

Louisiana Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Task Force

Tuesday, August 30, 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. Susannah Craig 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
Em LeBlanc-Cooper	LDOE
Susannah Craig	Commissioner of Higher Education
Janet Pope	LA School Boards Association
Karen Peace	LA Association of School Executives
Sandy Holloway	BESE
Mike Faulk	LA Association of School Superintendents
Paula Calderon	LA Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
Cynthia Posey (designee)	LA Federation of Teachers
Barry Erwin	Council for a Better Louisiana
Alex Jerrell	LA Association of Public Charter Schools
Sen. J. Rogers Pope	LA Senate
Rep. Buddy Mincey	LA House of Representatives

Members Absent	Affiliation
Rep. Mark Wright	House Committee on Education
Esrom Pitre	Senate Committee on Education
Bruce Chaffin	LA State Association of School Personnel Administrators
Joy Rimmer	LA Professional Educators
Gladys Mouton	LA Association of Educators

APPROVAL OF JUNE 21, 2022, MINUTES

Mr. Erwin asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2022, meeting. On motion of Senator J. Rogers Pope, seconded by Dr. Janet Pope, the Task Force approved the minutes.

UPDATES ON RECOMMENDATIONS TO DATE

Ms. Em LeBlanc-Cooper, LDOE, presented an update on the workforce data reporting system. She stated that in the past data was collected during the 2015-2016 school year, with the first published workforce report coming out the following school year, in fall of 2016. Since then, the data set has grown and improved each year. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper stated that in the past these reports based on October 1st data were submitted through numerous data systems. She said that beginning with this past school year, workforce reports will be based on end-of-year data, providing more accurate information. School and system leaders will now have access to real-time data, instead of waiting on a published PDF file. All data will now be in one place for them to use.

Mr. Mike Faulk, LA Association of School Superintendents, asked if the issue had been resolved for districts to access data. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that some of them have access and that one of the issues was the transition to the one-stop shop. She said that schools are still working on that, and the full transition has not yet been finished. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper presented the dashboard that a site leader will see when they log in. System leaders can see data for all schools in the system, while site leaders can see data for their schools only. From the main dashboard, there are four tabbed dashboards. The data can drill down to the teacher level; therefore, the system and site leaders can see the workforce data for any teacher in the system, and site leaders can view any teachers at their site. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper presented what the graphs on the overview dashboard look like. A user can click on any bar to see the list of what the bar represents. For example, certifications as well as compensation can be viewed. Sen. Pope asked if there has been any comparison between higher ed and K-12 in reference to compensation. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that nothing formal has been done, but it could be investigated. Dr. Craig also responded that the wide range of instructors in higher education make less than a teacher salary, and the higher you get, the wider the range of salaries you might find. Mr. Faulk then asked if this was a snapshot and if it presented actual information from a school district and reported in this format. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that the snapshot report is live for a school system, which is different than the snapshot PDF that is published once a year. What the dashboard does is allow real-time data to be viewed, and a snapshot that is also produced at the state level. Mr. Faulk asked how this will be helpful in addressing the teacher shortage now. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that these new data provide a lens that users did not have access to before, which can pinpoint where their needs are. These new data will change the ways that HR directors, system leaders, and teams

analyze the data. For the elements that exist now, with compensation broken out like this, users can see all different types of pay and school systems can have very different conversations. Many systems are not providing major compensation pay, and this will help them see which schools are doing it and allow them to drill down to the school and to the teacher levels, and not just look at percentages. Patrick Steck from Deans for Impact, added that these data are not currently available to others in the country. From a state perspective, school personnel and HR directors will see which teachers depart, who prepared them, and whether departure rates are the same as at the institution that prepared them.

Mr. Faulk then discussed a Monroe newspaper article about why teachers are leaving. He said that as a state we must show the magnitude of the problem to get people to move. He noted that we must have concrete information and start honing in on a solution to the problem before it gets completely out of hand. Dr. Pope indicated that a common theme is that, because of expectations and demands, teachers say that they do not cite the real reason why they are leaving. She suggested there be a way for teachers to confidentially indicate why they left and be honest. Ms. Cynthia Posey, LA Federation of Teachers, said the reason teachers are leaving are the same reasons every year and nothing changes. Mr. Jerrell asked whether these data include the attrition rate from year to year. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that it will be a true end-of-the-year, school year. Dr. Pope said it would be interesting to see how many do not come back after the Christmas holiday and October 1st. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that we can now query to see key times in the year when there is change. Mr. Jerrell asked if there is a way to see the compensation by district. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that there likely currently is or, if not, it will be in place soon. Dr. Pope said teachers are currently being paid based on performance, with the state dictating those performance metrics. She asked if pay will still be based on performance with the state setting metrics. Mr. Faulk stated that pay is determined by the district and the resources that they have. Dr. Pope suggested that may be why certain schools are falling below the ranks for teacher pay.

Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper then provided an update on the new teacher experience, and how we support teachers in those first critical years, when we lose about half of our teachers. The comprehensive induction program was designed to provide new teachers with the experience they deserve and need to be successful in their first few years. This provides them with professional learning modules on key topics, as well as a system leader guidance document and affinity groups to network and learn with. They also have a mentor during their first year. The new teacher of the year award process has also been released, with the winner announced at the gala in July. This year LDOE is also piloting the guidance to support system leaders in improving their new teacher induction program, with over a million dollars allocated to get systems off the ground. Eighteen school systems will be part of this pilot, to help refine guidance and provide feedback. Rep. Mincey asked what the mentor program will look like for the teachers. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper explained that

it would be the same as a mentor for a resident, with a mentor for the whole year, and that a stipend is included. Sen. Pope asked how these mentors are selected, trained, etc. for the pilot program. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that the school systems participating in the pilot have received guidance. The program should be effective for teachers and people at the school site. Would-be mentors must complete a mentor teacher program, and there is also a waiver in place for those who want to be mentors. Rep. Mincey then commented on the pilot program and the funding emphasis, asking if there would be an evaluation component. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that the program is strategically designed to ensure that it can be sustained when the money goes away. Rep. Mincey asked if the funding could support sixty-nine school systems. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that it could. Dr. Paula Calderon then asked if the school systems are responsible for money coming from the state to pay for substitute teachers to mentor teachers to do professional development and other things. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that the money can be used for that. Rep. Mincey stated that there used to be a curriculum for that. Mr. Faulk asked if any of the 18 pilots already have a mentoring program. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that they either have no induction program or have one that they want to improve on. Mr. Faulk said it goes back to the resources that the districts have.

Dr. Craig recommended that the survey and listening session results be moved to the end, due to timing, or presented at the next meeting to give time to the compensation and incentive study. The Task Force members agreed.

COMPENSATION AND INCENTIVES STUDY

Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper stated that one of the recommendations of the Task Force is to complete a compensation and incentive study to understand the compensation and incentives across the state and compare them to other southern states and the country. After the study is complete, it will inform the next steps for compensation and incentives. SSA consultants will be listening to perspectives and experiences. Dr. Christel Slaughter from SSA began the discussion.

Dr. Slaughter asked about the expectations for the compensation study. Mr. Faulk stated that we need to show disparities across the state and the demographics, as finances are completely different in every one of them. Rep. Mincey noted the whole purpose is to understand what is driving teachers away. He said teachers would accept a lack of pay because they loved their jobs, but the challenge now is that they are asked to do more with less and burn out. He requested that the disparity be looked at in neighboring states.

Mr. Faulk then said he did a total compensation package for every employee. The benefits, the salary, and all other elements were entered in a form for the teacher to see the total

compensation. Dr. Pope said the cost of health care and other benefits continues to increase by more than the wage increase and needs to be included in the discussion. Dr. Calderon mentioned providing advanced degrees and rewards, noting that some parishes could do it and others could not. Dr. Peace suggested that it is time for a shift in thinking of how to structure a pay scale. Rep. Mincey said compensation is all competing in the job market and competing in the job market, adjusted for high-need areas, such as STEM, and factors like a mass exit. He added that issues of fairness and need must be considered. Sen. Pope noted that benefits must be fought for in the legislature.

The members discussed cost-per-pupil and return-on-investment issues, and whether good analyses of these issues exist. Mr. Faulk asked Dr. Slaughter if the survey could include a question for HR directors or superintendents, to determine what they have done with their teacher salary schedules to attract more teachers. Ms. Slaughter replied that this question has been drafted and that they have discussed, at a high level, how to get the data. Dr. Janet Pope added that it may be beneficial to do a historical analysis of the early 2000s, to study the incentives offered.

Dr. Janet Pope also noted that school systems tend to place the best teachers where they are needed the most, not necessarily where they want to be placed, which can lead to attrition. She added that she is unsure if this is done in other states that pay certain teachers more. Dr. Calderon said that many of her education students switched from one grade to another so they could avoid certain tests.

Mr. Faulk asked to whom the compensation survey would be directed and suggested the survey ask teachers what would make them stay. Dr. Calderon responded that the amount of paperwork required of teachers, along with punitive accountability rather than supportive accountability, may answer the question.

Mr. Erwin asked what information would be valuable to legislators to support pay raises. Rep. Mincey responded that a better job needs to be done to educate legislators on the severity of the problem as well as the sustainability of a teacher pay raise.

Dr. Slaughter then asked Task Force members what success might look like. Mr. Jerrell responded that having a plan and data to support competitive compensation would be a good start. He added that his experience managing a federal grant for teacher recruitment and retention is that teachers are more likely to stay if they have a 10% increase in pay. He asked if it was possible to provide a bonus after a set number of years of service, as a milestone toward which new teachers could work. Dr. Pope suggested considering student loan assistance as well.

Dr. Slaughter asked the group to identify the most critical area for deep study. Mr. Faulk suggested looking at districts with low-performing schools because they have a high turnover rate. Dr. Calderon urged discussion of what makes teachers stay.

Mr. Erwin asked for final thoughts. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper asked members to send any additional items for the legislature to her. The group then discussed ways to distribute the survey and get a good rate of response.

PRAXIS UPDATE

Mr. Erwin stated that there was an update to legislation and asked Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper to give an update. She said last week BESE updated and passed a policy to remove Praxis Core for entrance into a teacher preparation program. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper and Dr. Craig thanked the Task Force members for their help. Rep. Mincey said it had been a very educational experience. Dr. Pope talked about social studies, content, and scores for certification, as well as the foreign language Praxis and how many calls were received reporting issues with that test being administered remotely. Dr. Pope asked what we are doing differently from other states. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper replied that for social studies we have recently lowered the score to the ETS recommendation, saying that many questions came from the Praxis core, especially for people who are changing their career later. She indicated that she would check into the foreign language and at-home concerns. Dr. Calderon discussed the elementary multi-subject exam, and suggested revisiting 5018. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper said we are still looking into that. Rep. Mincey asked about the content cut time. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that LDOE is still looking into it and getting all the data to see if it is a good route.

Dr. Craig discussed flexibility in Praxis requirements and Dr. Pope asked about waivers for students who cannot pass. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that all options are on the table, noting that four states in the country have created alternatives to content assessment. Texas has a complete waiver because of Covid, but those who received the waiver are exiting the profession at a higher rate than any other population. Other states, like Arkansas, have a tiered structure to certify teachers. Dr. Craig noted that Minnesota has a four-tier certification approach, where a teacher graduates from a program, begins teaching, passes the certification, and gets a slight increase in pay upon passage.

Dr. Craig stated that the next steps for the group will be meetings on October 4 and November 10, 2022. She urged the group to review recommendations in the Task Force one-pager and reflect on the questions to determine whether there are additional priorities that were missed when recommendations were first established in December 2021. Members should also consider

whether any potential legislation should be considered for the next session. In closing, Dr. Craig invited all members of the Task Force to the Champions of Education Panel discussion on September 10, 2022, at the Independence Theatre.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the Task Force voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES & GUESTS

Name	Affiliation
Mellynn Baker	Board of Regents
Dr. Susannah Craig	Board of Regents
Dr. Michelle DeMeulenaere	Board of Regents
Melissa Anders	Board of Regents
Cara Landry	Board of Regents
Hannah Courtney	Board of Regents
Patrick Steck	Deans for Impact
Dr. Christel Slaughter	SSA Consulting
Anita Byrne	SSA Consulting
Mr. Gomez	SSA Consulting
Sarah Bowden	SSA Consulting