

Louisiana Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Task Force

Tuesday, October 4, 2022
1:00-3:00 p.m.

Iowa Room, 1st Floor of the Claiborne Building
1201 N. Third St.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed called the meeting of the Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Task Force to order at 1:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Dr. Michelle DeMeulenaere called the roll, and a quorum was established.

Members Present	Affiliation
Ersom Pitre	Senate Committee on Education
Em LeBlanc-Cooper	LDOE
Dr. Kim Hunter Reed	Commissioner of Higher Education
Janet Pope	LA School Boards Association
Karen Peace	LA Association of School Executives
Mike Faulk	LA Association of School Superintendents
Bruce Chaffin	LA State Association of School Personnel Administrators
Paula Calderon	LA Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
Cynthia Posey (designee)	LA Federation of Teachers
Gladys Mouton	LA Association of Educators
Barry Erwin	Council for a Better Louisiana
Sen. J. Rogers Pope	LA Senate
Rep. Buddy Mincey	LA House of Representatives

Members Absent	Affiliation
Rep. Mark Wright	House Committee on Education
Sandy Holloway	BESE
Joy Rimmer	Associated Professional Educators of Louisiana
Alex Jerrell	LA Association of Public Charter Schools

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 4, 2022 MINUTES

Mr. Barry 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. Reed, the Task Force approved the minutes.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO DATE

Mr. Erwin began by discussing the one-pager, asking for thoughts or comments. Mr. Chaffin raised an issue related to GPA requirements that have become known since the removal of Praxis I. Ms. Cooper said that the GPA for enrollment was mistakenly removed and LDOE will bring this policy correction to BESE at its meeting in a week for a pre-enrollment waiver to allow people under the 2.2 GPA flexibility to complete the interview and pre-enroll into the program so they can start taking courses. During the next legislative session, it will be requested to add that piece back in the law.

Dr. Calderon said that alternative certification candidates previously were allowed to take non-degree hours to bring up their GPA and asked if this is no longer permitted. Ms. Cooper affirmed that this is currently not possible and added that this process is similar to provisional enrollment in nature. New provisions will allow preparation programs to enroll students and the policy change next week will further support this effort. Ultimately, additional edits will be needed during the next legislative session.

Mr. Chaffin said this will be an issue with the new fingerprint law, requiring individuals hired to go through initial certification, background check, etc. Mr. Chaffin indicated that in the next five years (summer of 2027), Livingston Parish and others must re-fingerprint all principals, substitutes, and certified teachers within a five-year period and submit to LDOE for review. Dr. Calderon stated that teachers may quit in lieu of revealing their personal background. Discussion continued related to navigating this barrier over the coming years.

Rep. Mincey added that he thought the Task Force should continue convening in the coming year, noting the importance of teachers and the impact of additional requirements on teachers and the profession. Rep. Mincey emphasized the importance of the Task Force work in helping to improve morale at school systems.

LISTENING SESSION

Ms. Cooper discussed the Comprehensive Center Network listening session and survey presentation. In the December 2021 report, the recommendation was adopted that LDOE and the Board of Regents conduct listening sessions around the state with various stakeholders and provide a survey to educators to understand their perceptions of the workforce. This survey was completed during the summer. Many participants who registered for the listening sessions did not attend. There were fifty-five scheduled listening sessions, beginning in May and ending in July. Confidentiality

was maintained, and at least five people were required for each focus group. Eleven sessions, totaling in seventy people, were held. The trends that emerged were as follows; a need to look at a variety of scheduling options for educators, assistance in finding substitutes, teachers' need for more support from leaders, and increases in compensation. In addition to the listening sessions, an online survey was distributed across the state. The survey results in Louisiana mirrored those of national surveys. Thirteen percent of teachers in Louisiana responded to the survey.

Ms. Mouton stated that the majority of survey respondents were veteran teachers. Dr. Reed asked whether responses could be sorted by years of experience. Ms. Cooper said she would find out. Mr. Chaffin noted that 50% of respondents say they do not feel satisfied with the recognition they receive and Dr. Pope replied that "recognition" needs to be defined. She added that 68% of the teachers responded that the main reasons they stay in the profession are that they feel effective in developing students and have a good balance between work and home. School administration and culture were not ranked highly. Many said teachers leave early because of the high stress and need for higher compensation. Ms. Cooper indicated that LDOE is conducting another round of listening sessions to continue to receive feedback and plans to continue collecting these data. Dr. Pope asked if the survey included a question concerning the certification status of the respondents. Ms. Baker affirmed that it did. Dr. Pope asked how respondents were encouraged to participate. Ms. Cooper said that notice was provided through weekly newsletters, a monthly webinar, and direct communication from many of the groups represented at the meeting.

VACANCY DATA UPDATE

Ms. Cooper discussed collection and reporting through the new data system, indicating that information will be released at the October BESE meeting. In January 2022 a survey was sent to HR directors to receive vacancy data. LDOE is now working with school system data managers to add this data element to EDlink360. It is optional this year but will be required in the next cycle. Since it was optional this year, LDOE has reminded data managers to collect this information to share during an update at the October BESE meeting.

Mr. Faulk commented that this new data-gathering system will need to be as functional as possible and that a reliable framework is essential to combat misperceptions that school systems are not submitting information. He added that it is essential to make sure people who are inputting information understand the program.

ENROLLMENT UPDATE IN TPP

Dr. Demeulenaere presented on the impact of Act 707 of the 2022 Regular Legislative Session. Dr. Demeulenaere shared that most teacher preparation programs have seen a slight decrease in fall enrollment due to the timing of the legislation, though four institutions reported a slight increase: Southern University, LSU, Xavier, and Southeastern. HBCU enrollment overall increased. Mr. Patrick Steck noted that from a national perspective teacher enrollment is down, so to see any increase is remarkable.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2023

Dr. Reed said that a draft report would be provided to the Task Force in November, with an opportunity to provide feedback before submission to the legislature. Discussion then moved to priorities for the upcoming 2023 legislative session. Ms. Cooper raised the issue of reciprocity, which was a key recommendation of the Task Force. Reciprocity allows for educators who had at least three years of out-of-state teaching experience before they entered Louisiana the opportunity to be excused from taking Louisiana exams if they also had one year of experience teaching in Louisiana. During the 2022 legislative session, in an effort to increase teacher mobility and remove barriers to certification, Act 244 amended the requirements for out-of-state educators, including one year of teaching in the state for educators qualifying for the exam exclusion. Only educators with at least three years' experience out of state were eligible to get a license in Louisiana without the exams.

Ms. Cooper observed that teaching is heavily regulated in every state and each state can develop and administer its own teacher licensing policies. This can make it difficult for those who have a license in one state to get licensed in another state. The NASTDEC agreement is the oldest agreement related to licensed teachers. The teacher mobility compact is a contractual agreement between states that aligns licenses and supports both the teachers and state licensing agencies. It allows states to retain control and regulate licensure. Criminal background checks are a requirement by law, and the compact addresses access to healthcare and other benefits. The compact, funded by the Department of Defense, is governed by the states represented in the compact. There are currently nine occupational licensure compacts, and Louisiana is a member of six. The compact stipulates that a teacher who holds an unencumbered license in one of the participating is eligible for reciprocity. A teacher with a valid unencumbered license is eligible to use the compact if they have a bachelor's degree, complete preparation programs, pass the criminal background check, and do not have any pending disciplinary actions. There are also special accommodations for military personnel and their families. Ms. Cooper said that LDOE is in phase 3, with a developmental team making revisions and meetings started with the national government association. By December, the final compact will be ready for states, with a minimum of ten states needed to pass legislation. Mr. Erwin asked whether there are reasons that states might not want to participate. Mr. Chaffin said some states have full reciprocity and are not worried about this compact. Dr. Calderon added that one of Louisiana's biggest reasons for transfer is a spouse in military. Dr. Reed asked whether, if ten states agree, Louisiana has reciprocity with those states. Ms. Cooper affirmed that the compact is for participating states. Dr. Pitre asked if the compact has not yet begun and Ms. Cooper indicated that it is in development. Sen. Pope asked if Louisiana could secure full reciprocity even if ten states do not agree to the compact. Ms. Cooper responded that in this case, Louisiana would have to pursue reciprocity individually with every state.

Ms. Cooper discussed the Compensation and Incentives study, which will be ready for the Task Force in the next month. Once the work is complete, the consultants hope to discuss strategies for moving forward and any potential legislative action. Mr. Chaffin said it will be difficult for the state to find significant resources for pay increases and suggested other ways to accomplish the goal. He

noted that a national legislative committee of which he is a member met with U.S. Sen. Cory Booker, who has authored legislation including major tax credits for individuals who are educators.

EXTENSION OF THE TEACHER RECRUITMENT, RECOVERY, AND RETENTION TASK FORCE

Dr. Reed discussed the consideration of extending of the Task Force, noting that HCR 39 currently sunsets in the summer of 2023. Discussion for the extension was favorable.

A motion was made by Mr. Mike Faulk, seconded by Mr. Bruce Chaffin, that the Task Force to endorse the Board of Regents and LDOE to pursue legislation in the upcoming 2023 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature to extend HCR 39 of the 2021 Regular Legislative Session, explore options for increasing teacher pay and compensation, and express support for the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact. The Task Force approved the recommendation.

Dr. Calderon discussed the BRIDGE program, bridging from residency to teaching. The program is building an induction mechanism for Southeastern graduates, planning to pay for substitute teachers, to allow experienced teachers time to work with new teachers. The program will follow new teachers from residency through their first two or three years in the classroom. The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching will be providing professional development. Program leaders have also partnered with NIET districts, which use the aspiring teacher rubric for residents.

Mr. Erwin said the next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 9, 2022, at 1:00 pm, and that the Task Force will review the draft of the final report.

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
Hannah Courtney	Board of Regents
Patrick Steck	Deans for Impact