

Louisiana Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Task Force

Wednesday, March 1, 2022

1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Iowa Room, 1st Floor of the Claiborne Building

1201 N. 3rd St.

Baton Rouge, LA 70802

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Reed called the meeting of the Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Task Force to order at 1:03 p.m.

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Ms. Cara Landry called the roll, and a quorum was established.

Members Present	Affiliation
Dr. Esrom Pitre	Senate Committee on Education
Ms. Em Leblanc-Cooper	LDOE
Dr. Kim Hunter-Reed	Commissioner of Higher Education
Dr. Janet Pope	LA School Boards Association
Dr. Karen Peace	LA Association of School Executives
Ms. Sandy Holloway	BESE
Mr. Bruce Chaffin	LA State Assoc. of School Personnel Administrators
Dr. Paula Calderon	LA Assoc. of Colleges for Teacher Education
Ms. Cynthia Posey	LA Federation of Teachers
Mr. Barry Erwin	Council for a Better Louisiana
Sen. J Rodgers Pope	LA Senate
Rep. Buddy Mincey	LA House of Representatives

Members Absent	Affiliation
Rep. Mark Wright	House Committee on Education
Mr. Mike Faulk	LA Assoc. of School Superintendents
Ms. Gladys Mouton	LA Association of Educators
Mr. Alex Jerrell	LA Assoc. of Public Charter Schools

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 9, 2022 MINUTES

Mr. Erwin asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2022, meeting. On the motion of Mr. Chaffin, seconded by Dr. Pitre, the Task Force approved the minutes.

OVERVIEW OF THE WORKFORCE DATA

Mr. Erwin called upon Ms. Em Leblanc Cooper, Assistant Superintendent of Educator Development, to present an overview of the workforce data.

Ms. Cooper began by presenting the state workforce snapshot that was released in February. As a refresher, she stated that LDOE began publishing state and regional snapshots in 2016 to help system leaders better understand workforce development and education. She noted that LDOE has recently made these data more accessible to school leaders. Previously annual reports were static and focused on data from the October 1st count date but are now based on the entire school year. The reports contain data related to educator recruitment, promotion, compensation, and placement. Since summer 2022, Workforce Reporting has served as a living dashboard, offering real-time data to system and school leaders. The snapshot provides high-level information about the educator workforce in the areas of demographics, certification, recruiting and hiring, evaluating results, compensation, and retention. The Regional Workforce Snapshots communicate annual workforce data and trends for each region and display a state-to-regional comparison.

Ms. Cooper then discussed the demographics revealed in the 2021-2022 snapshot, noting that the percentage of teachers of color increased by two percentage points from the previous year, rising to 29%. The makeup of teachers by gender remained consistent from the previous school year.

Representative Mincey asked what types of schools are included in this list. Ms. Cooper replied that

it incorporates all public schools, including charter schools. Dr. Janet Pope discussed breaking out Orleans Parish and seeing how many of those teachers are certified. Dr. Reed asked if the percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged has changed over the years. Ms. Cooper indicated that the makeup of teachers by gender has remained consistent from the previous school year and showed a breakdown of race/ethnicity. Ms. Cooper added that the percentage of certified teachers increased by two points from the previous year. Representative Mincey asked if charter schools are required to report their data and Ms. Cooper responded that they are not. Ms. Cooper then detailed certification by subject area. The data show that math, science, and social studies are the top three content areas in terms of need for certified teachers. Science has the highest percentage of teachers teaching outside of field.

Ms. Cooper discussed compensation, noting that the average teacher salary increased by \$1,268 during the 2021-2022 school year. She then provided data pertaining to retention, indicating that Louisiana retains 86% of its educator workforce. The number of departing teachers has decreased by two percentage points from the previous school year, while the departure rate of first-year teachers has declined by five percentage points. Dr. Janet Pope asked if DeSoto and Red River Parishes could be taken out of the data. Ms. Cooper responded that school systems can login and only have access to the data that they oversee. Dr. Janet Pope asked if we could investigate trends and Ms. Cooper noted that data could be pulled in many different ways. Dr. Calderon said it would be interesting to look at rural areas. Ms. Cooper then said the three-year retention rate is higher for educators prepared through an undergraduate teacher preparation program pathway. She added that Louisiana's educator workforce is seeing progress in recruitment and retention and that LDOE expects to see these numbers continue to rise. She said Louisiana is also the only state that is

moving in an upward direction, adding that undergraduate or traditional programs have higher retention rates over a three-year period than alternative certification programs.

The Task Force endorsed BOR and LDOE to pursue legislation in the upcoming 2023 Legislative Session of the Louisiana Legislature to:

1. Extend HCR39 of the 2021 Legislative Session for two years;
2. Support the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact; and
3. Explore options for increasing teacher pay and compensation.

Dr. Calderon asked for more information on the PRAXIS core and Ms. Holloway on the Legislative Endorsement of the Teacher Mobility Compact.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO DATE:

Compensation Study Preliminary Findings

Dr. Reed asked Dr. Christel Slaughter from SSA Consulting to discuss the preliminary findings of the Compensation Study.

Dr. Slaughter began by discussing the massive amounts of data included in the studies, indicating that 159 questions were included. Due to the volume of information, the researchers are still processing the information. She noted that 67 traditional school systems responded, but that the response rate from charter schools was substantially lower and would be supplemented with secondary research.

Dr. Slaughter then went on to highlight information around vacancy rates, teacher salaries, and district performance. She noted that vacancy rates increase as salaries decrease for teachers with bachelor's degrees, with 20% of all vacancies in Baton Rouge. She then presented a comparative analysis of the 10 systems with the highest salaries and the 10 systems with the lowest salaries and related vacancy rates. Dr. Slaughter clarified that different parishes have different pay scales based on whether teachers are certified or not. Dr. Calderon asked if teachers with bachelor's degrees included only those majoring in education. Dr. Slaughter responded that data captured bachelor's degrees in any field. Mr. Chaffin noted the difference in pay between certified and uncertified teachers. Senator Pope commented on how the mobility of teachers affects benefits and retention, adding that some districts are self-insured while others use the Office of Group Benefits.

Dr. Slaughter then presented a chart showing that higher teacher salaries are correlated with higher system performance scores. The top 10 list excluded districts with no or abnormal vacancy rates. Mr. Chaffin discusses teacher salaries increasing by 10% for all teachers, including those that have remained in the field for a long period of time.

Dr. Slaughter presented charts showing teacher salary and vacancy effectiveness rates along with information on how the rates were calculated. She also discussed further survey findings and hard-to-fill positions, identified by school systems as special education, high school teachers, middle school teachers, elementary school teachers, teachers in UIR labeled schools, teachers in CIR labeled schools, and paraprofessionals. Hard-to-fill positions by subject area as identified by school systems included math, science, foreign language, English, history, art, PE, and technology.

Dr. Slaughter moved to survey findings on recruitment and retention incentives, indicating that local school systems in Louisiana offer a wide array of incentives and presenting samples of incentives.

Task Force members discussed different approaches to teacher incentives.

Dr. Slaughter presented a timeline and overview of the next steps:

- **January and February** - Conduct interviews with selected leaders and work sessions with LDOE staff to gain perspective on compiled/analyzed survey data.
- **February** - Continue analysis of survey data. Utilize national and southern regional data to conduct comparative analysis of compensation and recruiting/retaining strategies.
- **March** - Develop final report to include findings and recommendations.

The final report will include:

1. Introduction – Purpose and Scope Primary Research
2. Study Methodology and Timeline
3. Compensation Survey of Louisiana School Systems – Findings
4. Comparative Analysis: Louisiana vs. Southern Regional Education Board States – Findings
5. Comparative Analysis: Louisiana vs. Other States including *50 States Comparison Teacher Recruitment and Retention* (Education Commission) practices – Findings.
6. Recommendations to Improve Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Educator Evaluation

Mr. Erwin then asked Ms. Cooper to discuss the Educator Evaluation System and the associate's degree pathway. Ms. Cooper began by updating everyone on the findings of the survey, reminding the Task Force that the current educator evaluation system contains a professional practice portion that uses a rubric for observation along with student learning targets and the value-added model.

The system is over ten years old, which led to a recommendation to conduct a study.

LDOE, in conjunction with the Region 14 Comprehensive Center, administered a statewide online survey for teachers and leaders with 8,000 educators providing feedback and 5,684 educators completing the survey, representing over 11% of teachers in Louisiana. The results of the survey are intended to provide information for the redesign of Louisiana's current Educator Evaluation System. Questions measured feelings toward the current system, including what components are valuable to professional growth and what components might need refinement. Open-response questions were also provided to allow for submission of additional ideas for improvement.

Ms. Cooper then presented Teacher Survey Demographics by Years of Experience and by Racial Identity, as well as Leader Survey Demographics by Years of Leadership Experience and by Racial Identity. Findings showed that, in general, teachers and school leaders differed in their perceptions of the existing evaluation system. Among teachers, 47.3% believe the evaluation system enhances the quality of instruction, 36.5% believe it provides a process to retain effective teachers, 40.9% believe evaluation contributes to student achievement, and 54% agree that the evaluation system fosters continuous improvement. For leaders, 71.3% believe evaluation enhances the quality of instructional leadership, 45.6% believe it provides a process to retain effective school leaders, 72.6% believe evaluation contributes to student achievement, and 66.7% report receiving feedback that was specific and actionable. Dr. Calderon asked for clarification on the 11% who responded to the survey, asking whether they were just teachers or teachers and leaders. Ms. Cooper clarified that the percentage includes both teachers and leaders. Dr. Calderon asked for the breakdown of how many teachers vs. leaders responded and Ms. Cooper responded that she would get this information.

Ms. Cooper moved to another key finding, that teachers with more years of experience thought the

evaluation system was less helpful in their growth than novice teachers and that 68% of teachers with less than one year experience indicated their evaluation rating helped them select professional development and learning, compared to just 28.2% of teachers with more than 16 years of experience. General satisfaction with evaluation implementation and belief that feedback received is specific and actionable also declined as years of service increased.

Ms. Cooper noted that teachers and school leaders want an improved evaluation system that is focused on professional growth, with more professional learning and more cycles of observation, feedback, and coaching. She noted that both groups felt that observation should hold the most weight in the evaluation system. Educators noted that they want flexibility in the evaluation model and like autonomy in the system to allow for things that fit into their school or system. Dr. Calderon observed that this falls in line with why they were not happy with the state mentor teacher training: because they have deep knowledge of their specific districts and know what makes a good mentor in their specific context.

Ms. Cooper then shared the next steps in the process. An RFP was published to select a partner to assist in research and practice to review the current system and recommend improvements. Next steps include planning for the improvement and development of evaluation components and training materials, holding a learning year to pilot evaluation component(s) to provide feedback, and developing professional learning materials, including a video library.

Ms. Holloway asked for clarification on the framing of the question about the value-added scores, since so many variables go into these. Ms. Cooper said that respondents could choose multiple

options, as well as add their own.

Associate's Degree Pathway

Ms. Cooper then transitioned into the last two items, starting a proposal to redress the teacher shortage. To increase opportunities for aspiring educators, the LDOE is proposing to establish a certification pathway by which an individual possessing an associate's degree who is pursuing entry into a teacher prep program at a four-year institution may be employed by a school system as a teacher of record. An entry point for those with associate's degrees helps school systems to address teacher vacancies by adding an entry point to bring more people into programs and the workforce, ease the burdens of staffing vacancies, and support local retention in grow-your-own programs by allowing teacher candidates an expedited route to employment within their local school districts. Ms. Cooper noted Arizona and Florida are initiating programs similar to this model. She detailed some of the components to be pursued legislatively, including: the governing authority of a public elementary or secondary school may issue an associate's degree teaching permit to an individual who holds an associate's degree from an accredited college or university; an associate's degree teaching permit shall remain in effect for not more than five years, during which time the holder shall be enrolled in a college or university for the purpose of obtaining a bachelor's degree; the salary paid shall not exceed 75% of the average classroom teacher yearly salary for such school system; the holder of an associate's degree teaching permit may not provide special education services; no more than ten percent of the teaching staff of a school system shall hold an associate's degree teaching permit; and a candidate must have a mentor teacher and participate in weekly teacher collaborations. She also noted that this license proposed to be administered at the local level

and provided how administration would work. Ms. Cooper then listed the four different pathways: traditional, alternate, TEP and associate's (proposed).

Ms. Cooper asked for feedback on two questions:

1. What considerations should LDOE take under advisement as this proposal continues to be built?
2. What support would two-year institutions, four-year institutions, school systems, and aspiring educators need for this to be successful?

Mr. Chaffin discussed his concern about the content knowledge of those pursuing the proposed associate degree pathway, particularly in math. Dr. Calderon asked whether the math content exam would be required as an entry point to the four-year institution and Ms. Cooper responded that this could be a possibility though the issue has not yet been resolved. Mr. Chaffin noted that adding this as a requirement would alleviate his concern. Dr. Calderon noted a few concerns, including that when students transfer from two-year colleges with 60 hours, they assume they can finish the baccalaureate in two years, but the timing depends on when courses are offered, residency, etc. She also noted that some deans of education are worried about a 19-21-year-old in a classroom serving as the teacher of record and added that deans would like to keep traditional undergraduate programs separate from alternative certification programs. She recognized that the proposed program looks like an alternate certificate program, and that they should be cautious of this appearance. Mr. Chaffin expressed confusion about how an individual would be able to pursue a four-year degree while also serving as a teacher of record and the group discussed course load reductions needed to maintain their workload. Ms. Holloway asked about the difference between this program and other programs and Ms. Cooper noted the difference that students need a bachelor's to enter the

alternative certification program. Mr. Chaffin discussed his concern that districts would need to become certification specialists at all levels. Dr. Reed added that the Task Force must think about how to scale multiple initiatives and asked if what we are proposing might work counter to what we are already doing. Ms. Cooper stated that the mentor teacher would not receive payment from the MFP but could receive funding from the local district. Dr. Pitre noted that he has visited classrooms in which paraprofessionals are working as teachers and found it very successful. Ms. Cooper stated that the program is the para-to-professional model, which the Task Force has previously recommended.

CERTIFICATION APPEALS COUNCIL

Dr. Reed then called on Ms. Cooper to present information regarding the Certification Appeals Council. Ms. Cooper explained that this nine-member body is charged with evaluating appeals of persons seeking certification in Louisiana. At the October 2022 meeting of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, BESE directed LDOE to provide at its December 2022 BESE meeting a report regarding educator appeals considered by TCAC. At its January meeting, BESE then directed an item be brought to the Task Force seeking the opinion of members regarding whether evaluation law should be changed. Ms. Cooper noted that Louisiana Revised Statute (R.S.) 17:3901 et al. requires educators to be evaluated yearly. R.S. 17:3886 indicates the effect evaluation has on an educator's credentials. One-half of one percent of teachers request an appeal.

One circumstance, which has increased in frequency over the last few years, is a failure to evaluate educators at all, in contravention of statute, with potential consequences for the

educator's certification, including:

- Expired certificate
- Renewal denied
- Must appeal

Approximately 90% of all teachers are evaluated each year. Apart from two years in which appeals were higher, since 2012 approximately 30 educators per year appeal to the Teacher Certification Appeals Council (TCAC) to have additional validity linked to their certificate.

Ms. Cooper then requested Task Force feedback relative to changing the law regarding requiring three effective evaluations for renewal. Ms. Holloway expressed concern about teachers not being evaluated. She added that teachers moving from public to non-public are penalized in recertification, which could be solved (on the BESE side) by removing three years of evaluation and retaining a single evaluation. The intent of the law was to keep ineffective teachers out of the classroom, but only one certificate was not renewed due to an ineffective evaluation.

Mr. Chaffin discussed the process of granting a waiver. Dr. Calderon stated that the school leader recommends a teacher for certification.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, on motion of Mr. Chaffin, seconded by Dr. Peace, the Task Force voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 3:17 p.m.

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES & GUESTS

Ms. Shan Davis, Board of Elementary and Secondary Education