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Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council

Monday, October 30, 2023

10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Claiborne Building, 6th Floor
Board of Regents Conference Room, Room 6-242
1201 North Third Street
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Tristan Denley called the meeting of the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council to order at 10:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL AND APPROVAL OF MAY 17, 2023 MINUTES

Ms. Kim Langlois called the roll, and a quorum was established.

Members Present	Affiliation
Dr. Kim Hunter Reed	Commissioner of Higher Education
Courtney Ryland (Proxy)	LA Rehabilitation Services
Bambi Polotzola (Proxy)	Office of the Governor
Dr. Mary Breaud	Office of the Governor
Dr. Willie Louviere (Proxy)	LSU System
Ebony Haven	LA Developmental Disabilities Council
Gerald "Mitch" Dillon	LA Developmental Disabilities Council
LaKiesha London	Senate Committee on Education
Dr. Erica Calais (Proxy)	UL System
Allen Vital (Proxy)	Southern University System
Dr. Willie Smith	LA Developmental Disabilities Council
Sydney Mabile (Proxy)	House Committee on Education
Members Absent	Affiliation
Katherine Granier	Special School District
Johnny Manela	LCTCS

Dr. Denley asked the Council to approve the minutes of the May 17, 2023 meeting. On motion of Dr. Mary Breaud, seconded by Commissioner Kim Hunter Reed, the minutes were approved.

NEW POSTSECONDARY INCLUSIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM UPDATES

Dr. Paul Mooney and Dr. Willie Louviere, LSU A&M, presented an update on the institution's newly developed Postsecondary Inclusive Education program.

Ms. Bambi Polotzola asked if consideration would be given to changing the program from a two-year to a four-year program as a two-year program does not give participants the same experience as a traditional four-year student. Dr. Louviere responded that LSU A&M would like to transition the program to a four-year program and the team is currently working on developing years three and four.

Ms. Polotzola also asked about the program's tuition cost. Dr. Mooney responded that the program fee was initially \$12,000 per semester, a small increase from the tuition of a traditional student due to the need for additional instructional support. He noted that he had been informed that the legislature must approve any program fees, so one has not yet been assessed. He added that Blue Cross Blue Shield and legislative funds are being used to cover program costs and students are paying traditional fees as well as housing and meal plan costs during this pilot year. He advised that during the next legislative session, LSU A&M will seek to have the program fee approved. Ms. Polotzola asked for clarification on current costs for students; Dr. Mooney responded that the approximate cost in traditional fees is \$4,500 plus the cost of the meal plan. Ms. Polotzola asked why the students cannot pay the same tuition and fees as traditional students. Dr. Mooney replied that there are two reasons: the LSU Legal Department has advised that the legislature has stipulated that a program fee cannot be charged and the LSU System does not allow certificate programs to charge tuition. Commissioner Reed asked if LSU A&M's plan is to present to the legislature a bundled fee for the program, and Dr. Mooney affirmed this is the plan. Ms. Polotzola asked what he expects total costs to be and how many hours this would cover. Dr. Mooney responded that anticipated costs are \$4,500 in traditional fees, plus a \$12,000 program fee plus residence and meal plans and the students would be enrolled in 12 hours per semester.

Commissioner Reed asked if LSU A&M anticipates the fees for years three and four to be different. Dr. Louviere responded that they do not expect a difference in the program fee as students will be taking the same number of credit hours as in years one and two. Dr. Mooney added that for the first two years, students will be living and working on campus and years three and four will be off campus.

Commissioner Reed asked about the outreach plan to meet the goal of 12-14 enrolled students. Dr. Mooney responded that the program has an active website and the project team is reaching out to the community as well as school districts as well as utilizing social media and word of mouth to bring attention to the program.

Ms. Polotzola asked for clarification on seeking legislative approval to charge a program fee. Dr. Mooney repeated his understanding that any fees have to be approved by the legislature.

Commissioner Reed added that the law requires a two-thirds vote of the Legislature to approve any tuition or fee increase that is not a student user fee. She added that if LSU A&M Legal is advising this, then that unit will need to provide clarity.

REVIEW OF 2023 LEGISLATIVE FUNDING

Dr. Denley advised the Council that in the 2023 Regular Legislative Session, the appropriation to fund the work moving forward was \$1 million.

FUNDING AND APPLICATION DISCUSSION

Dr. Denley then opened a discussion of plans to support the future work of the Council. He reminded the Council of last year's awards and proposed a process to support new programs and encourage institutions to create programs by providing awards of \$80,000 in matched funds for institutions launching new programs as well as planning grants of \$20,000 for institutions interested in creating a program but needing funds to begin the process.

Dr. Breaud added that LAPIE discussed this year's plans twice, proposing that up to \$100,000 be given to new programs and up to \$75,000 to existing programs, with the funds being available for up to two years instead of one.

Commissioner Reed asked if LAPIE wants new or existing programs to receive the two-year grant; Dr. Breaud replied that the longer term would be for existing programs. She added that there are concerns about allocating funds to programs without CTP status. Dr. Denley noted that the previous year's process required that institutions confirm that they would be applying for CTP status to receive the award. He suggested that the \$20,000 planning grant could be used for institutions to prepare and apply for CTP status and that status would be required to receive a grant to establish a new program.

Commissioner Reed began a discussion of the planning grants, commenting that survey results showed at least eleven institutions interested in creating a program but that did not apply for a grant in the previous application cycles. Dr. Denley added that the planning grant application could include asking institutions how they would use the \$20,000 to earn CTP status.

Dr. Denley then opened discussion on the grants for establishing a new program. Commissioner Reed proposed a possible multi-year grant process, with institutions receiving \$20,000 for the first year and then, if they receive CTP status, the remainder of the funds in the second year.

Dr. Denley provided a proposed timeline for distributing the funds by March 2024.

Commissioner Reed clarified that for the new program grants that the idea is to provide the \$80,000 over two years, with a program eligible for a second draw of funding once it receives CTP status. Ms. Kathy Dillon asked whether, if funds are auto-awarded to existing programs, they will still require match, and what would happen if the campus is not able to provide match. She wondered if it would be a better approach to require reapplication. Commissioner Reed responded that the Council would have to communicate all requirements to the institutions and

that any institution wishing to receive the funds would have to provide the necessary documentation.

Ms. Polotzola commented that, based on the current proposal and the possibility of an additional eleven institutions receiving funding, total spending would be very close to \$1 million. She asked how the Council would move forward if funds were exhausted. Commissioner Reed responded that there is a need to forecast for the future and determine how much money is needed to continue support versus a second-year draw for existing programs. Dr. Breaud suggested that, to expand existing programs, the Council put \$20,000 into establishing new programs, so grantees would receive an initial \$20,000, then \$60,000 upon receiving their CTP status. Dr. Denley added that in this round this would total \$80,000, then moving forward they would receive \$60,000.

Dr. Willie Smith asked about the threshold for the planning grants and whether they would be used to gain CTP status or to plan for the program. Dr. Denley responded that the purpose of the \$20,000 is to determine how the grantees will use the funds to gain CTP status. Dr. Mooney suggested that institutions could apply for both at the same time, and Dr. Denley added that Regents would process the funds dispersal as two different payments.

Commissioner Reed and the Advisory Council members further discussed program fees and affordability.

In addition, Commissioner Reed informed the Council that a webinar for interested institutions will be provided in late November and the applications will be scored by the same review committee for the next round of grants.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business brought before the Council.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Dillon asked a clarifying question regarding the certification requirements in HB 682 and whether the management boards are certifying that applying institutions have CTP status. Commissioner Reed affirmed that management boards are certifying that these institutions have or are pursuing CTP status.

NEXT STEPS & ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.