%	0.0%	11.9%	4.8%
% of all awards	33.6%	1.4%	50.0%	7.6%	6.4%	1.0%	100.0%
Source: LOSFA - TOPS Payment Summary by Award Level for Academic Year 2022-2023 as of 08/14/2023							

### **TOPS Report: Historical Analysis of the TOPS Program, from 2011-2012 to 2021-2022**

This report includes current and historical data on TOPS students (receiving an *Opportunity*, *Performance*, *Honors*, or *Tech* Award) and, where appropriate, non-TOPS students to allow for comparison. Some of the data provided in the "Preparation" section and all the data provided in the "Participation," "Persistence/Retention," and "Graduation" sections of this report do not include private postsecondary institutions since those institutions do not currently participate in Regents' reporting systems.

### **Methodology**

This report contains data from public and private institutions, except for graduation rates, retention rates, and time-to-degree. Private institutions are currently not required to report this information to the Board of Regents.

In this year's report, we have made several improvements to the granularity of the underlying data. These improved data have allowed us to refine the calculations of retention, graduation, and time-to-degree. These subtle changes in methodology should be taken into account when comparing this report to previous reports.

### **Preparation**

With the 2001 Master Plan, the BOR adopted the TOPS Core as the Regents' Core, the most critical element of the minimum standards for admission to the state's public four-year colleges and universities. The TOPS/BOR Core currently consists of four units of coursework in English, Math, Natural Science, and Social Science, two units of foreign language, and one unit of study in fine arts. TOPS academic eligibility criteria require students to take this nineteen-hour core curriculum to prepare them for success after high school, particularly in postsecondary education. With this change, students had a double incentive to complete the college-preparatory curriculum. Table 4 illustrates the average ACT composite between students who completed the BOR core and those who did not complete the BOR core.

**Table 4**

<b>Average ACT Composite, AY 2019-2022</b>					
<b>High School Grad Year</b>	<b>Average ACT Composite for students completing BOR Core</b>		<b>Average ACT Composite for students not completing BOR Core</b>		<b>Total High School Graduates with an ACT Composite from LOSFA</b>
	<b>AVG ACT</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>AVG ACT</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Count</b>
2019	21.3	33,739	15.0	6,049	39,788
2020	21.2	32,310	14.7	4,802	37,112
2021	20.8	31,405	14.4	5,245	36,650
2022	20.7	30,816	14.4	5,618	36,434

Source: Louisiana Department of Education and LOSFA Files.

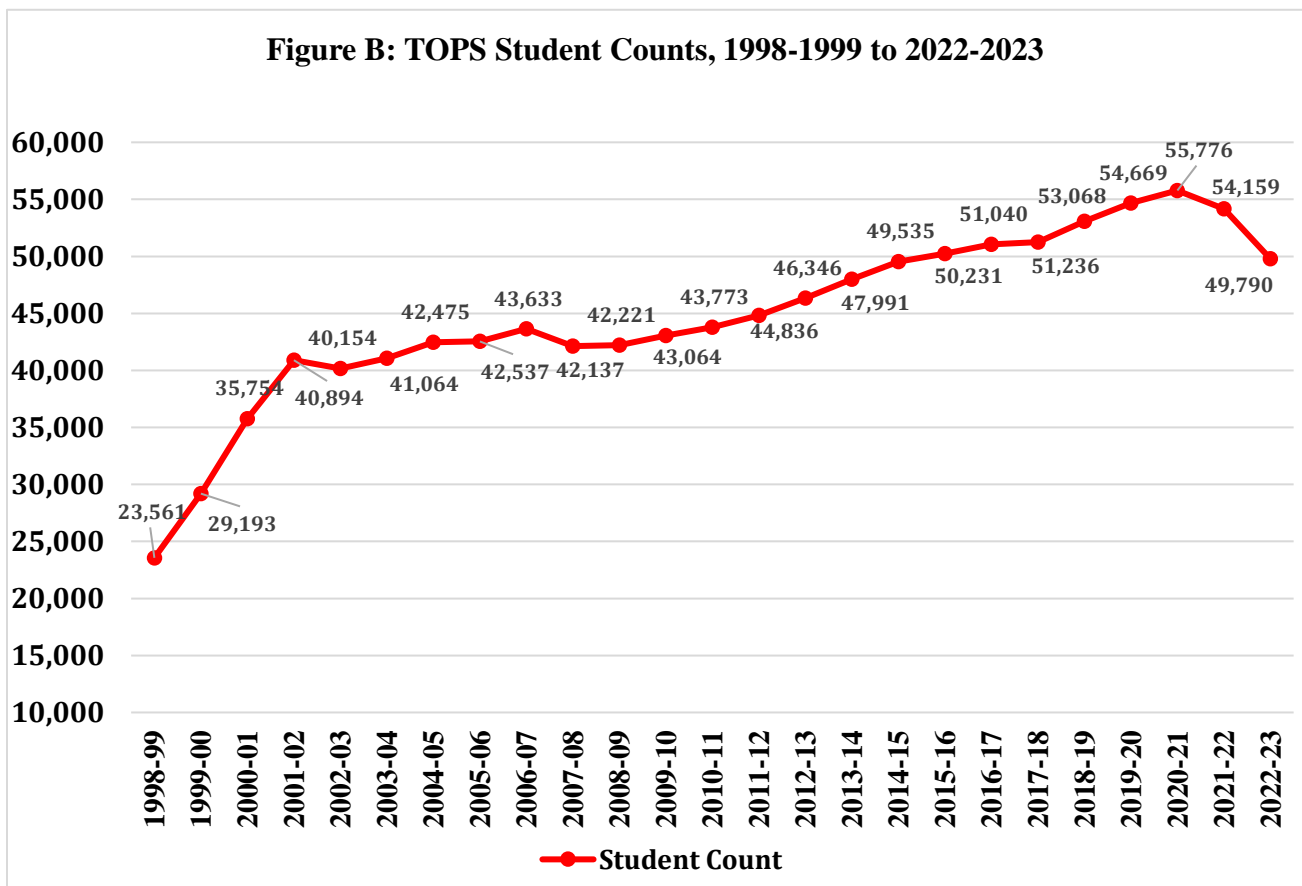
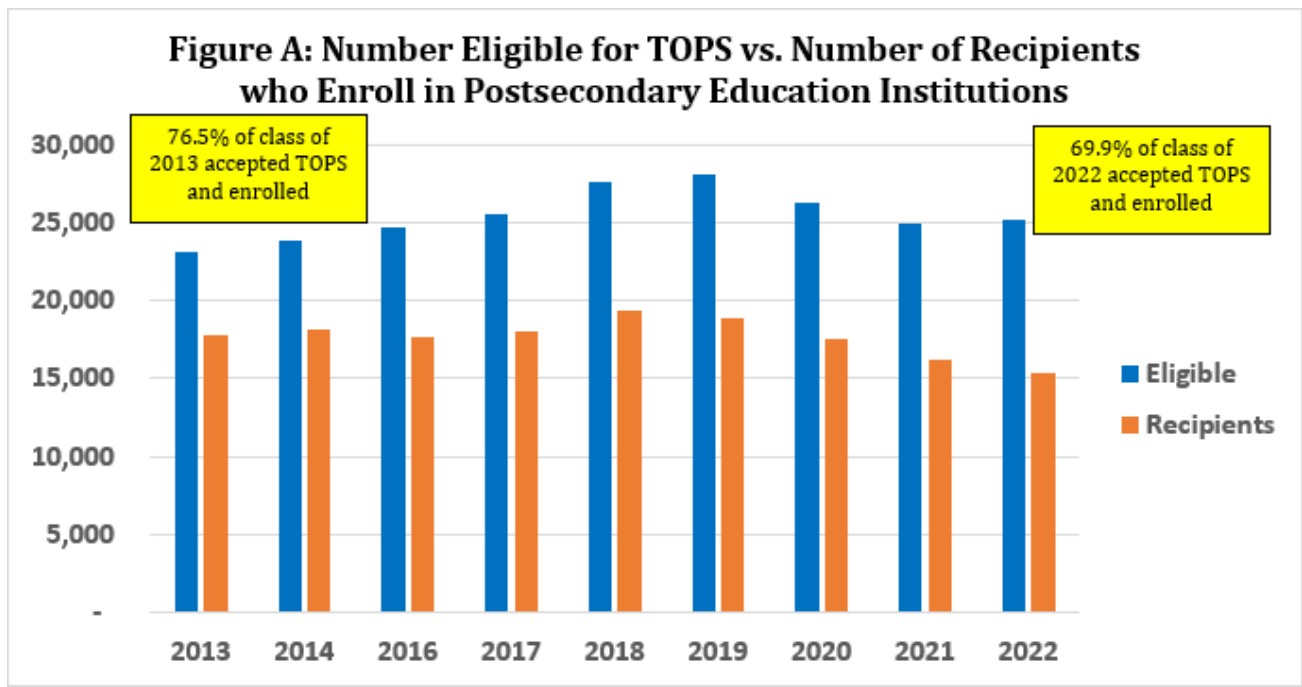
### Participation

A generally accepted purpose of TOPS is to attract and retain Louisiana's high school graduates who are more likely to persist and attain a postsecondary credential. A common slogan associated with the TOPS Program has been to "retain the best and brightest" students to attend Louisiana's colleges, with the hope that they will enter the state's workforce after graduation. A recent Washington Post (September 2022) analysis reported, "Louisiana ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in keeping graduates in the state."

To that end, of the 253,734 students deemed eligible for a TOPS *Opportunity, Performance, Honors*, or TOPS *Tech Award* between 2013 and 2022, 177,295 (or 69.9%) accepted the award and enrolled in a postsecondary education institution in Louisiana (see Figure A).

While data supports the claims that participation in the TOPS Program keeps Louisiana students in the state to attain their postsecondary education, declining numbers of high school graduates and college-going high school graduates over the past several years are of concern. The percentage of students accepting TOPS and enrolling in college (Figure A) is the lowest it has been in ten years.

Several years of declining high school graduate numbers and declines in the number of TOPS-eligible students, combined with lower proportions of students receiving their awards, have resulted in a second decline in the number of overall TOPS recipients and, for the second year, an increase in TOPS funding was not requested (Figure B).



While Figure A presents the overall acceptance rate, this average masks significant differences in acceptance rates for the four different TOPS awards.



While the acceptance rates for *Opportunity* and *Performance* awards have remained in the mid-80s in recent years (Table 5), a steadily declining proportion of *Honors* awardees have been accepting their award. That proportion has dropped from 80% in 2018-19 to 75% in 2020-21.

**Table 5**

<b>TOPS ACCEPTANCE RATES</b>				
<b>YEAR</b>	<b><i>Opportunity</i></b>	<b><i>Performance</i></b>	<b><i>Honors</i></b>	<b><i>Tech</i></b>
<b>2014-2015</b>	89%	92%	82%	23%
<b>2015-2016</b>	86%	91%	81%	18%
<b>2016-2017</b>	85%	89%	78%	23%
<b>2017-2018</b>	83%	88%	79%	25%
<b>2018-2019</b>	83%	88%	80%	25%
<b>2019-2020</b>	83%	88%	78%	23%
<b>2020-2021</b>	83%	86%	75%	24%

Also striking is that only about one in four of those eligible for a TOPS *Tech* award choose to accept their scholarship and enroll in an eligible program (refer to Appendix D). Table 6 illustrates the mean ACT and Core GPA of TOPS recipients.

**Table 6**

<b>Mean ACT and Core GPA of TOPS Recipients*</b>		
<b>H.S. Cohort</b>	<b>TOPS Recipients' Average Composite ACT Score</b>	<b>TOPS Recipients' Average Core GPA</b>
2013-2014	24	3.35
2014-2015	24	3.35
2015-2016	24	3.37
2016-2017	24	3.40
2017-2018	24	3.53
2018-2019	24	3.57
2019-2020	24	3.63
2020-2021	24	3.68
2021-2022	24	3.71
2022-2023**	24	3.71

\* Since 2013, the average overall composite ACT score of TOPS recipients is 24, and the overall average GPA is 3.50

\*\*Of those eligible

As illustrated below in Table 7, TOPS recipients' average ACT scores vary by race. Composite ACT scores for African American students throughout the past ten years have increased to an average of 22.7 for 2021-2022, compared to 24.4 for white and 23.9 for Hispanic students.

ACT reported that the number of Louisiana students taking the ACT more than once declined last

year; this decrease in retesting is of concern as it has been found that students who retest do better in the subsequent test administrations. If a student took only one administration of the ACT, then there is a possibility that lower scores might not meet TOPS eligibility criteria, although a student could achieve that mark with an additional attempt.

**Table 7**

TOPS Recipients, by Race and ACT Composite Score*							
HS Cohort	Asian	American Indian	African American	White	Hispanic	Other	Total
2012-2013	25.0	23.4	22.4	24.4	23.9	24.4	24.0
2013-2014	25.1	23.6	22.3	24.5	24.3	24.4	24.1
2014-2015	25.4	23.3	22.4	24.5	24.0	24.5	24.1
2015-2016	25.8	23.8	22.7	24.7	24.3	24.5	24.3
2016-2017	25.5	24.3	22.6	24.7	24.2	24.7	24.3
2017-2018	25.5	23.8	22.6	24.8	24.4	24.0	24.4
2018-2019	26.0	23.3	22.6	24.8	24.1	24.3	24.4
2019-2020	25.8	25.0	22.8	24.8	24.1	24.5	24.4
2020-2021	25.8	23.6	22.6	24.5	24.1	24.1	24.2
2021-2022	25.6	24.1	22.7	24.4	23.9	24.1	24.1
* It should be noted that 2,985 individuals did not report their race. Therefore they were not included in this analysis.							
Source: LOSFA internal data files as of August 2023.							

As Table 8 indicates, overall TOPS recipients are predominantly white. In 2021-2022, the first-time entering freshman student population was 50.5% white; this reflects all enrolled first-time freshmen (including in-state, out-of-state, TOPS recipients, and non-TOPS students).

Despite the racial gaps among TOPS recipients, the number of minority students accepting TOPS has generally increased over time; this year, the numbers of African American, American Indian, Asian, and Hispanic TOPS recipients all saw a slight increase (Tables 8 and 9).

**Table 8**

TOPS Recipients, by Race*							
HS Cohort	Asian	American Indian	African American	White	Hispanic	Other	Total
2012-2013	492	82	2,947	12,176	413	138	16,248
2013-2014	518	111	2,770	12,144	461	144	16,148
2014-2015	539	110	3,081	12,492	507	150	16,879
2015-2016	509	102	3,092	12,087	545	154	16,489
2016-2017	506	97	2,942	12,183	537	195	16,460
2017-2018	563	117	3,312	12,758	586	258	17,594
2018-2019	525	73	2,954	12,214	592	269	16,627
2019-2020	531	71	2,658	11,472	599	268	15,599
2020-2021	519	74	2,151	10,662	549	255	14,210
2021-2022	531	76	2,276	9,856	632	254	13,625

\* It should be noted that 2,985 individuals did not report their race. Therefore they were not included in this analysis.

Source: LOSFA internal data files as of August 2023.

**Table 9**

TOPS Recipients, by Race								
HS Cohort	Asian	American Indian	African American	White	Hispanic	Other	Not Reported	Total
2012-2013	3%	0%	18%	74%	3%	1%	1%	100%
2013-2014	3%	1%	17%	73%	3%	1%	3%	100%
2014-2015	3%	1%	18%	73%	3%	1%	2%	100%
2015-2016	3%	1%	18%	72%	3%	1%	2%	100%
2016-2017	3%	1%	18%	73%	3%	1%	2%	100%
2017-2018	3%	1%	19%	72%	3%	1%	1%	100%
2018-2019	3%	0%	17%	72%	4%	2%	2%	100%
2019-2020	3%	0%	17%	72%	4%	2%	2%	100%
2020-2021	4%	1%	15%	74%	4%	2%	2%	100%
2021-2022	4%	1%	16%	71%	5%	2%	2%	100%
Source: LOSFA internal data files as of August 2023.								

TOPS recipients have been predominantly female for more than a decade. As Tables 10 and 11 noted, in 2021-2022, 57.2% of TOPS recipients were female. Male students receiving TOPS have had slightly higher average ACT scores; however, the number of male participants is 42.5%. In comparison, 56.2% of the total Academic Year 2021-2022 first-time freshman undergraduate population was female; this percentage reflects all enrolled first-time freshmen (including in-state, out-of-state, TOPS recipients, and non-TOPS students).

**Table 10**

TOPS Recipients ACT Composite Score* by Gender			
H.S. Cohort	Female	Male	Total
2012-2013	23.7	24.5	24.0
2013-2014	23.8	24.6	24.1
2014-2015	23.8	24.6	24.1
2015-2016	24.0	24.8	24.3
2016-2017	24.0	24.9	24.4
2017-2018	24.0	24.9	24.4
2018-2019	24.1	24.9	24.4
2019-2020	24.1	25.0	24.5
2020-2021	23.9	24.6	24.2
2021-2022	23.9	24.5	24.2

Source: BOR data files as of August 2023

\* The average includes only those students whose data points were fully reported. It should be noted that over the ten-year period, 420 individuals did not report their gender and are not included in this analysis.

**Table 11**

TOPS Recipients, by Gender*			
H.S. Cohort	Female	Male	Total
2012-2013	9,597	6,852	16,449
2013-2014	9,784	6,925	16,709
2014-2015	10,130	7,026	17,156
2015-2016	9,925	6,849	16,774
2016-2017	9,775	6,913	16,688
2017-2018	10,334	7,441	17,775
2018-2019	9,729	7,095	16,824
2019-2020	9,236	6,566	15,802
2020-2021	8,216	6,212	14,428
2021-2022	7,943	5,896	13,839

Source: BOR data files as of August 2023

\* The average includes only those students whose data points were fully reported. It should be noted that over the ten-year period, 420 individuals did not report their gender and are not included in this analysis.

### **Persistence (Retention)**

Persistence in postsecondary education is measured by the rate at which first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students are retained in (or return for) their second year. As illustrated in Tables 12, 13, and 14, students who begin college with a TOPS award return to postsecondary education in subsequent years at higher rates than non-TOPS students.

Furthermore, students receiving the *Performance* and *Honors* Awards, generally better prepared for postsecondary education, are retained at higher rates than those receiving the *Opportunity* Award.

Table 13 examines the overall retention rate (retention at any Louisiana public postsecondary

institution, not necessarily the institution where the student started) through the second, third, and fourth years of students with TOPS who began at a four-year institution compared to those who started without TOPS.

**Table 12**

<b>Statewide Retention Rates of TOPS vs. Non-TOPS Students Who Began at a Four-Year Institution</b>						
<b>Fall Semester Entering Class</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Yr. Retention</b>		<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Yr. Retention</b>		<b>4<sup>th</sup> Yr. Retention</b>	
	<b>TOPS</b>	<b>Non-TOPS</b>	<b>TOPS</b>	<b>Non-TOPS</b>	<b>TOPS</b>	<b>Non-TOPS</b>
2012	87%	66%	81%	52%	75%	46%
2013	87%	63%	81%	53%	76%	44%
2014	87%	65%	81%	53%	75%	46%
2015	87%	61%	80%	51%	75%	43%
2016	88%	64%	81%	53%	76%	45%
2017	88%	65%	81%	52%	76%	44%
2018	88%	63%	81%	49%	75%	40%
2019	89%	65%	81%	50%	73%	42%
2020	87%	60%	79%	45%	0%	0%
2021	88%	60%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: BoR internal data files as of September 2023

Table 13 examines the overall retention rate by award level of TOPS students who began at a four-year institution through the second, third, and fourth years.

**Table 13**

<b>Statewide Retention Rates of TOPS Students Who Began at a Four-Year Institution by TOPS Award Level</b>									
<b>Fall Semester Entering Class</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Yr. Retention</b>			<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Yr. Retention</b>			<b>4<sup>th</sup> Yr. Retention</b>		
	<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Honors</b>	<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Honors</b>
2012	82%	91%	94%	73%	85%	90%	67%	80%	86%
2013	81%	91%	95%	74%	85%	90%	68%	79%	86%
2014	81%	91%	94%	72%	85%	90%	66%	80%	86%
2015	81%	90%	94%	73%	84%	90%	66%	79%	86%
2016	82%	90%	93%	74%	85%	89%	68%	79%	84%
2017	82%	91%	94%	74%	84%	89%	68%	79%	84%
2018	82%	90%	93%	74%	84%	89%	67%	78%	82%
2019	83%	90%	95%	72%	84%	89%	64%	76%	82%
2020	81%	89%	93%	71%	82%	88%	0%	0%	0%
2021	83%	90%	93%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: BoR internal data files as of September 2023

Table 14 examines the overall retention rate in the second year of students who began with TOPS at a two-year institution compared to those who started without TOPS (Non-TOPS students include only Louisiana residents for comparative purposes).

**Table 14**

<b>Statewide Retention Rates of TOPS vs. Non-TOPS Students Who Began at a Two-Year Institution</b>		
Fall Semester Entering Class	2 <sup>nd</sup> Year Retention	
	TOPS	Non-TOPs
2012	76%	51%
2013	74%	51%
2014	75%	52%
2015	76%	51%
2016	76%	48%
2017	76%	49%
2018	77%	51%
2019	75%	46%
2020	73%	51%
2021	76%	53%

Source: BOR internal data files as of September 2023

### **Retaining the TOPS award**

As previously noted, students who receive a TOPS award must meet minimum academic criteria to retain their award (See Table 2). The award is cancelled when students fail to maintain full-time and continuous enrollment, earn 24 hours of credit per academic year, or maintain the minimum GPA. Students may request and be granted exceptions for failure to meet these criteria for circumstances beyond their control, including illness, death in the family, military service, natural disasters, etc. TOPS Awards are initially suspended for GPA and are permanently cancelled after two years. TOPS *Tech* awards are permanently cancelled after one year has passed during which the student has not attained the required GPA. As shown in Table 15, the number of awards cancelled has declined over time.

Furthermore, between the 2012-2013 cohort and the 2022-2023 cohort, 187,430 students received TOPS awards. Of these TOPS award recipients, 31,901 (17%) had their TOPS award cancelled during their postsecondary academic career. From 2012-2013 to 2022-2023, the cumulative total of cancelled awards was 31,901. Of these 31,901 cancelled awards, 28,148 were cancelled due to students' failure to earn 24 hours of college credit during an academic year, 2,555 due to the GPA requirement, and 1,198 due to non-continuous enrollment. The vast majority of awards are cancelled due to the 24-hour requirement. However, there has been a decreasing trend of award cancellations in recent years.

**Table 15**

<b>Percentage of TOPS Award Cancelled** by Cohort</b>									
<b>Entering Cohort</b>	<b>Total # of TOPS Awards</b>	<b>Total # of Awards Cancelled*</b>		<b>Cancelled: 24 Hr. Requirement</b>		<b>Cancelled: GPA Requirement</b>		<b>Cancelled: Non-Continuous Enrollment</b>	
2012-2013	16,171	4,314	27%	3,652	23%	557	3%	105	1%
2013-2014	16,994	4,578	27%	3,901	23%	556	3%	121	1%
2014-2015	17,306	4,488	26%	3,999	23%	382	2%	107	1%
2015-2016	17,883	4,553	25%	4,086	23%	355	2%	112	1%
2016-2017	16,974	4,045	24%	3,602	21%	311	2%	132	1%
2017-2018	17,262	2,968	17%	2,631	15%	202	1%	135	1%
2018-2019	18,511	2,705	15%	2,412	13%	138	1%	155	1%
2019-2020	18,198	1,394	8%	1,212	7%	43	0%	139	1%
2020-2021	16,958	1,364	8%	1,256	7%	10	0%	98	1%
2021-2022	15,704	1,174	7%	1,101	7%	1	0%	72	0%
2022-2023	15,469	318	2%	296	2%		0%	22	0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>187,430</b>	<b>31,901</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>28,148</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>2,555</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1,198</b>	<b>1%</b>

Source: BOR data files as of August 2023

\* Due to change in methodology by LOSFA in 2018 regarding a timeframe change from 90 days to 9 months for data collection. For awards cancelled for 2021-2022, these data are not available at this time and will be reported in the next year.

\*\*Students whose awards are cancelled for everything but GPA, may request and be approved for an exception under existing law.

The average ACT score of all TOPS recipients who had their awards cancelled between 2010-2011 and 2021-2022 (due to failure to earn the required 24 hours of credit per academic year, achieve the required minimum GPA, or maintain full-time and continuous enrollment) was 23.1. This group's average high school GPA was 3.17 (Table 16).

**Table 16**

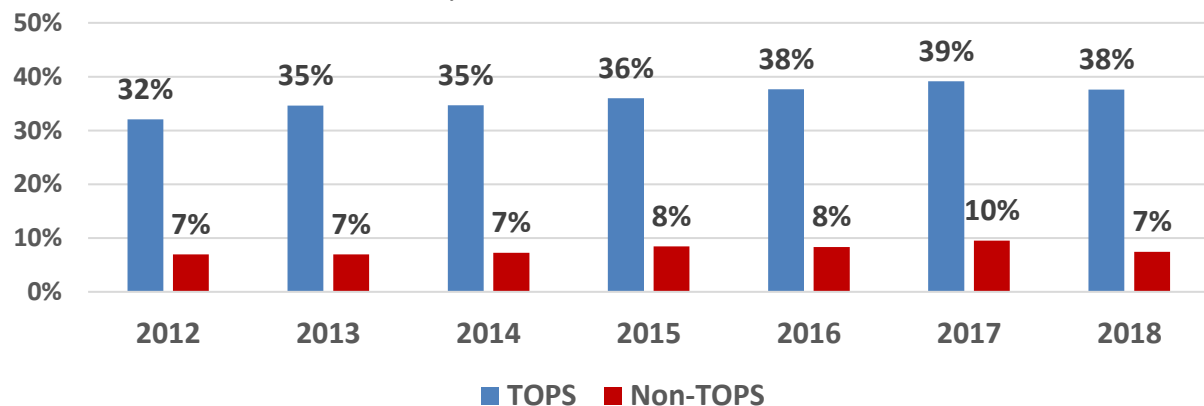
<b>Average ACT Score and High School GPA of TOPS Recipients Who had Their Award Cancelled*, 2010-2011 to 2021-2022</b>		
<b>Reason Cancelled</b>	<b>Average ACT Composite</b>	<b>Average High School GPA</b>
24 Hour	23.1	3.17
GPA	22.8	3.10
Non-Continuous Enrollment	23.6	3.19
*Students whose awards are cancelled for everything but GPA may request and be approved for an exception under existing law.		

## **Graduation**

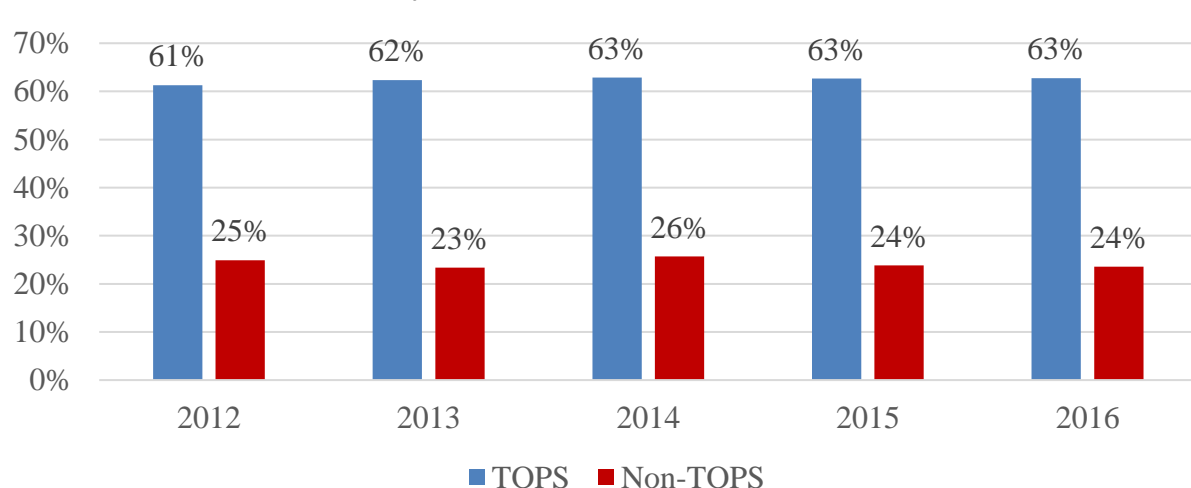
A graduation rate is typically measured by calculating the rate at which first-time, full-time degree-seeking students earn their academic degrees within 150% of the time anticipated (i.e., within six years for baccalaureate degrees and within three years for associate's degrees). However, because TOPS recipients are only eligible for the award for up to four years (or eight semesters), examining graduation rates at both 100% and 150% of time is essential.

As noted in Figures C and D, students who begin a baccalaureate degree program with TOPS graduate within 100% and 150% of time at much higher rates than students without a TOPS award. The 2016 class is used to compare cohorts as both 100% and 150% data are available. Findings indicate that 38% of the 2016 first-time, full-time entering cohort of TOPS recipients completed a baccalaureate degree within 100% of time, compared with 8% of non-TOPS students. Furthermore, 63% of the 2016 first-time, full-time entering cohort of TOPS recipients completed a baccalaureate degree within 150% of time, compared with 24% of non-TOPS students.

**Figure C: Statewide Baccalaureate Four-Year Graduation Rate (100%)  
Among TOPS and Non-TOPS Students First-Time, Full-Time Entering  
Cohorts, Four-Year Institutions 2012-2018**

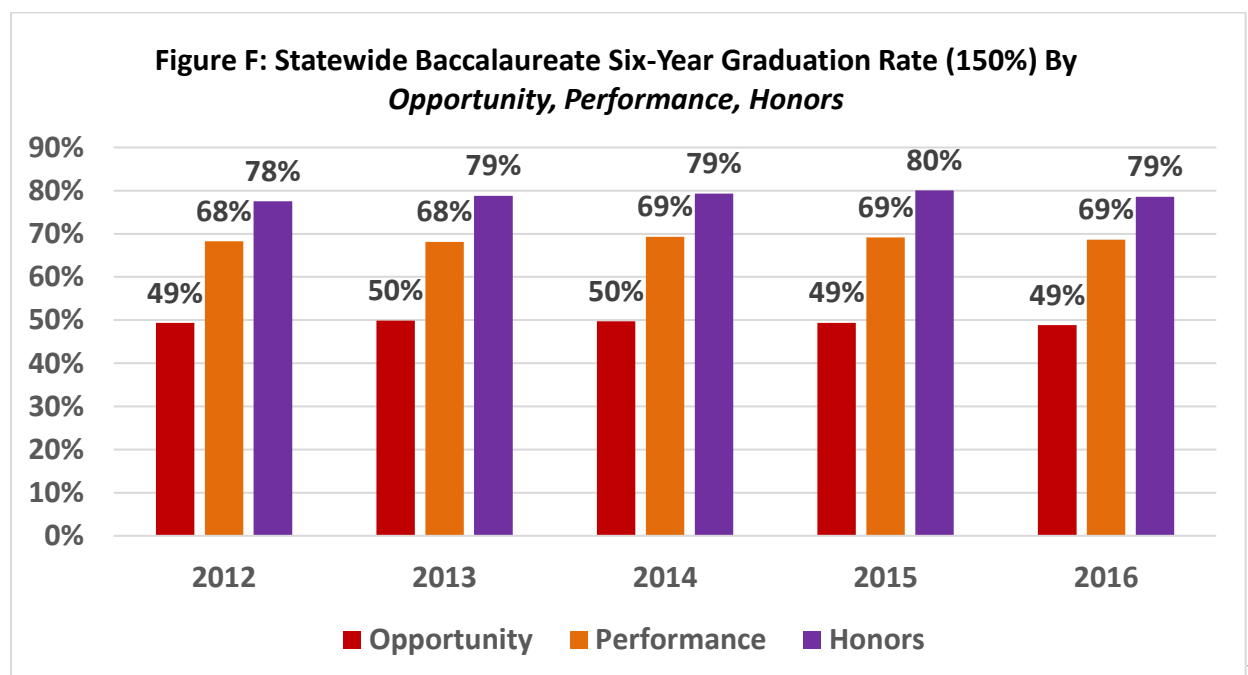
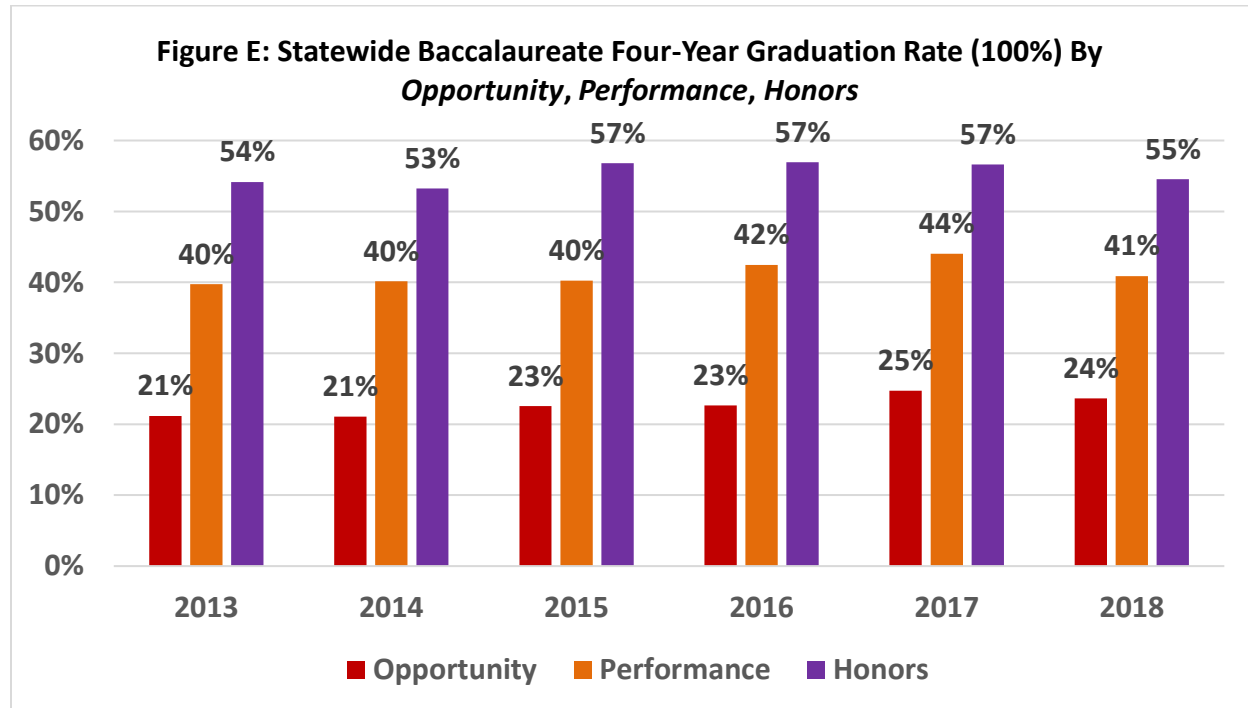


**Figure D: Statewide Baccalaureate 6-Year Graduation Rate (150%)  
Among TOPS and Non-TOPS Students First-Time, Full-Time Entering  
Cohorts, Four-Year Institutions 2012-2016**



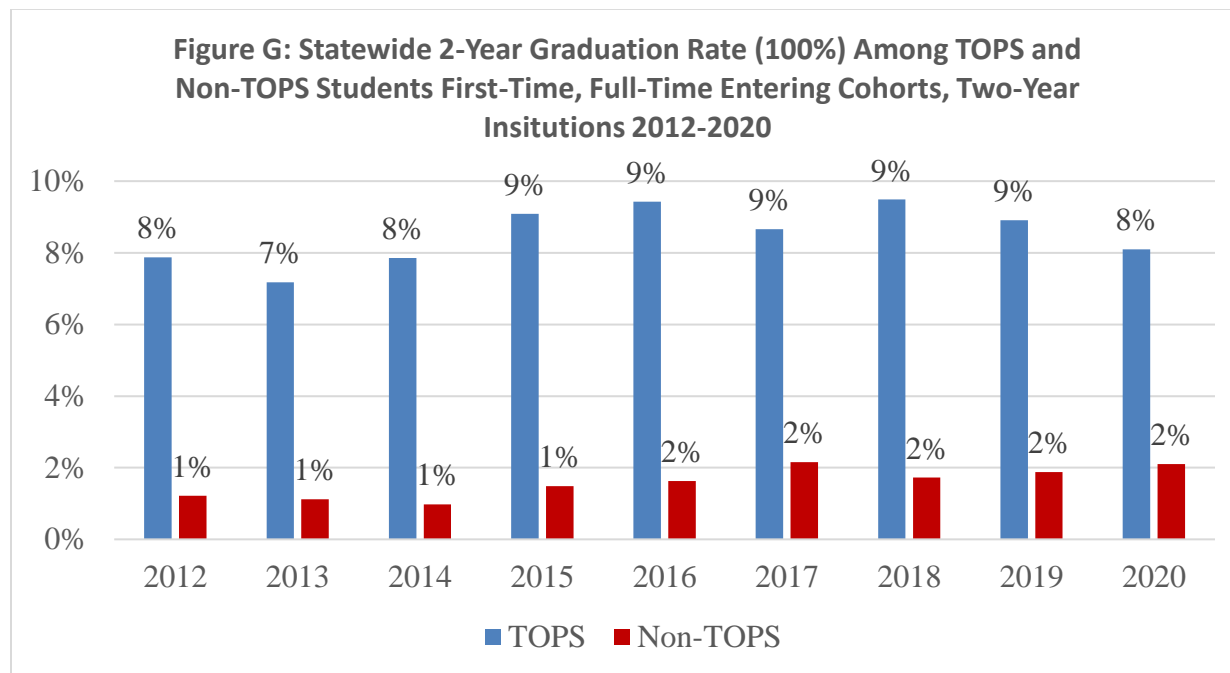


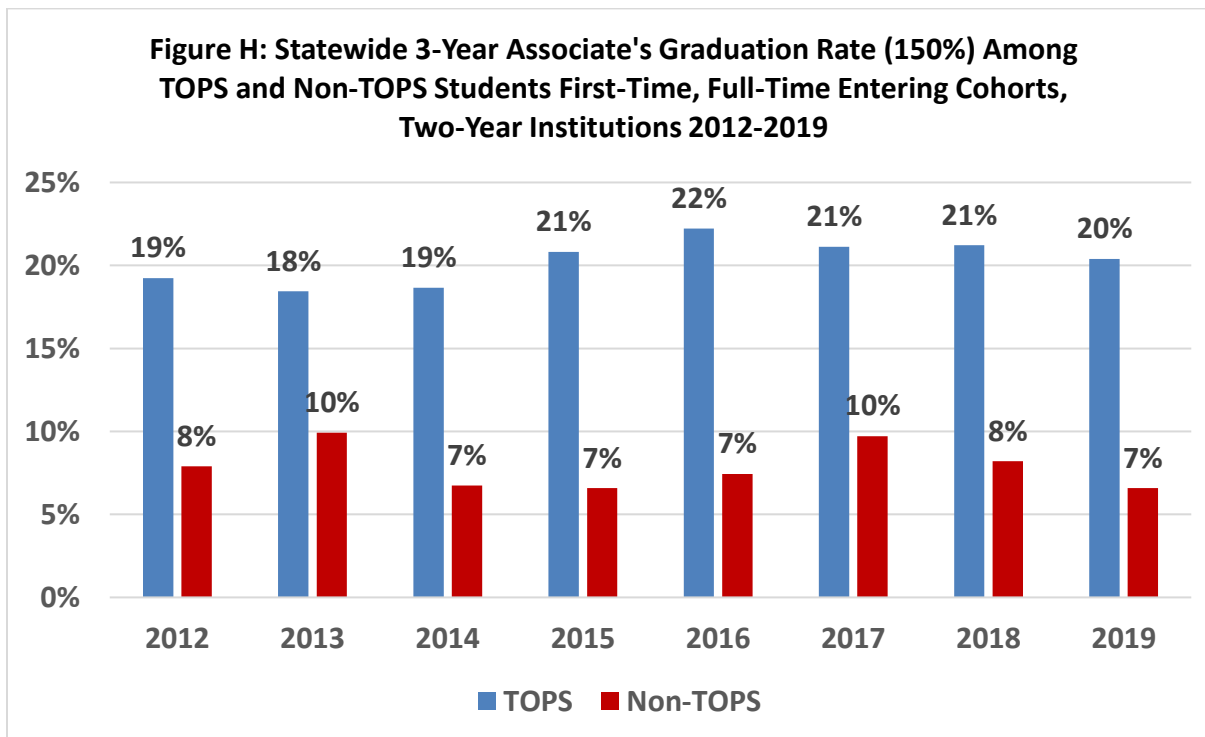
Graduation rates also differ across the types of award received. TOPS *Honors* recipients graduate at much higher rates than TOPS *Performance* and *Opportunity* recipients. As noted in Figures E and F, 57% of TOPS *Honors* recipients in the 2016 entering cohort completed a baccalaureate degree within 100% of time and 79% within 150% of time, compared with 42% and 23% within 100% of time and 69% and 49% within 150% of time for TOPS *Performance* and *Opportunity* recipients, respectively. As mentioned previously, the 2016 class will be used to compare cohorts as both 100% and 150% data are available.



Like

TOPS recipients who begin an associate's degree program graduate at much higher rates than students without a TOPS award; as previously mentioned, the 2019 class is used to illustrate both 100% and 150% graduation rates as data are available. As shown in Figures G and H, 9% of the 2019 first-time, full-time entering cohort of all TOPS recipients completed an associate's degree within 100% of time, compared with 2% of non-TOPS students. Within 150% of time, 20% of the 2019 first-time, full-time entering cohort of TOPS recipients completed an associate's degree, compared with 7% of non-TOPS students. Performance measures for out-of-state and international students were negligible and did not affect the data.





The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) [2016] defines time-to-degree as "the time between initial enrollment in a postsecondary institution and graduation with a college degree." Table 17 examines this metric for TOPS recipients compared with non-TOPS students for the 2021-2022 Academic Year. Consistent with trends discussed in this report, TOPS students took less time to complete the degree than their non-TOPS counterparts. Within the three tiers of TOPS (*Opportunity*, *Performance*, and *Honors*), the higher the scholarship level, the fewer semesters taken to graduate.

**Table 17**

<b>2022-2023 Average Time-to-Degree of TOPS &amp; Non-TOPS Recipients*</b>	
Average Time-To-Degree (Calendar Years)	
Associate's Degree Recipients	
TOPS	3.7
Non-TOPS	6.1
Total	5.2
Baccalaureate Degree Recipients	
TOPS <i>Opportunity</i>	4.9
TOPS <i>Performance</i>	4.2
TOPS <i>Honors</i>	4.0
TOPS Total	4.4
Non-TOPS	6.2
Baccalaureate Total	4.7

\* Does not include out-of-state or international students

## **Conclusion**

The TOPS eligibility criteria require students to take a more rigorous high school curriculum, which better prepares them for success in postsecondary education. Students who complete the TOPS Core also earn higher ACT composite scores than students who do not complete the TOPS Core.

Data indicate that the TOPS Program has succeeded in keeping more of Louisiana's high school graduates in the state to pursue postsecondary education. In a recently published positive trend for the state, a Washington Post (September 2022) analysis reported that "Louisiana ranks 17<sup>th</sup> in keeping graduates in the state".

From 2012-2013, of the 253,734 students deemed eligible for a TOPS *Opportunity, Performance, Honors, or Tech Award*, 177,295 (or 69.9%) have accepted a TOPS *Opportunity, Performance, Honors, or Tech Award* and enrolled in a postsecondary education institution in Louisiana.

TOPS recipients consistently attain ACT scores and high school core GPAs above the minimum required for TOPS eligibility. Among TOPS recipients from 2013-2014 to 2022-2023, the average ACT score was 24 (four points above the minimum needed for eligibility for a TOPS *Opportunity Award*), and the average high school GPA (Core GPA) was 3.71 (significantly higher than the 2.5 minimum required for a TOPS *Opportunity Award*). Data also indicate that the majority of initial TOPS recipients are disproportionately white and disproportionately female.

Despite the racial gaps among TOPS recipients, the number of minority students receiving TOPS has generally increased over time; however, minority participation rates are too low to erase the existing opportunity gaps. In a positive trend for the state this year, all minority races saw an increase in number of TOPS recipients. BOR has been working with the Lumina Foundation to look more deeply into these findings and potential solutions to further increase minority participation.

In terms of persistence, students who begin college with a TOPS award return to postsecondary education in subsequent years at a higher rate than non-TOPS students. Approximately 16.8% of TOPS recipients had their awards cancelled between 2012-2013 and 2021-2022, with most cancellations due to students' failure to earn 24 hours of college credit during an academic year. Students may receive an exception to this requirement by filing an appeal due to extenuating circumstances.

Data indicate that students who began a baccalaureate or an associate's degree program with a TOPS award graduated within 100% and 150% of the time at much higher rates than students without a TOPS award. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of the 2016 first-time, full-time entering cohort of TOPS recipients completed a baccalaureate degree within 100% of time, compared with 8% of non-TOPS students.

Data indicate that TOPS awards may correlate with time-to-degree, as TOPS recipients graduated in fewer semesters than non-TOPS students. Students who begin with a TOPS Award complete at a higher rate, regardless of whether they retain the award for the entirety of their eligibility.

From 1998-1999 through the 2022-2023 fiscal years, the state provided approximately \$5.10 billion in funding for the TOPS Program. However, several years of declines in the number of high school graduates and TOPS eligible students combined with lower proportions of students accepting their awards has resulted in a second decrease in the number of overall TOPS recipients and a second year where an increase in TOPS funding was not requested.

Further research will be conducted concerning TOPS eligibility and acceptance, as it is critical that more students successfully enroll and complete their credentials and access the financial aid resources that will assist them in reaching their educational goals.

**Appendix A:**  
**Act 1202 from 2001**  
**Regular Legislative Session**

<https://www.legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=817880>

**Appendix B:**  
**Act 587 from 2014**  
**Regular Legislative Session**

<http://legis.la.gov/Legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=911152>

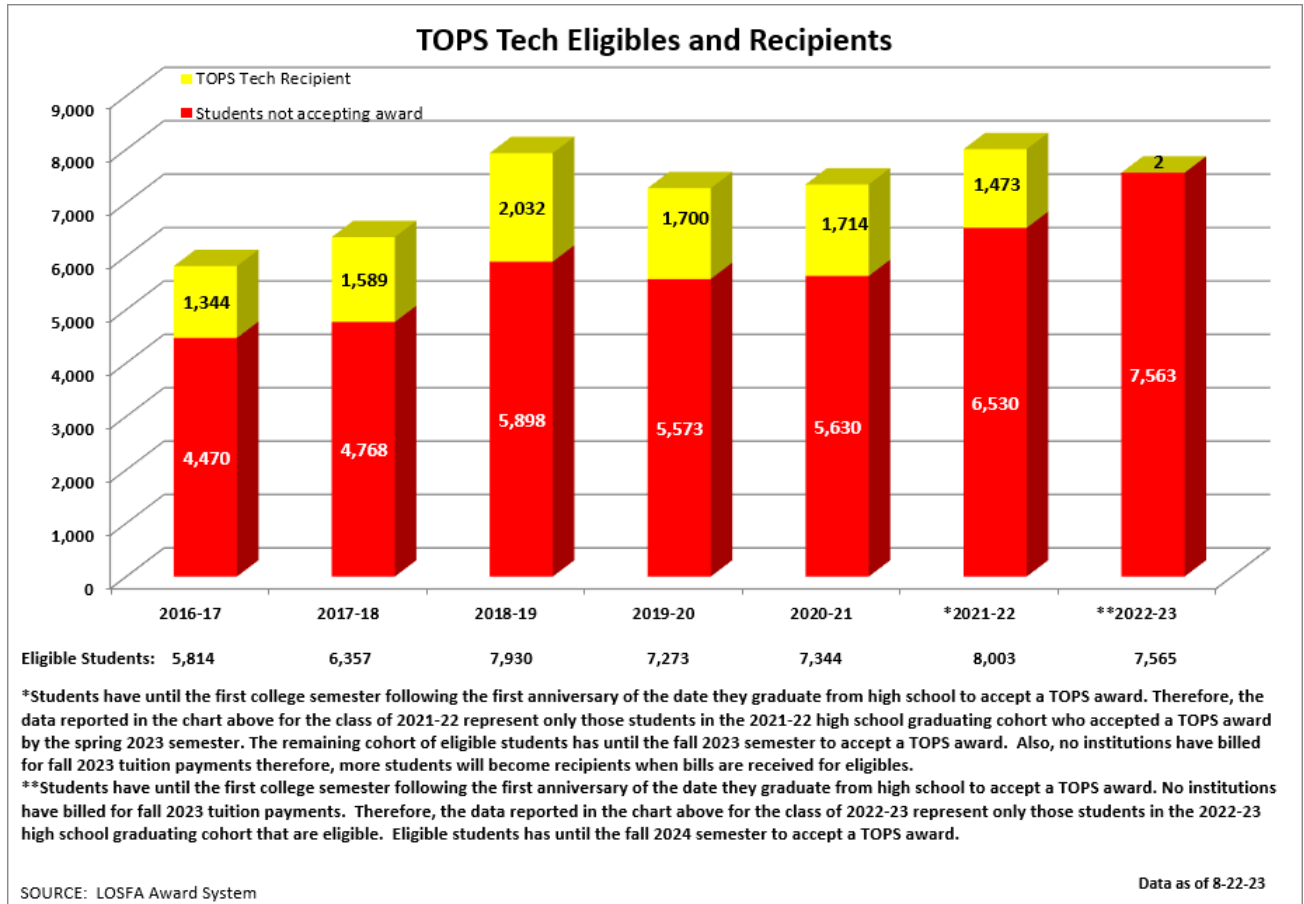
**Appendix C:**  
**Act 227 from 2015**  
**Regular Legislative Session**

<https://legis.la.gov/legis/ViewDocument.aspx?d=954697>



## Appendix D:

### TOPS Tech Analysis



**Appendix E:**  
**TOPS Core Curriculum**

<https://mylosfa.la.gov/wp-content/uploads/TOPSCoreCurriculum.pdf>

**Appendix F:**  
**2023 High School Grads TOPS Eligible**  
**by School and Parish**

<https://mylosfa.la.gov/wp-content/uploads/TOPS-Eligibles-by-School-and-Parish-2023.pdf>

## **AGENDA ITEM III.B.**

### **AY 2022-2023 Interim Report for Governor's Military and Veteran Friendly Campus Designation**

#### **Background Information**

Act 232 of the 2015 Legislative Session enacted R.S. 17:3138.5 to address the need for comprehensive, statewide support to aid military veterans transitioning from military service to enrollment in postsecondary education. Targeting the need for faculty and staff awareness of "veterans' culture" and for orientation and mentoring programs designed specifically for veterans, the law required the Board of Regents (BOR) to establish a process for designating an institution as a *Governor's Military and Veteran Friendly Campus* (GMVFC, or Friendly Campus), beginning in Fall 2015.

With advice from the Statewide Articulation and Transfer Council and Faculty General Education Committee (SATC-GE), the BOR developed an application process for institutions interested in receiving the designation. In Fall 2015, 28 of the 29 public colleges and universities were submitted to the Governor for initial designation. The law specifies that the designation is to be renewed annually, with an institution's renewal application to include a report containing a series of prescribed data elements from the previous year indicating veterans' participation in campus offerings. Any institution that fails to maintain Friendly Campus status must complete the application for initial designation if or when the campus chooses to seek it again.

Act 429 of the 2021 Legislative Session (R.S. 17:3138.5) amended Act 232 of 2015 to extend participation in the Governor's Military Friendly Campus Program to *non-public* education institutions, including the colleges and universities of the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU). This mandate also included campus reporting of completion rates of veterans, their spouses, and their children.

Act 53 of the 2023 Legislative Session (R.S. 17:3138.5) amended Act 429 of 2021 to authorize the Board of Regents to establish additional tiers of recognition for institutions, to increase the duration of the designation from one to two years, and to submit an interim report in the years campuses do not submit renewal applications. This 2023 Interim Report will begin the alternating schedule for future reporting.

To compile the required data, BOR staff created and sent a link to the application to all public and private campuses: <https://form.jotform.com/232538755166060>.

#### **Staff Summary**

BoR staff reviewed each application to determine whether the institution met the requirements for continued designation as a Friendly Campus, with a particular focus on the specific data required by law:

- the number of veterans granted application fee waivers;
- the number who attended the specialized orientation program;
- the number who participated in the priority class registration;
- the number of students (veterans and dependents) who benefitted from the articulation and transfer process, including the number of credits accepted and a list of the courses credited; and
- the number of veteran, spouse and dependent graduates.

Most institutions have adjusted their student record systems, established business processes to identify veterans (and spouses/dependents of veterans), and provided all data required for the 2022-2023 year.

***Mandatory Criteria for Continued Designation as a GMVFC:***

- Waive Application Fees for Veterans: Institutions reported 2,557 application fee waivers for AY 2022-23.
- Veterans' Orientation: Institutions reported 2,932 students participating in the special orientation sessions in AY 2022-23.
- Priority Class Scheduling: Institutions reported that 4,578 students participated in priority scheduling for the fall, winter, spring, or summer semesters/terms of AY 2022-23.
- Military Articulation & Transfer Process: Friendly Campuses reported serving a combined total of 6,375 veteran or dependent transfer students, transferring 81,606.41 credit hours in AY 2022-23.

Chart 1, below, details the total number of veteran students, their spouses/dependents, course articulation, and total graduates:

**CHART 1: AY 2022-23 Reported NEW Incoming Enrollment for GMVF Campuses**

SYSTEM	CAMPUS	NEW VETS	TOTAL CREDIT HOURS	TOTAL SPOUSE/ DEPS	TOTAL SPOUSE/ DEPS CREDIT HRS	TOTAL CREDIT HOURS VETS+ SPOUSE/ DEPS	TOTAL VET GRADS	TOTAL SPOUSE/ DEP GRADS
LSU System	LSU A&M	24	1,411	506	10,557.70	11,968.70	194	555
	LSUA	102	7,000.55	133	8,019.61	15,020.16	51	25
	LSUE	32	1,402.73	8	557	1,959.73	6	7
	LSUS	41	1,363	8	379	1,742	98	50
Total		199	11,177.28	655	19,513.31	30,690.59	349	637
SU System	SUBR	19	1,086.50	22	1,259	2,345.50	33	31
	SUNO	15	162	4	39	201	6	7
	SUSLA	4	39	1	17	56	4	1
Total		38	1,287.50	27	1,315	2,602.50	43	39
UL System	GSU	6	297	3	192	489	8	11
	LA TECH	1,164	25,72.84	175	494	3,066.84	56	52
	MCNEESE	54	1,050	77	3,187	4,237	10	11
	NICHOLLS	271	780	157	489	1,269	39	16
	NSU	8	0	0	0	0	102	6
	SLU	32	2,049.20	14	703	2,752.20	47	41
	ULL	80	5,584.45	79	3,239	8,823.45	41	42
	ULM	58	2,986	86	3,150	6,136	32	36
	UNO	127	359	27	80	439	8	3
Total		1,800	15,678.49	618	11,534	27,212.49	343	218
LCTCS	BRCC	69	2,437.67	128	4,828	7,265.67	61	94
	BPCC	12	118.5	6	46	164.5	34	18
	CLTCC	0	0	0	0	0	8	20
	DELGADO	1,063	1,832	1,165	1,663	3,495	40	15
	FTCC	14	672	27	1,071	1,743	17	24
	LDCC	28	1,453	23	692	2,145	44	67
	NTCC	17	308	16	153	461	12	33
	NWLTC	0	0	0	0	0	48	45
	NUNEZ	1	3	0	0	3	14	13
	RPCC	18	503.7	32	845	1,348.70	12	37
	SLCC	94	1,774	121	1,998	3,772	40	0
	SOWELA	96	275	108	428	703	18	25
Total		1,412	9,376.87	1,626	11,724	21,100.87	348	391
GRAND TOTAL		3,449	37,520.14	2,926	44,086.31	81,606.41	1,083	1,285

## **Staff Analysis**

Based upon the applications received, BOR staff has determined that each of the 28 public postsecondary institutions and one non-public institution listed below meet the requirements specified in R.S. 17:3138.5 and R.S. 3165.2 for designation as a *Governor's Military and Veteran Friendly Campus* for the 2022-23 academic year. This represents 100% participation in this program by public postsecondary institutions in the state. This year also marks the first time a private university, Dillard University, has met the initial criteria and attained the designation.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Senior Staff recommends **approval** to forward to the Governor the following 28 *public* postsecondary institutions and one *non-public* institution with an endorsement as having met requirements for continued and initial designation as *Governor's Military and Veteran Friendly Campuses*:

### **Louisiana Community and Technical College System**

- Baton Rouge CC
- Bossier Parish CC
- Central Louisiana TCC
- Delgado CC
- Fletcher Technical CC
- Louisiana Delta CC
- Northshore TCC
- Northwest Louisiana TCC
- Nunez CC
- River Parishes CC
- South Louisiana CC
- SOWELA CC

### **Louisiana State University System**

- LSU A&M
- LSU Alexandria
- LSU Eunice
- LSU Shreveport

### **Southern University System**

- Southern University A&M
- Southern University New Orleans
- Southern University Shreveport

### **University of Louisiana System**

- Grambling State University
- Louisiana Tech University
- McNeese State University
- Nicholls State University
- Northwestern State University
- Southeastern Louisiana University
- University
- University of Louisiana Lafayette
- University of Louisiana Monroe
- University of New Orleans

### **Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities**

- Dillard University

## **AGENDA ITEM III.C.**

### **ACT 682 of the 2022 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature**

#### **Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council Annual Report**

#### **STAFF SUMMARY**

Act 682, formerly Senate Bill 192, of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session created the Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council (Advisory Council).

Under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents, the Council is charged with identifying opportunities to expand existing or establish new inclusive education programs that provide pathways to postsecondary degree, certificate, and apprenticeship programs designed to increase independent living and employment opportunities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Council is also charged with developing and implementing an annual application process for public postsecondary institutions to request funds to create or expand inclusive programs.

Annually, Act 682 charges the Advisory Council to produce a report addressing the key issues and research topics listed in the legislation.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Senior Staff recommends approval of the "Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council Annual Report" and authorizes the Commissioner of Higher Education to submit the report to the appropriate legislative committees on behalf of the Board of Regents.**



**REPORT OF THE POSTSECONDARY INCLUSIVE  
EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL  
PRODUCED IN RESPONSE TO ACT 682 OF THE 2022  
REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

**LOUISIANA BOARD OF REGENTS**



**February 2024**

## LOUISIANA BOARD OF REGENTS

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**Samuel Gil, Student Member**

**Randy L. Ewing**

**Stephanie A. Finley**

**Kim Hunter Reed, Ph.D.**

*Commissioner of Higher Education*

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## **I. Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council Overview**

Act 682, formerly Senate Bill 192, of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session (Appendix A) created the Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council (Advisory Council). Under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents, the Council is charged with identifying opportunities to expand existing or establish new inclusive education programs that provide pathways to postsecondary degree, certificate, and apprenticeship programs designed to increase independent living and employment opportunities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Council is also charged with developing and implementing an annual application process for public postsecondary institutions to request funds to create or expand inclusive programs.

Annually, Act 682 charges the Advisory Council to produce a report addressing the key issues and research topics listed in the legislation. The legislation stipulates that the report include the following information:

<b>Act 682: Legislative Tasks Charged</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Identify existing inclusive programs capable of providing technical assistance to institutions creating or expanding inclusive programs and developing a method to provide grants for such technical assistance</li><li>● Develop an annual application process for public postsecondary institutions to request funds to create or expand inclusive programs</li><li>● Review applications and determine the amount of funds to distribute for each inclusive program</li><li>● Determine a method to distribute information about inclusive programs to students and their families</li></ul>

## **II. Overview of Work**

The Advisory Council comprises various stakeholders, including postsecondary education system presidents, postsecondary inclusive education program directors, and various interest groups from public and private agencies across the state (see Appendix B).

Applications for funding from the Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund were due to the Advisory Council by January 17, 2023. Applications from institutions seeking funds to either expand an existing or create a new inclusive program were received from both two- and four-year institutions (see Table 1) by the Application Review Committee (see Table 2). Committee members reviewed and scored the applications and presented their recommendation

to approve all submitted applications to the Advisory Council at its March 2023 meeting (see Appendix C). The Council unanimously approved the Committee's recommendation.

**Table 1**

<b>Applications to Expand an Existing Inclusive Education Program</b>	<b>Applications to Create an Inclusive Education Program</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baton Rouge Community College</li> <li>• Bossier Parish Community College</li> <li>• Nicholls State University</li> <li>• Southeastern Louisiana University</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Louisiana State University and A&amp;M College</li> <li>• Louisiana State University of Alexandria</li> <li>• Southern University at New Orleans</li> </ul>

**Table 2**

<b>Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund Application Review Committee Members</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. James Ammons, Southern University System</li> <li>• Dr. Tristan Denley, Board of Regents</li> <li>• Dr. Roy Haggerty, Louisiana State University System</li> <li>• Dr. Jeannine O'Rourke, University of Louisiana System</li> <li>• Dr. Wendy Palermo, Louisiana Community and Technical College System</li> <li>• Ms. Bambi Polotzola, Office of Disability Affairs</li> </ul>

The Advisory Council approved a second round of applications, with a submission deadline of April 14, 2023. Additional applications were received from both two- and four-year institutions seeking funds to either expand an existing or create a new inclusive program (see Table 3). The applications were once again submitted to the Application Review Committee for assessment. The members of the Committee reviewed and scored the applications and presented their recommendation to approve all submitted applications to the Advisory Council at its May 2023 meeting (see Appendix D). The Council unanimously approved the Committee's recommendation.

**Table 3**

<b>Applications to Expand an Existing Inclusive Education Program</b>	<b>Applications to Create an Inclusive Education Program</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Louisiana at Lafayette</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University of Louisiana at Monroe</li> </ul>

Upon approval of the applications by the Advisory Council, letters were sent via email to the presidents of the four public postsecondary education systems indicating that the statute requires each receiving institution to certify that the institution has created or is creating an inclusive program and that the institution shall use all funds received for the inclusive program. The Board of Regents, acting as the designated agent in the statute, then distributed the funds to the awarded public postsecondary education institutions on June 28, 2023.

### **III. Annual Submission of the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Program Updates**

Annually, Act 682 charges the Advisory Council to produce a report documenting the detailed accounting of the Fund. During FY23, the following disbursements were made from the initial \$1 million allocation (Table 4). There are currently \$330,000 in unexpended funds remaining from the initial allocation.

**Table 4**

<b>Program Name and Institution</b>	<b>Amount of Fund Distribution</b>
The Program for Successful Employment, Baton Rouge Community College	\$50,000
Program for Successful Employment, Bossier Parish Community College	\$50,000
Integrative Community Studies Program, Louisiana State University and A&M College	\$80,000
SPERO, Louisiana State University of Alexandria	\$80,000
Bridge to Independence, Nicholls State University	\$50,000
Lions Connected, Southeastern Louisiana University	\$50,000
Exceptional Knights Academy, Southern University at New Orleans	\$80,000
UL Life, University of Louisiana at Lafayette	\$50,000
ACES, University of Louisiana at Monroe	\$80,000
Louisiana Alliance of Postsecondary Inclusive Education <sup>1</sup> ,	\$100,000

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<sup>1</sup> Southeastern Louisiana University acts as the fiscal agent for LAPIE

Additionally, Act 682 stipulates that the programs receiving a distribution from the Fund report the following information:

<b>Submission of the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Program Update</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Whether the program is operational or in development. If the program is in development, the date the program will begin offering services to students shall be reported.</li><li>• The student capacity of the program, both in the current academic year and the upcoming academic year.</li><li>• The actual number of students enrolled in the program.</li><li>• The number of students, if any, on a waiting list for the program.</li><li>• A description of the services offered through the program.</li><li>• The number of students who completed the program, both during the prior academic year and in total.</li><li>• The number and percentage of program completers who are employed.</li><li>• The number and percentage of program completers who are living independently.</li></ul>

The responses provided by the institutions are provided in Appendix I.

#### **IV. Fiscal Year 2024 Fund Applications**

At the October 2023 meeting (Appendix E), the Council discussed how the monies in the Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund should be allocated for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. The Council decided to provide planning grant awards at a maximum of \$20,000 for institutions interested in creating a program but need funds to begin the process, as well as awards for new programs at a maximum of \$60,000, with the possibility that programs receiving the \$20,000 award will become eligible for an additional \$60,000 award once they receive Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP) status. The Advisory Council approved this approach at its October 2023 meeting.

Dr. Tristan Denley, Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Innovation, Louisiana Board of Regents, developed an Application for Planning Grants (Appendix F) and an Application for Planning Grant and Initial Program Development (Appendix G). In addition, Dr. Denley and Board of Regents staff created an application guidelines document to steer applicants through the application process (Appendix H). The RFA was issued on November 15, 2023. Recommendations are expected to be provided to the Advisory Council at the February meeting.

The proposals will be reviewed by a team of reviewers who hold the same roles as those listed in Table 2.

To disseminate this information to both public postsecondary institutions and the general public, the Board of Regents hosted an informational webinar on November 16, 2023. The webinar included panelists who discussed creating Postsecondary Inclusive Education Program opportunities in Louisiana, as well as information on the application process as provided in Act 682 to fund and expand inclusive programs in the state. A recording of the webinar has been posted on the Board of Regents website.

## **V. Next Steps**

The Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Advisory Council met throughout the year to assess the need for inclusive education programs in the state, create a process for institutions to apply for funds from the Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund, and disseminate this information to both institutions and the public. From these meetings, the Advisory Council was able to determine and establish best practices to apply for monies from the Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund and provide support for the creation of four new programs and the enhancement of five existing programs, resulting in an expansion of programs geographically and the inclusion of Louisiana's first program at an HBCU.

In the coming months, the Advisory Council will receive applications for both planning grants and the establishment of new programs. The Application Review Committee will score these applications. The Advisory Council will consider the recommendations of the Review Committee at its next meeting.

The Council is optimistic about the progress made to date and the interest expressed by Louisiana public postsecondary institutions to expand access for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



## Appendix A:

Regular Session

# ACT No. 682

ENROLLED

SENATE BILL NO. 192

BY SENATORS BOUDREAUX, BARROW, BERNARD, BOUIE, CARTER, FIELDS,  
FOIL, HARRIS, LUNEAU, MCMATH, FRED MILLS, MIZELL,  
PRICE, SMITH, TARVER AND WARD AND REPRESENTATIVES  
COUSSAN, FREIBERG, GAINES, GLOVER, JEFFERSON, JENKINS,  
JORDAN, LAFLEUR, LARVADAIN, LYONS, NEWELL, PIERRE,  
SELDERS, THOMPSON, WHITE AND WILLARD

1 AN ACT  
2 To enact R.S. 17:3138.10 and R.S. 36:651(K)(10), relative to postsecondary education for  
3 students with intellectual and developmental disabilities; to establish the  
4 Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund as a special fund in the state treasury; to  
5 provide for the purposes of the fund; to create and provide for the Postsecondary  
6 Inclusive Education Advisory Council; to require annual reports with respect to the  
7 fund; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 17:3138.10 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 **§3138.10. Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund; Postsecondary**

11 **Inclusive Education Advisory Council**

12 **A.(1)(a) The Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund,**  
13 **referred to in this Section as the "fund", is hereby created within the state**  
14 **treasury as a special fund for the purpose of funding an approved**  
15 **comprehensive inclusive postsecondary education program at each public**  
16 **postsecondary education institution in the state in order to provide pathways**  
17 **to postsecondary degree, certificate, and apprenticeship programs designed to**  
18 **increase independent living and employment opportunities for students with**  
19 **intellectual and developmental disabilities.**

20 **(b) An approved inclusive education program, referred to in this Section**  
21 **as an "inclusive program", shall mean a federally approved comprehensive**  
22 **transition and postsecondary program offered at a Louisiana public**

1 postsecondary institution.

2 (2) Any money donated to the fund or appropriated to the fund by the  
3 legislature shall be deposited in the fund. Monies in the fund shall be invested  
4 in the same manner as monies in the general fund. Interest earned on  
5 investment of monies in the fund shall be credited to the fund.

6 (3) Monies in the fund shall be appropriated to the Board of Regents for  
7 distribution to public postsecondary institutions only for:

8 (a) The creation, operation, and expansion of inclusive programs.

9 (b) Technical assistance in creating or expanding inclusive programs.

10 (c) Dissemination of information on inclusive programs in Louisiana to  
11 students with intellectual or developmental disabilities and the parent or  
12 guardian of the students.

13 (4) Any funds distributed to an institution that remain unexpended or  
14 unobligated at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund and, subject to  
15 appropriation, be available for use in the subsequent fiscal year by an  
16 institution for the purposes as provided in this Section.

17 (5) Funding shall be distributed by the Board of Regents to a public  
18 postsecondary education management board only upon the certification by the  
19 board, on behalf of the receiving institution, that the institution has or is  
20 creating an inclusive program and that all funds shall be used by the institution  
21 for the inclusive program.

22 (6) The fund is in addition to, and separate from, other monies  
23 appropriated or allocated to any public postsecondary education management  
24 board. Allocations from the fund shall not be included in the Board of Regents'  
25 funding formula calculation, nor shall they supplant any state general fund  
26 allocations to institutions. The availability of the fund shall not in any way  
27 substitute, limit, or otherwise affect the allocation of any funds otherwise  
28 available to those institutions under state or federal laws.

29 B(1) The Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council, referred  
30 to in this Section as the "council", is hereby created under the auspices of the

- 1 Board of Regents for the purpose of advising the board with respect to inclusive  
2 programs and methods to fund and expand inclusive programs in the state.
- 3 (2) The council shall assist the Board of Regents in:
- 4 (a) Identifying existing inclusive programs capable of providing technical  
5 assistance to institutions creating or expanding inclusive programs and  
6 developing a method to provide grants for such technical assistance.
- 7 (b) Developing an annual application process for public postsecondary  
8 institutions to request funds to create or expand inclusive programs.
- 9 (c) Reviewing applications and determining the amount of funds to  
10 distribute for each inclusive program.
- 11 (d) Determining a method to distribute information about inclusive  
12 programs to students and their families.
- 13 (3)(a) The council shall be composed of the following members:
- 14 (i) Two members with expertise in postsecondary educational  
15 programming for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities,  
16 appointed by the governor.
- 17 (ii) The commissioner of higher education or his designee.
- 18 (iii) A director of an inclusive program appointed by the chairman of the  
19 Senate Committee on Education.
- 20 (iv) A director of an inclusive program appointed by the chairman of the  
21 House Committee on Education.
- 22 (v) The president of the Louisiana State University System or his  
23 designee.
- 24 (vi) The president of the Southern University System or his designee.
- 25 (vii) The president of the University of Louisiana System or his designee.
- 26 (viii) The president of the Louisiana Community and Technical College  
27 System or his designee.
- 28 (ix) The executive director of the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities  
29 Council or his designee.
- 30 (x) The director of the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services or his designee.

- 1            (xi) An alumnus of an inclusive program appointed by the Louisiana  
2            Developmental Disabilities Council.
- 3            (xii) The parent or legal guardian of a student who is enrolled in or who  
4            has completed an inclusive program appointed by the Louisiana Developmental  
5            Disabilities Council.
- 6            (xiii) The superintendent of the Special School District or his designee.
- 7            (b) Any member selecting a designee shall select the designee from his  
8            respective system, agency, office, or association who has expertise in transitional  
9            postsecondary educational services.
- 10           (4) A vacancy in the membership of the council shall be filled in the same  
11           manner as the original appointment.
- 12           (5) Members of the council shall elect a chairman, vice chairman, and  
13           other officers as they consider necessary.
- 14           (6) The members of the council shall serve without compensation, except  
15           for per diem or reimbursement of expenses to which they may be entitled as  
16           members of the constituent organizations.
- 17           (7)(a) The council shall meet upon the call of the chairman or of a  
18           quorum of the members of the council.
- 19           (b) The chairman shall give at least seven day's notice to the members  
20           of the council of the time and place where each meeting will be held.
- 21           (c) The commissioner of higher education shall, no later than  
22           September 1, 2022, convene the first meeting of the council.
- 23           (8) A majority of the members of the council shall constitute a quorum  
24           for the transaction of business.
- 25           (9) The council shall be domiciled in Baton Rouge but may hold public  
26           meetings elsewhere in the state.
- 27           C.(1) By February first of each year, the Board of Regents, with  
28           assistance from the council, shall submit a report to the Senate Committee on  
29           Education, the Senate Committee on Finance, the House Committee on  
30           Education, and the House Committee on Appropriations.

- 1                   (2) The report shall include:
- 2                   (a) A detailed accounting of the fund.
- 3                   (b) The following information for each program that received a
- 4                   distribution from the fund:
- 5                   (i) The name of the program.
- 6                   (ii) The name of the institution housing the program.
- 7                   (iii) The amount provided to the program from the fund for the current
- 8                   academic year and in total.
- 9                   (iv) Whether the program is operational or in development. If the
- 10                  program is in development, the date the program will begin offering services to
- 11                  students shall be reported.
- 12                  (v) The student capacity of the program, both in the current academic
- 13                  year and the upcoming academic year.
- 14                  (vi) The actual number of students enrolled in the program.
- 15                  (vii) The number of students, if any, on a waiting list for the program.
- 16                  (viii) A description of the services offered through the program.
- 17                  (ix) The number of students that completed the program, both during
- 18                  the prior academic year and in total.
- 19                  (x) The number and percentage of program completers who are
- 20                  employed.
- 21                  (xi) The number and percentage of program completers who are living
- 22                  independently.
- 23                  (xii) The purpose for which monies from the fund were requested.
- 24                  (c) Details on each technical assistance grant provided from the fund.
- 25                  (d) Recommendations for additional money for the fund, if any.
- 26                  (3) Each public postsecondary education management board shall report
- 27                  to the Board of Regents the information necessary for the Board of Regents to
- 28                  complete the report.
- 29                  (4) The report shall be posted on the Board of Regents' website.

30                  Section 2. R.S. 36:651(K)(10) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

4 \* \* \*

8 \* \* \*

11 \* \* \*

**PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE**

**SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

Page 6 of 6

Coding: Words which are ~~struck through~~ are deletions from existing law; words in **boldface type and underscored** are additions.

## Appendix B: Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council Members

Member	Title	Seat Information
Dr. Gerlinde Beckers	Director, Lions Connected, Southeastern LA University	Member with expertise in postsecondary educational programming for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, appointed by the governor.
Dr. Mary Breaud	Associate Professor of Education, Nicholls State University	Member with expertise in postsecondary educational programming for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, appointed by the governor.
Dr. Kim Hunter Reed	Commissioner of Higher Education	Commissioner of Higher Education
LaKiesha London	Interim Director, Baton Rouge Community College Program for Successful Employment	Director of an inclusive program, appointed by the chairman of the Senate Committee on Education
Brittany Soden	Director, LSUA SPERO	Director of an inclusive program, appointed by the chairman of the House Committee on Education
Dr. Dan Bureau	Assistant Vice President for Student Health & Wellbeing, Louisiana State University A&M	President of the Louisiana State University System or his designee
President Dennis J. Shields	President-Chancellor, Southern University System	President of the Southern University System or his designee
Dr. Jeannine O'Rourke	Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, University of LA System	President of the University of Louisiana system or his designee
Dr. Willie Smith	Chancellor, Baton Rouge Community College	President of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System or his designee
Ebony Haven	Interim Executive Director, Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council	Executive Director of the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council or his designee
Melisa Bayham	Director, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services	Director of the Louisiana Rehabilitation Services or his designee
Gerald "Mitch" Dillon	Alumnus of an Inclusive Program	Alumnus of an inclusive program appointed by the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Johnny Manela	Parent of a Student who Graduated from an Inclusive Program	Parent or legal guardian of a student who is enrolled in or who has completed an inclusive program appointed by the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Katherine Granier	Acting Superintendent, Louisiana Special School District	Superintendent of the Special School District or his designee

## Appendix C: March 2023 Meeting Agenda

*Collis B. Temple, III*  
*Chair*

*Gary N. Solomon, Jr.*  
*Vice Chair*

*Robert W. Lery*  
*Secretary*

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



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*Darren G. Mize*  
*Wilbert D. Pryor*  
*T. Jay Seale, III*  
*Lorris P. Sterling*  
*Felix R. Weill*  
*Judy A. Williams-Brown*  
*Caterina M. Labré, Student*

### POSTSECONDARY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL AGENDA

Wednesday, March 1, 2023  
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Claiborne Building, 6th Floor  
Board of Regents Conference Room  
1201 North Third Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call and Approval of November 1, 2022 Minutes
- III. Consideration of Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund Application Recommendations
- IV. Approval of LAPIE Fiscal Agent
- V. Discussion of Remaining PIEF Funds
- VI. Update on Annual Report
- VII. Other Business
- VIII. Public Comments
- IX. Adjournment

Proposed Next Meetings: May/June 2023

*The Board of Regents is an Equal Opportunity and ADA Employer*



## Appendix D: May 2023 Meeting Agenda

*Collin B. Temple, III*  
*Chair*

*Gary N. Solomon, Jr.*  
*Vice Chair*

*Robert W. Levy*  
*Secretary*

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



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*Phillip R. May, Jr.*  
*Darren G. Mire*  
*Wilbert D. Pryor*  
*T. Jay Seale, III*  
*Terrie P. Sterling*  
*Felix R. Weill*  
*Judy A. Williams-Brown*  
*Catherine M. Lobri, Student*

### POSTSECONDARY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL AGENDA

Wednesday, May 17, 2023  
10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Claiborne Building, 6th Floor  
Board of Regents Conference Room  
1201 North Third Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call and Approval of March 1, 2023 Minutes
- III. Consideration of Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund Application Recommendations
- IV. Update on Postsecondary Inclusive Education Program Accreditations
- V. Other Business
- VI. Public Comments
- VII. Adjournment

Proposed Next Meetings: August/September 2023

*The Board of Regents is an Equal Opportunity and ADA Employer*

## Appendix E: October 2023 Meeting Agenda

*Collis B. Temple III*  
*Chair*

*Gary N. Solomon, Jr.*  
*Vice Chair*

*Robert W. Levy*  
*Secretary*

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



BOARD OF REGENTS  
STATE OF LOUISIANA

*P. O. Box 3677*  
*Baton Rouge, LA 70821-3677*  
*Phone (225) 342-4253, FAX (225) 342-9318*  
*[www.laregents.edu](http://www.laregents.edu)*

*David J. Aubrey*  
*Christian C. Creed*  
*Blake R. David*  
*Randy L. Ewing*  
*Stephanie A. Finley*  
*Phillip R. May, Jr.*  
*Darren G. Mire*  
*Wilbert D. Pryor*  
*T. Jay Seale III*  
*Torrie P. Sterling*  
*Felix R. Well*  
*Judy A. Williams-Brown*  
*Samuel T. Gil, Student Member*

### POSTSECONDARY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL AGENDA

Monday, October 30, 2023  
10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Claiborne Building, 6th Floor  
Board of Regents Conference Room  
1201 North Third Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call and Approval of May 17, 2023 Minutes
- III. New Postsecondary Inclusive Education Program Updates
  - Dr. Paul Mooney, Louisiana State University A&M
  - Brittany Soden, Louisiana State University Alexandria SPERO
- IV. Review of 2023 Legislative Session Funding
- V. Funding and Application Discussion
- VI. Other Business
- VII. Public Comments
- VIII. Adjournment

Proposed Next Meetings: November/December 2023

*The Board of Regents is an Equal Opportunity and ADA Employer*

## **Appendix F: Application for Planning Grant**

### **Postsecondary Inclusion Fund**

#### **Application for Planning Grant**

##### **Section 1: CTP Status**

Indicate the status of the institution's federally approved CTP program:

\_\_\_\_\_ The institution commits to submitting an application for CTP status within the subsequent year for federal approval of a program.

##### **Section 2: Description**

1. Provide a detailed description of how the institution will use the planning grant funds to develop plans for a new program and submit a CTP application.
  
2. Provide details of financial support the institution has already identified or a detailed description of how the institution will use the planning grant funds to identify potential matching funds for a future Initial Program Grant Application.

##### **Section 2: Budget, and Budget Narrative**

1. What level of funding is being requested (up to \$20,000)?
  
2. Provide a detailed budget for the requested funds. The budget should be accompanied by a budget narrative that includes the following:
  - Details on each line item.
  - Explanation of the value of each planned expenditure to the program.

## **Appendix G: Joint Application for Planning Grant and Initial Program Development**

### **Postsecondary Inclusion Fund Application for Planning Grant**

#### **Section 1: CTP Status**

Indicate the status of the institution's federally approved CTP program:

\_\_\_\_\_ The institution commits to submitting an application for CTP status within the subsequent year for federal approval of a program.

#### **Section 2: Description**

1. Provide a detailed description of how the institution will use the planning grant funds to develop plans for a new program and submit a CTP application.
2. Provide details of financial support the institution has already identified or a detailed description of how the institution will use the planning grant funds to identify potential matching funds for a future Initial Program Grant Application.

#### **Section 2: Budget, and Budget Narrative**

1. What level of funding is being requested (up to \$20,000)?
2. Provide a detailed budget for the requested funds. The budget should be accompanied by a budget narrative that includes the following:
  - Details on each line item.
  - Explanation of the value of each planned expenditure to the program.

## Application for Initial Program Development

### Section 1: CTP Status

Indicate the status of the institution's federally approved CTP program:

- ☐ The institution has received federal approval of the proposed program.\*
- ☐ The institution has submitted an application for a federally approved program and is awaiting a decision. \* The application was submitted on this date: \_\_\_\_\_.
- ☐ The institution commits to submitting an application within the subsequent year for federal approval of a program, supported by planning grant funds.

### Section 2: Program Description

3. Proposed Postsecondary Inclusive Education Program (PIEP) name:
4. Year in which the proposed PIEP will first admit students:
5. Enter the number of students:
  - ☐ Enrolled in the existing program in the current year (enter 0 if this application is for a new program)
  - ☐ Projected to enroll in the program next year
  - ☐ Projected to enroll in the program in the year after next
6. In which college, department, administrative unit, or other institutional component will the PIEP "live" at the institution? That is, in what area of the institution will the PIEP be "housed"? Please specify whether this is an academic, continuing education, or administrative unit.
7. Provide a general summary of the proposed PIEP: (1 page max)
8. Describe how the PIEP will be "organized" at the institution:
9. Describe the tuition and fees that will be charged for the program.

---

\* Include documentation with the application. Development funds will not be dispersed until CTP Status has been approved

10. What honor/endorsement/certificate/degree will the institution award to students upon completion of the program?
- a. Name of the general honor/endorsement/certificate/degree:
  - b. Describe the general honor/endorsement/certificate/degree:
11. Indicate the **length of time** needed to complete the PIEP (expressed as terms/semesters or years):
12. Is there more than one level or benchmark within the PIEP at which students may exit?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes or No
- If yes, describe the levels or benchmarks:
13. Do students enrolled in the PIE program have opportunities to earn an industry-recognized certificate or certification(s)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes or No
- If yes, name the industry-recognized certificate or certification(s):
14. Do students enrolled in the PIEP have opportunities to earn micro-credential(s)/badge(s) other than an industry-recognized certificate or certification(s)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes or No
- If yes, name the micro-credential(s)/badge(s):
15. Describe how students enrolled in the program participate in one or more of the following activities alongside students without disabilities:
- a. Regular enrollment in credit-bearing courses
  - b. **Auditing** or participating in courses for which the student does not receive academic credit
  - c. Enrollment in **non-credit-bearing, non-degree** courses
  - d. **Internships** or work-based learning
  - e. **Student life** and cocurricular activities

### Section 3: Student Eligibility and Admission

1. Describe how students with intellectual disabilities are/will be **recruited** to enroll in the proposed PIEP.
2. Describe the process through which student **eligibility will be verified**, including the documentation used to assess eligibility:
  - a. Process and documentation to determine eligibility:
  - b. Name and title of individual (or group) who makes eligibility determination:
3. Describe how the final decision to *admit* students with intellectual disabilities to the PIEP will be made:
  - a. Criteria used to make admission decision:
  - b. Name and title of individual (or group) who makes the final admission decision:
4. Maximum number of students the program expects to serve each year:

### Section 4: Assessment and Advising

1. Describe how **assessments** of students' interests, skills, and needs will be/are:
  - a. Conducted
  - b. Used to identify a student's targeted "program of study"
  - c. Used to develop his/her "program of study"
2. Describe the program's **advising structure**.

### Section 5: Employment Opportunities

1. Describe the program's **plan for partnerships with businesses** to promote experiential training and employment opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities.

2. Describe **employment opportunities** available through the program to students **while** enrolled in the program.
3. Describe how the program connects students to **employment opportunities** upon successful **completion** of the program.

## Section 6: Performance Indicators

1. Describe the **performance indicators** established to determine a **student's satisfactory academic progress (SAP)**. What standards are applied to evaluate a student's performance in terms of making SAP? Also, describe how and when SAP will be assessed and the strategies to be used if it appears a student is not making SAP.
2. **List the performance indicators that will be part of the annual report.** Include both programmatic and student-level information, including but not limited to the following: number of applicants, admission rate, enrollment, student retention, students meeting SAP, course completion, program completion, student learning, post-program employment status of students who successfully complete the program, wage level of students who successfully complete the program, industry certifications earned, and student demographics.
3. Identify the individual(s) responsible for collecting the data regarding the PIEP required performance indicators and the institution's additional performance indicators. Also describe when and how the data are/will be collected and used for program improvement.

## Section 7: Match, Budget, and Budget Narrative

3. What level of funding is being requested\* (up to \$60,000)?
4. Provide validation of matching funds at a one-to-one ratio to the requested funding level. Matching funds may include but are not limited to cash from private or state sources, in-kind donations of technology, personnel, construction materials, program space and overhead, facility modification, or corporeal property, internships, scholarships, sponsorship of staff or faculty, or faculty endowment.
5. Provide a detailed budget for the requested and matching funds. The budget should be accompanied by a budget narrative that includes the following:
  - Details on each line item.
  - Explanation of the value of each planned expenditure to the program.

---

\* These funds will not be dispersed until CTP Status has been approved



- Description of matching funds including whether they are cash or in kind and their source(s).

### **Section 8: Program Sustainability**

1. Briefly describe the institution's five-year plan for the program regarding:
  - a. Projected enrollment – Does the institution expect enrollment in the PIEP to increase over the next five years? If so, what are the current projections for enrollment **each year** through the next five years?
  - b. Sustainability – How will the institution operate the PIEP over the next five years in terms of funding, staff, and other operational expectations?
  - c. From what sources of funding will the institution draw to sustain the program and support student participation (such as private donations or sponsorships, scholarships, grant funding, etc.)?

## Appendix H: Application Guidelines

### **POSTSECONDARY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Guidelines for the Submission of

Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund Applications

**Applications Due: January 19, 2024, 5:00 p.m. Central**

FISCAL YEAR 2024-25

Request for Applications

P. O. Box 3677  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-3677  
(225) 342-4253

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

### Important Notices

#### 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

##### A. BASIS OF AUTHORITY

The Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council (LPIEC) is charged with enacting R.S. 17:3138.10 and R.S. 36:651(K)(10), relative to postsecondary education for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities; to establish the Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund (LLPIEF) as a special fund in the state treasury; to provide for the purposes of the fund; to create and provide for the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council; to require annual reports with respect to the fund; and to provide for related matters.

##### B. PURPOSE OF THE LOUISIANA POSTSECONDARY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FUND

The Louisiana Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund (LLPIEF), referred to in this Section as the "fund", has been created within the state treasury as a special fund for the purpose of supporting approved comprehensive inclusive postsecondary education programs at public postsecondary education institutions in the state, thereby providing pathways to postsecondary degree, certificate, and apprenticeship programs designed to increase independent living and employment opportunities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

An approved inclusive education program, referred to in this Section as an "inclusive program", shall mean a federally approved comprehensive transition and postsecondary program offered at a Louisiana public postsecondary institution.

Monies in the fund are appropriated to the Board of Regents for distribution to public postsecondary institutions only for: (a) The creation, operation, and expansion of inclusive programs. (b) Technical assistance in creating or expanding inclusive programs. (c) Dissemination of information on inclusive programs in Louisiana to students with intellectual or developmental disabilities and the parent or guardian of the students.

Funding shall be distributed by the Board of Regents to a public postsecondary education management board only upon the certification by the board, on behalf of the receiving institution, that the institution has or is creating an inclusive program and that all funds shall be used by the institution for the inclusive program.

The fund is in addition to, and separate from, other monies appropriated or allocated to any public postsecondary education management board. Allocations from the fund shall not be included in the Board of Regents' funding formula calculation, nor shall they supplant any state general fund allocations to institutions. The availability of the fund shall not in any way substitute, limit, or otherwise affect the allocation of any funds otherwise available to those institutions under state or federal laws.

##### C. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR; QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

Specific questions shall be submitted via email to the Board of Regents Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Innovation, Dr. Tristan Denley, at [Tristan.Denley@laregents.edu](mailto:Tristan.Denley@laregents.edu) with the subject line "Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund RFA Inquiry." The deadline for receipt of written inquiries is 4:30 p.m. Central on January 17, 2024. All written inquiries and responses will be uploaded to <https://www.laregents.edu/inclusive/>. No inquiries will be accepted after the deadline date to ensure all interested parties receive the same information.

## **2. THE POSTSECONDARY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FUND PROGRAM**

### **A. PURPOSE AND PROGRAM OUTCOMES AND STANDARDS**

The purpose of the fund is to support the development or enhancement of an inclusive Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) education program that is consistent with the Higher Education Act (HEA) requirements that the program be a "degree, certificate, or non-degree program at an accredited institution that is designed to support students with intellectual disabilities (ID) who are seeking to continue academic, career and technical, and independent living instruction" in order to obtain competitive integrated employment (CIE).

[Model Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability](#)

### **B. ELIGIBILITY**

Public two- and four-year institutions of higher education, including community and technical colleges, are eligible to apply.

For applications that propose to share resources among several institutions, the following rules/guidelines apply:

1. The application must be submitted by a single lead institution. Partnering institutions must be referenced under the heading "Additional Institutions" on the cover page of the application
2. Documentation that defines the role(s) of the partner institutions must be submitted as an appendix to the application.
3. Only one comprehensive budget page for the project may be submitted for each year of the application. Sub-awards for partnering institutions must be described in the budget justification and referenced in the work plan.

Funds will be provided to, and managed by, the lead institution's management board, which will be responsible for executing and managing any sub-contracts with partnering institutions. Funds distributed from this source are to be placed in a restricted funds account for the development or enhancement of a Postsecondary Inclusive Education Program (PIEP).

### **C. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS**

The Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund (LPIEF) Act (682) of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session requires an institution to provide<sup>1</sup>:

- a. Evidence that it currently offers a federally approved Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) program via Title IV, which is eligible for federal student aid programs; or
- b. Documented evidence of the submission of an application for such federal approval of a program proposed by the institution; or
- c. Documentation demonstrating the commitment of the institution's governing board to submit an application within the subsequent academic year for federal approval of a program pursuant to 20 U.S.C. s. 1140.

### **D. APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS**

All applications submitted will be reviewed by a panel appointed by the LPIEAC members. The reviewing panel will present their recommendations to the LPIEAC for final approval.

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<sup>1</sup> If the institution has received approval for the CTP or has submitted an application for approval, upload the application materials and documentation (including the letter to the institution's accrediting body) into the online portal as part of the PIEF grant application process.

- a. **FINAL SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS TO BE FUNDED:** After recommendations are submitted, the LPIEC makes final determinations of applications to be funded based on the competitive review process.
- b. **TIMETABLE:** The following schedule for submission, assessment, and approval of funding will apply for FY 2022-23. If any deadline dates fall on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, the deadline(s) will be extended until 4:30 p.m. Central of the next working weekday.

November 15, 2023	RFA issued
January 17, 2024	Last day applicants may submit questions about the RFA
January 19, 2024	Application submission deadline 5:00 pm CST
January 22-February 2, 2024	Applications reviewed by review committee
February 3-8, 2024	Systems to certify recommended applications
February 9, 2024	Reports and recommendations of review committee provided to the LPIEC

#### E. PROCEDURES AND DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

Submission deadlines are absolute; all institution work on the application, including final approval and submission to the Board of Regents by the designated institution office, must be completed on or before the deadline date and time. All completed application packets must be submitted via the [online portal](#). An application sent to the Board of Regents may be released upon request of the submitting institution if additional changes are needed, provided such request is made before the deadline for receipt. A released application must be resubmitted prior to the deadline to be eligible for funding consideration.

#### F. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

All narrative sections of the application should be presented in a single PDF document with pages numbered, 1-inch margins at the top, bottom, and each side. In addition, the font should be no smaller than 12 point. Applicants should use either the **Initial Program Development or Enhancement Projects for Existing Programs** form as appropriate. Forms must be completed, and applications submitted via the [online portal](#) by the deadline provided.

#### G. PROJECT ACTIVATION DATE AND ANTICIPATED DATE OF COMPLETION

The project activation date is **August 1, 2024**, and the termination date is **February 28, 2026**.

### 3. PROJECT BUDGET INFORMATION

Program resources are limited and must be used only to support direct work toward the purposes outlined in Section 1.B of this RFA. The application must include a narrative/justification detailing the costs of and rationales for each expense budgeted to LPIEF and matching support. Indirect costs may not be budgeted to LPIEF but may be provided as institutional support, using the campus's federal negotiated rate.

#### A. DISALLOWED BUDGET ITEMS

Given the targeted nature of this support, LPIEF funds may not be used for maintenance or repair of equipment, whether existing or purchased with LPIEF funds. Long-term maintenance contracts for equipment cannot be budgeted to LPIEF but may be provided as match.

Submitting entities should also note that the scope of the program does not permit (1) construction of facilities; (2) routine renovation or upgrading of facilities; (3) purchase of standard motorized vehicles such as cars, trucks, vans, boats, etc.; or (4) purchase of standard office furniture or routine office equipment (e.g., desktop computers and peripherals, copiers, desks, chairs, etc.). Each annual CEA budget must detail and fully justify the specific STEM-related educational, outreach, and/or training uses of the activities included in the proposed budget as related to LPIEF purposes and project objectives.

Costs of meals, snacks, and drinks may be included when necessary for a LPIEF-related event or activity and must comply with State rates as set forth by the Division of Administration Policy and Procedure Memorandum 49 (the State General Travel Regulations). LPIEF funds cannot be used for entertainment costs, including performers, musicians, and rental of entertainment venues. These activities may be provided as part of host entity support.

Equipment and supplies purchased with LPIEF dollars (excluding promotional materials with no monetary value) may not be given to project participants (faculty, students, teachers, etc.) as personal property during or after the CEA period. These activities may be provided as part of host entity support.

Only under exceptional circumstances may LPIEF dollars be used to support institutional memberships to business, technical, and/or professional organizations. Individual faculty/staff memberships to any of the above are disallowed.

Proposed budgets may not provide for shortfalls or deficits in budgets, tuition payments, augmentation of salaries of individuals pursuing regularly assigned duties (except regular merit or cost-of-living increases), or unspecified contingencies.

Discounts received for equipment purchases may not be counted as part of the host entity support.

#### **B. FUNDS FOR PERSONNEL**

Include any guidance for salaries/fringe, additional compensation, etc.

#### **C. STUDENT SUPPORT EXPENSES**

Include any guidance for student scholarships, work-study, tuition/fee provisions, etc.

#### **D. OTHER EXPENSES**

Except as noted in Section V, above, and subject to state procurement and purchasing guidelines, support may be budgeted for any activity necessary for approved LPIEF work, as explained and justified in the project budget, including equipment, supplies, professional travel, event expenses, consultants, and participant stipends.

## Appendix I: Institutional Responses

**Table 5**

Operational Programs	Programs in Development with Date Program will Begin Offering Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baton Rouge Community College</li> <li>• Bossier Parish Community College, Louisiana State University and A&amp;M College</li> <li>• Louisiana State University of Alexandria</li> <li>• Nicholls State University</li> <li>• Southeastern Louisiana University</li> <li>• University of Louisiana at Lafayette</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Southern University at New Orleans – August 2024</li> <li>• University of Louisiana at Monroe – August 2024</li> </ul>

**Table 6**

What is the student capacity of the program for the 2023-2024 academic year?	
Baton Rouge Community College	3-5
Bossier Parish Community College	5
Louisiana State University and A&M College	2
Louisiana State University of Alexandria	8
Nicholls State University	12
Southeastern Louisiana University	17
Southern University at New Orleans	In development
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	33
University of Louisiana at Monroe	In development



**Table 7**

<b>What is the student capacity of the program for the 2024-2025 academic year?</b>	
Baton Rouge Community College	5-8
Bossier Parish Community College	8
Louisiana State University and A&M College	14
Louisiana State University of Alexandria	12
Nicholls State University	12
Southeastern Louisiana University	17
Southern University at New Orleans	In development
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	33
University of Louisiana at Monroe	5

**Table 8**

<b>What is the number of students currently enrolled in the program?</b>	
Baton Rouge Community College	3
Bossier Parish Community College	5
Louisiana State University and A&M College	2
Louisiana State University of Alexandria	8
Nicholls State University	12
Southeastern Louisiana University	17
Southern University at New Orleans	N/A
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	33
University of Louisiana at Monroe	N/A



**Table 9**

<b>What is the number of students, if any, on a waiting list for the program?</b>	
Baton Rouge Community College	0
Bossier Parish Community College	3
Louisiana State University and A&M College	0
Louisiana State University of Alexandria	SPERO does not have a waiting list.
Nicholls State University	8
Southeastern Louisiana University	5
Southern University at New Orleans	N/A
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	0 (Does not have a rolling waitlist)
University of Louisiana at Monroe	N/A

**Table 10**

<b>Please provide a detailed description of the services offered through the program.</b>
<b>Baton Rouge Community College</b>
<p>Courses offered to audit in this program are part of Baton Rouge Community College's regular offerings and are open to all BRCC students. As participants in campus life, PSE students will have the opportunity to be a part of the complete college life experience both socially and academically. PSE will have peer mentors who will be able to assist students with needs such as extracurricular events throughout campus, academic supports using Americans with Disabilities (ADA) classroom accommodations and changing the college culture to one of inclusiveness, where diversity is valued. Independent living skills and self-advocacy will be explicitly supported to enrich each student's experience and improve individual achievement.</p> <p>The components of the program include an individually determined program of study for each student, based on the student's career goals, peer and natural supports, and the involvement of students in more than just academic classes, especially in extracurricular and other campus activities to facilitate social relationships and friendships on campus. There will be academic coaches as well as mentors to provide support and coordinate individualized supports to assist</p>

students applying for financial supports.
<b>Bossier Parish Community College</b>
<p>Services offered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Inclusive academics with the regular population</li> <li>-Encouraged to attend campus events, i.e. (clubs, job fairs, theater productions, athletic games,</li> <li>-Social skills training and independent living skills</li> <li>-Work on employability skills training, (i.e., completing job applications, mock interviews, resume writing, email etiquette, phone etiquette, communication skills</li> <li>-Create a HIRE account through LA Workforce Commission</li> <li>-Job site visits (start in spring)</li> <li>-Career speakers</li> <li>-Resources about WIOA Youth Programs via The Coordinating &amp; Development Corporation</li> <li>-Invite SSA benefits planner</li> <li>-Students receive accommodations based on documentation submitted to BPCC disability services</li> <li>-Student work/study for eligible students</li> <li>-Academic advising</li> <li>-Tutoring when requested one-on-one or referrals to BPCC learning commons</li> <li>-Mentoring (academics and social)</li> </ul>
<b>Louisiana State University and A&amp;M College</b>
<p>The LSU Integrative Community Studies Program, known as the LSU Community, promotes independent living, employment opportunities, and social interaction for individuals with moderate disabilities. The goal of the LSU Integrative Community Studies Program is to provide a life-changing university learning experience for individuals selected for admission.</p> <p>LSU faculty, staff, and students are directly involved in the development of Integrative Community Studies. The program's mission is to provide students with intellectual disabilities with an integrative and inclusive educational experience using comprehensive transitional programming to prepare students for success competitive employment and in meaningful participation in their communities.</p>
<b>Louisiana State University of Alexandria</b>
Students in the program audit some college-level classes (credit-bearing); take special program classes (non-credit-bearing) designed to improve their daily living skills, social skills, and employment skills; achieve social integration through participation in on-campus events and

activities; and participate in internships or work-based training either on campus or at approved off-campus venues. They are assisted by paid student mentors both during and outside of class time. Students continue in the program for four years. It is expected that upon completion of the program, they will have developed the daily living skills, social skills, and employment skills that will allow them to live more independently and to secure meaningful and rewarding employment in their communities. An additional four students will be admitted to the program annually in years two, three, and four. By 2025, and for each subsequent year, 16 students will be enrolled in the program. The program addresses a significant community need in Central Louisiana: the lack of postsecondary educational options for young people with intellectual disabilities who have completed high school but are ineligible for regular college admission.

#### Nicholls State University

The Bridge to Independence – Certificate program is designed to help students with Intellectual Disabilities gain the skills needed to become gainfully employed through college courses and job training. Students are provided with individualized education. Students audit 2-3 college courses per semester. They receive assistance from a peer mentor with internship duties and class assignments. They attend weekly courses for independent living skills and social skills. Students participate in on and off-campus internships to build job-readiness skills. Students have access to counseling services on campus.

#### Southeastern Louisiana University

Lions Connected (LC) is accredited by the U.S. Department of Education and follows the approved advising and curriculum structure. LC offers both two- and four-year program options. Students are included in traditional campus experiences for a minimum of 75% of the day. LC students select their courses based on interest and future career options. They audit one three-hour academic course and one one-hour recreation-type course for a total of four hours per academic semester. Beginning year 2, LC students participate in an inclusive vocational opportunity (IVO)(unpaid on-campus work experience). IVOs are selected based on student interest and future career options. All LC students participate in instruction based on individualized needs in life skills and social skills. LC students have the opportunity to participate in on-campus Speech Clinic if desired. LC students have the opportunity to participate in all campus extracurricular activities the same as traditionally enrolled students.

#### Southern University at New Orleans

The Exceptional Knights Academy at Southern University at New Orleans will provide a full

college experience to students with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The students will gain the leadership skills, social skills, and communication skills needed for future employment and independent living. The Exceptional Knights Academy will provide the guided support services needed for eligible students to participate in campus events and activities and engage with students with and without disabilities. Students will have the option to live on campus in housing or commute to campus for classes and activities. The courses outlined in the two-year program of study will provide training and assess each student's ability to communicate effectively in oral and written English; read with comprehension; reason abstractly and think critically; understand numerical data and statistics; be familiar with key technological and informational applications; learn independently; recognize and appreciate cultural diversity; understand the nature and value of the fine and performing arts; develop a personal value system while retaining a tolerance for others; fundamentals of hygiene, personal health and wellness and self-care.

The program combined with college-level courses for the students to audit or take for credit, is designed to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities. The epicenter of the program emphasizes the attainment of learning through practical experiences. We will work meticulously with each student to adapt their courses and college experience, so they are prepared for a career they love.

Our academic counselors will provide support to each student in all aspects of the program to include:

- i. campus navigation
- ii. class attendance
- iii. requesting support from the Office of Disabilities
- iv. modification of coursework and assignments
- v. peripheral academic support services for external class assignments

#### University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Residential: inclusive on-campus housing options  
 Students audit 1-2 typical college courses per semester  
 Students take program-only courses  
 Social skills sessions, skills lab (cooking lab & independent living skills)  
 50-74% of academic time is spent in inclusive settings  
 Mentor support in typical college courses being audited  
 Access to the following campus-wide services:  
 Career services  
 Disability/accessibility services  
 Academic tutoring services  
 Health services  
 Transcripts via the registrar

<p>Communication Disorders Clinic Recreation facilities</p> <p>Career development services: Internships: On- and off-campus Volunteer work Community Service opportunities Work/Study</p>
University of Louisiana at Monroe
<p>Our ACES (Academics, Career, Engagement, Support) program will provide postsecondary inclusion students with the ability to audit courses and specific career courses currently in development. After completing these courses students will have the opportunity for two internship placements. Students will also have access to student support and all student activities on campus.</p>

**Table 11**

How many students completed the program in the 2022-2023 academic year?	
Baton Rouge Community College	0
Bossier Parish Community College	0
Louisiana State University and A&M College	N/A
Louisiana State University of Alexandria	The first cohort of SPERO students will complete the program in May of 2026
Nicholls State University	4
Southeastern Louisiana University	4
Southern University at New Orleans	N/A
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	5
University of Louisiana at Monroe	N/A

**Table 12**

<b>Corresponding terms for the data in the following questions</b>	
Baton Rouge Community College	Fall 2023-Spring 2024
Bossier Parish Community College	Fall 2023-Spring 2024
Louisiana State University and A&M College	N/A
Louisiana State University of Alexandria	Fall 2022- Fall 2023
Nicholls State University	Fall 2016-Fall 2023
Southeastern Louisiana University	Fall 2016-Spring 2023
Southern University at New Orleans	N/A
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	Fall 2014-Spring 2023
University of Louisiana at Monroe	N/A

**Table 13**

<b>What is the total number of students who have completed the program?</b>	
Baton Rouge Community College	0
Bossier Parish Community College	0
Louisiana State University and A&M College	N/A
Louisiana State University of Alexandria	The first cohort of SPERO students will complete the program in May of 2026
Nicholls State University	28
Southeastern Louisiana University	17
Southern University at New Orleans	N/A
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	27

University of Louisiana at Monroe	N/A
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**Table 14**

<b>Of the total number of students who have completed the program, how many are employed?</b>		
Baton Rouge Community College	N/A	
Bossier Parish Community College	0	
Louisiana State University and A&M College	N/A	
Louisiana State University of Alexandria	0 - The first cohort of SPERO students will complete the program in May 2026	
Nicholls State University	17	60%
Southeastern Louisiana University	11	64%
Southern University at New Orleans	N/A	
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	23	86%
University of Louisiana at Monroe	N/A	N/A

**Table 15**

<b>Of the total number of students who have completed the program, how many are living independently?</b>		
Baton Rouge Community College	N/A	
Bossier Parish Community College	0	
Louisiana State University and A&M College	N/A	
Louisiana State University of Alexandria	N/A	
Nicholls State University	7	25%
Southeastern Louisiana University	3	17.6%
Southern University at New Orleans	N/A	

University of Louisiana at Lafayette	3	11%
University of Louisiana at Monroe	N/A	



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item IV.**

**APPROVAL FOR SUBMISSION OF LEGISLATIVE REPORTS**

An overview of all Legislative Study Reports that involve the Board of Regents will be presented. These reports will be completed prior to their respective 2024 deadlines.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Senior Staff recommends granting the Commissioner authority to finalize legislative reports required by 2023 legislation and submit them to the Legislature by their respective 2024 deadlines, and update the Board at its next regular scheduled meeting.