



**Third Quarter LASTEM Advisory Council Meeting**  
**August 10, 2023**  
**10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.**

The LASTEM Advisory Council met on Thursday, August 10, 2023, at the Meraux Foundation/Docville Farm in Violet, Louisiana.

**Committee Members/Representatives Present**

Kaneisha Akinpelumi  
Bianca Deliberto (Proxy – Tammy Brouillette)  
Jawanda Givens  
Commissioner Kim Hunter Reed  
Lindsey Keith-Vincent (arrived after roll call)  
Calvin Mackie  
Jamie Mixon  
Ronnie Morris  
Frank Neubrandner  
Janet Pope (Proxy – Robin Cosenza)  
Kellie Taylor-White  
Christen Timmins

Rep. Vincent St. Blanc  
Scott Stevens  
Rachel Vincent-Finley  
William Wainwright  
Tina Watts  
Jaimee Williams  
Tom Yura

**Staff Members Present**

Christina Cheek  
Clint Coleman  
Jennifer Stevens

**Committee Members Not Present**

Brian Davis  
Larry Carter, Jr.  
Patty Glasser  
Crystal Gordon  
Paul Helton  
Jim Henderson  
Sen. Sharon Hewitt  
David Lafargue  
Francesca Mellieon-Williams  
Melissa Mann

**Guests & STEM Center Directors**

Representative Matthew Willard, District 97  
Mark Arseneault, STEM Center Director  
Daphine Barnes, STEM Center Director  
Angela Boxie, STEM Center Director  
Wendy Conarro, STEM Center Director  
Summer Dann, STEM Center Director  
Jennifer DePriest, STEM Center Director  
Heather Kleiner, STEM Center Director  
Christie Landry, STEM Center Director

**Welcome and Roll Call**

Commissioner Reed welcomed all attendees and called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Dr. Coleman called roll, noting that quorum was not obtained. Dr. Reed stated that the second quarter meeting minutes and any other items on the agenda needing a vote would be held until the next meeting.

Dr. Coleman thanked the Meraux Foundation for hosting the LASTEM Council and asked Mr. Chris Haines, Meraux Foundation Board Member, to welcome the group. Next, Dr. Coleman introduced Ms. Daphine Barnes, Region 1 GNORocs Director and Regional STEM Center host for the meeting. Ms. Barnes introduced special guest, Representative Matthew Willard of District 97, an advocate of STEM in the region and the state as the Chairman of the STEM Innovation Caucus. Dr. Reed thanked Representative Willard for his advocacy and passion for the work and invited the Caucus to do a tour of the nine Regional STEM Centers across the state.

**Approval of the Second Quarter Meeting Minutes**

Dr. Reed noted that since a quorum was not obtained, approval of the meeting minutes would be reintroduced during the fourth quarter meeting.

**2022 Year in Review: LASTEM RSC Performance Reports & #SummerofLaSTEM**

Before moving to the 2022 Year in Review, Dr. Reed mentioned the exciting conversations student attendees of the NASA Astro Camps had with the astronauts on the International Space Station (ISS) last week. It was the first time the state has had a link from the ISS to Louisiana students.

Dr. Coleman provided a recap of the funding received by LASTEM over the past few years and the creation of the Regional STEM Centers. Next, he presented metrics from the past year, obtained through the performance reports submitted quarterly by each Center.

Dr. Mackie mentioned there was a disconnect between what LASTEM is and what it represents, stating that when LASTEM was created he thought the intention was to gather all STEM data around the state, not just from the Centers. Dr. Reed stated that the Board of Regents has a responsibility to report to the Legislature on how allocations of public dollars to LASTEM have been spent and the impact of the dollars, clarifying the relationship between Regents' fiduciary responsibilities to the legislature related to public funding and its vision for LASTEM to develop and support a stronger STEM ecosystem across the state.

Dr. Coleman completed his presentation related to success metrics and the social media campaign, #SummerofLASTEM. Discussion of this agenda item included Center partnerships and collaborations and if/how they are funding their partners; how the Centers are collecting partner data; work towards a future outward-facing website repository for all things STEM in the state to inform the public of events happening in their communities and data on program success; the Kid Wind program and the Centers working with Entergy and/or other power companies; and the emergence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and ways in which the state will move forward in developing education standards, outcomes, workforce expectations, including who will be leading the conversation in both Louisiana and the nation. Dr. Reed stated she would discuss AI with Dr. Cade Brumley, Superintendent of Education, and others and report back to the Council. In addition, Dr. Reed celebrated the phenomenal work happening across the state and in the Regional STEM Centers she has visited so far on her statewide tour.

**STEM Definition Review & Approval**

Since quorum was not obtained and to save on time, the STEM definition item was held for the next quarterly meeting.

**Discussion of Nunez College Wind Program**

Dr. Coleman introduced Ms. Jacqueline Richard, Coastal Studies and GIS Technology Program Manager and Associate Professor of Geology at Nunez Community College. Ms. Richard shared information about multiple STEM programs at Nunez, but focused primarily on the new Wind Turbine Technician Program, a unique program in the state that places Nunez as one of the only community colleges in the country offering an associate's degree in Global Wind. Following conversation included the role of the M.J. Foster Promise Program in supporting students, working with local American Job Center to provide wraparound services for students, building partnerships with 2+2 programs, and creating internships.

**Overview and Updates on LDOE Key STEM Efforts**

Dr. Coleman noted that previous Council member Ms. Breigh Rhodes had taken another position and Ms. Jamie Mixon, LDOE STEM Specialist, had been appointed as the new LDOE representative. He informed the Council that Ms. Mixon and her team meet with Dr. Coleman and the directors on a regular basis to ensure alignment of LASTEM efforts with the goals and expectations of LDOE.

Ms. Mixon presented updated STEM pathways and features of high-quality STEM programming. She welcomed feedback from the Council and directors on these topics and stated that LDOE would be building out guidance and providing more information as this work continues to develop. The Council discussed the impact of STEM education being hands-on/'doing' and student-centered, as well as the importance of investments in how teachers are being trained today and continuing education of teachers already in the school system, to ensure all feel confident in their skills.

**Region 1 Update**

Dr. Reed asked Ms. Barnes to provide an update on the excellent work being done by the Region 1 STEM Center. Ms. Barnes shared with the Council the Annual State of STEM, which included not only GNOrocs information, but also ways GNOrocs works holistically with its host Economic Development Center and the eight other regions across the state. In addition, she shared highlights related to statewide programs including HBCU Innovation Internship, Wise Women, Mini Grants, Sons of Saints, and the NOLA STEM Summit. Next, Ms. Barnes introduced Ms. Salem Habte, Age to the Future Energy Inclusion Associate, who spoke about how Age to the Future aligns to higher education.

**Summit Update**

Dr. Coleman provided a brief update related to the 2023 LASTEM Summit, reminding the Council that general registration is now open for the event. In addition, he shared the Summit theme – “STEM Today, Success Tomorrow” – and announced that the keynote presenter was Mr. Mark Perna. He noted that presentation slots were filled, but registration is still available for interested exhibitors and sponsors.

**Adjournment**

*There being no other comments or business, a motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Calvin Mackie and seconded by Dr. Frank Neubrandner. With all in agreement, the meeting was adjourned at 12:06 p.m.*