

BOARD OF REGENTS

December 11, 2024

The Board of Regents met at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 11, 2024, in the Thomas Jefferson Room A&B, Claiborne Building, 1201 N. Third Street, 1st Floor, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Chair Misti Cordell called the meeting to order and welcomed Regent K. Samer Shamieh to his first meeting.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Doreen Brasseaux called the roll, and a quorum was established.

Present for the meeting were:

Kim Hunter Reed, Commissioner
Misti Cordell, Chair
Darren Mire, Secretary
David Aubrey
Christian Creed
Blake David
Stephanie Finley
Robert Levy
Phillip May
Kennedy Orr, Student Member
Wilbert Pryor
K. Samer Shamieh
Gary Solomon Jr.
Collis Temple III
Terrie Sterling
Judy Williams-Brown

Mgmt. Board Representative present were:

LSU System representative, Collis Temple, Jr.
UL System Representative Salter

Absent from the meeting was:

Felix Weill

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Cordell asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 12, 2024 MEETING (Joint BESE/BOR)

On motion of Regent Temple, seconded by Regent Cordell, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2024 meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 23, 2024 MEETING

On motion of Regent Aubrey, seconded by Regent Mire, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2024 meeting.

AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

Chair Cordell presented updates to BoR Bylaws based on Act 491 of 2024, which allows the Governor to opt to appoint the chairs of various boards and commissions, including Regents. BoR Bylaws must be amended to conform with the 2024 law.

On motion of Regent Temple, seconded by Regent May, the Board voted unanimously to approve the updates to the BoR Bylaws.

Chair Cordell explained proposed changes in the language regarding Board procedures for the Nominating Committee's development of recommendations each December for members to serve on the Proprietary Schools Commission. If adopted, these changes would allow the Board to appoint members when a vacancy occurs, removing this as a regular function of the Nominating Committee.

Regent Solomon asked for clarification about language stating that the vice chair or secretary shall not succeed themselves more than twice in succession. Dr. Uma Subramanian, BoR General Counsel, explained that individuals may serve a maximum of two consecutive years in these roles.

On motion of Regent May, seconded by Regent Sterling, the Board voted unanimously to approve the changes in Board procedures for the Nominating Committee.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

On motion of Regent Aubrey, seconded by Regent May, the Board voted unanimously to approve in globo the reports and recommendations of BoR Standing Committees.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chair Misti Cordell made the following comments:

- She noted that her tenure on the Board has been a great learning experience. She has traveled to many parts of the state, including numerous trips to the Baton Rouge area, in her capacity as a Board member and Chair. She praised the BoR Staff for their dedication and hard work. Regent Temple congratulated Chair Cordell on her contributions.
- She asked Kennedy Orr, student member, to present her Student Board Member report. Regent Orr reported on a successful academic year. She indicated that the student government presidents across the state are excited about moving forward. She expressed appreciation for the work of the BoR. She looks forward to an upcoming trip to Washington, DC with the Council of Student Body Presidents in the spring.

- She mentioned attendance at the investiture of McNeese State President Dr. Wade Rousse and praised Dr. Rousse's commitment to McNeese and the Lake Charles area.
- She recognized five BoR members whose terms of service are ending. Earlier in the meeting Regent Pryor had thanked Regents Aubrey, Levy, Mire, Solomon, and Weill for their service on the Board. Regent Levy, the Board's longest-serving member, took a brief time to express his gratitude for the work of the Regents over his 24 years as a member.

LOUISIANA TUITION TRUST AUTHORITY (LATTA)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Commissioner Reed asked if there were any public comments. There were none.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 27, 2024 MEETING (Joint BESE/BOR)

On motion of Regent Creed, seconded by Regent Solomon, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the March 27, 2024 meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Final Rulemaking – Rulemaking to amend Section 315 of the START Saving Program rules to add the applicable interest rates for the Louisiana Principal Protection investment option and for Earnings Enhancements for the 2023 calendar year.

Robyn Lively, Senior Attorney for the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA), explained that at its March 27, 2024, meeting, the Louisiana Tuition Trust Authority authorized publication of a Notice of Intent to add the interest rates to be applied to deposits in the START Saving Plan's principal protection option and to be applied for eligible Earnings Enhancements for the tax year ending December 31, 2023. The interest rates are determined by the State Treasurer and must be promulgated into the rules each year. The LOSFA Advisory Board recommended that the Louisiana Tuition Trust Authority authorize publication of the final rule.

On motion of Regent May, seconded by Regent Creed, LATTA approved the Consent Agenda items.

NOMINATING

Regent Solomon announced that the Nominating Committee had recommended the following officers for 2025: Vice Chair – Regent Terrie Sterling and Secretary – Phillip May, Jr.

On motion of Regent Levy, seconded by Regent Williams-Brown, the Board voted unanimously to approve the nomination of Regent Sterling as Vice Chair and Regent May as Secretary.

Regent Solomon announced the nomination of the following four non-officer members to serve on the Executive Committee for 2025: Christian Creed, Blake David, Collis Temple III, Judy Williams-Brown.

On motion of Regent Levy, seconded by Regent Aubrey, the Board voted unanimously to approve the nomination of Regents Creed, David, Temple, and Williams-Brown to serve on the Executive Committee for 2025.

FINANCE

REVIEW AND UPDATE OF FIVE-YEAR FUNDING FORMULA

Ms. Elizabeth Bentley-Smith, Interim Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration, provided a brief overview of the funding formula review process and work group actions. She noted that the Board of Regents is constitutionally [Art. 8, Sec. 5(D)(4)] and statutorily [R.S. 17:3129.2(B)] tasked with providing a fair and equitable distribution of funding for Louisiana's public institutions. Regents allocates State General Funds to the four postsecondary systems.

In early 2024, BOR, in partnership with all public higher education systems, initiated an agreed-upon five-year review of the state's higher education funding formula. Ms. Bentley-Smith stated that, as part of this process, Regents and the systems have worked jointly and collaboratively, using the current funding model as a starting point, to develop the next funding formula iteration. This represents the third time since the legislature enacted outcomes-based funding in 2014 and implemented it in Fiscal Year 2016–2017 that BOR and the systems have conducted a review.

Ms. Bentley-Smith noted that the workgroup was guided by certain principles: 1) the formula is aligned to the state's workforce needs, 2) the formula focuses on aiding all students, 3) the formula recognizes and rewards the different missions of our institutions, and 4) the formula is driven by clear and concise data.

The workgroup, including representation from all four systems and the Board of Regents, began meeting in March. Ms. Bentley-Smith noted that the proposed model was developed through a collaborative effort and reflects elements sought by each of the four systems, with an increased emphasis on education attainment in high-demand and high-reward disciplines. The model is workforce focused, provides continued fiscal stability, and includes the Meauxmentum Framework, further aligning with our Master Plan goals. Ms. Bentley-Smith also conveyed that the proposed model recognizes research as a stand-alone component along with validated skills and learning credentials at two-year institutions, responding to the interest for the model to be more workforce-aligned.

Ms. Bentley-Smith concluded by noting that Commissioner Reed and system presidents have had ongoing discussions regarding the formula recommendations. She indicated that this overview was for information only and that the proposed formula model will be considered by the Board at its January meeting. Following her presentation, Regent Aubrey asked whether online students and/or associate's degrees are counted in the funding formula. Ms. Bentley-Smith explained that students who take 100% of classes online and live out-of-state are not recognized in the funding formula, nor are associate's degrees awarded by four-year institutions. Commissioner Reed reiterated that Regents would retain the current practice of not recognizing those items.

Regent Sterling asked why four-year associate's degrees are not recognized. Commissioner Reed explained most associate's degree programs were moved to LCTCS when it was established, though some four-year colleges retained associate's degree programs. Those institutions that retained such degree programs were notified that these would not count in the funding formula.

Regent Aubrey requested clarification of the weights in the funding formula related to nursing graduate degrees, specifically the weights assigned to a Ph.D. in nursing and a DNP, or Doctor of Nursing Practice. Ms. Bentley-Smith responded that she would provide these details to the Board.

Regent Solomon inquired as to the weight of "outcomes" in the previous formula model. Ms. Bentley-Smith and Commissioner Reed clarified that the outcomes weight is 30% in the current model and 35% in the proposed model. Regent Solomon also asked: 1) How the transition from the present formula model to the proposed model will impact institutions that are reducing base costs to address their fiscal health; 2) how the data collected by the Blanco Center at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette is being used within the proposed model; and 3) whether dual enrollment is included in the proposed funding formula model. Ms. Bentley-Smith responded related to the first question that as the data included in the formula model is from the previous fiscal/academic year, any actions taken by an institution will be reflected in the following year's formula allocation. She noted that for those institutions that have had significant fiscal health concerns, the impact may be spread over multiple years. Related to question 2, Deputy Commissioner Tristan Denley noted that the data collection by the Blanco Center is not yet complete, so it is not yet a part of the proposed formula model. Ms. Bentley-Smith responded to question 3 that dual enrollment courses are captured within the new proposed funding formula model.

Ms. Bentley-Smith then provided an overview of the Third Extraordinary Session of the Louisiana Legislature, which ended Friday, November 22, 2024. She indicated that the impacts of the session are still being calculated by legislative staff and will not be fully known until the Revenue Estimating Conference meets and the constitutional amendment is voted on in March. She noted that it is anticipated that the UAL, which is a substantial cost to institutions, will be paid down, yielding savings across all systems. Regent Aubrey then asked for a campus-by-campus breakdown of the UAL savings, which Ms. Bentley-Smith indicated she would provide.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Bentley-Smith presented proposed recommendations related to HR 169, which charged a Task Force convened by the Board of Regents to examine ORP and TRSL retirement plans and their potential impacts on staff and faculty recruitment and retention. The Task Force reviewed best industry practices, looked at other states' approaches to see how higher education retirement plans are managed, identified and discussed employer contributions in Louisiana and compared to other states, and noted possible modifications to statutory language.

Ms. Bentley-Smith stated that the final Task Force meeting will be held December 18, 2025, with its report due by January 15th, prior to the next Board meeting. The final report will be shared with Board members for review and approval at the January Board meeting.

FACILITIES AND PROPERTY

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Chris Herring, Associate Commissioner for Facilities Planning and Emergency Management, summarized the Consent Agenda's Small Capital Projects report, containing the projects approved by staff since the previous meeting:

Small Capital Projects

1. **LSU-A: Baseball and Softball Locker Room, Alexandria, LA** – Louisiana State University - Alexandria, Auxiliary Revenues/Private Donations \$900,000
2. **LSU-A: Highway Lighting Project, Alexandria, LA** – Louisiana State University - Alexandria, Auxiliary Revenues/Legislative Appropriation \$350,000
3. **LSU A&M: Miller Hall Exterior Envelope Repairs, Baton Rouge, LA** – Louisiana State University and A&M College, Auxiliary Revenues \$302,520
4. **LSU A&M: Oyster Hatchery Repairs (Budget Increase), Grand Isle, LA** – Louisiana State University and A&M College, FEMA Proceeds \$453,480
5. **LSU A&M: Patrick F. Taylor Hall Chilled Water Tertiary Pump Replacement, Baton Rouge, LA** – Louisiana State University and A&M College, Operational Funds \$192,354
6. **LSU A&M: River Road Annex Building Chiller Replacement, Baton Rouge, LA** – Louisiana State University and A&M College, LSU Emergency Repair Fund \$224,000
7. **LSU A&M: School of Veterinary Medicine North Kennel Renovations for Doggie Daycare Relocation, Baton Rouge, LA** – Louisiana State University and A&M College, Operational Funds \$181,032
8. **LSU A&M: Student Union Domestic Water Heater Installation, Baton Rouge, LA** – Louisiana State University and A&M College, Auxiliary Revenues \$250,000
9. **LSU HSCNO: Center for Advanced Learning and Simulation Building Loading Dock Modifications, New Orleans, LA** – Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center New Orleans, Operational Funds \$248,500

On motion of Regent Mire, seconded by Regent Aubrey, the Facilities and Property Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the Small Capital Projects report.

ACT 959 PROJECT: LSU HEADHOUSE RENOVATION

Act 959 of 2003 permits institutions to initiate certain capital projects not exceeding \$10M that are funded with self-generated/auxiliary revenues, grants, donations, or local/federal funds. The Louisiana State University (LSU) Board of Supervisors, on behalf of LSU A&M College, submitted a request for the purpose of renovating the Headhouse facility to serve the LSU community.

The Headhouse building formerly provided access to greenhouses that extended off the rear of the building. With the construction of Camellia and Azalea Halls in 2021, the greenhouses were demolished and only the Headhouse was preserved. The facility is currently vacant and in disrepair. This project will renovate the Headhouse to provide a new food service location and common area for the LSU community. The project scope involves renovations to the interior and exterior of the existing 3,470 square foot facility, surrounding site improvements, and abatement. The renovated space will contain a new dining area, market, restrooms, and interior and exterior gathering spaces. The total project cost of \$5.7M will be funded with self-generated revenues provided by LSU Auxiliary Services.

On motion of Regent Aubrey, seconded by Regent Levy, the Facilities and Property Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the Act 959 project request submitted by the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors, on behalf of Louisiana State University and A&M College, for the purpose of renovating the Headhouse facility to create a new food service establishment and common space to serve the LSU community.

OTHER BUSINESS AND ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Facilities and Property Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m.

STATEWIDE PROGRAMS

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Final Rulemaking – M.J. Foster Promise Program Rulemaking to Implement Act 633 and Act 102 of the 2024 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

Robyn Lively, Senior Attorney for the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA), explained that at its August 28, 2024, meeting, the Board of Regents authorized publication of a Notice of Intent to implement Acts 633 and 102 of the 2024 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

Act 633 gradually reduces the age requirement for M.J. Foster Promise Program recipients, and Act 102 provides that the Louisiana Workforce Investment Council shall convene the Advisory Council, not the Board of Regents and the term “one-year” shall be defined. The LOSFA Advisory Board recommends that the Board of Regents authorize the Executive Director of LOSFA to publish the final rule to implement Act 633 and Act 102 of the 2024 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature.

- B. Approval of Final Rulemaking – TOPS Rulemaking to Implement Act 211 of the 2024 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature which amends Sections 301, 704, 804, 1203 and deletes Chapter 13 of the Scholarship and Grants Rules.

Ms. Lively explained that this rulemaking implements Act 211 of the 2024 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature. Act 211 adds a requirement that students must earn one Carnegie unit of credit in Computer Science to meet the TOPS Tech, Opportunity, Performance, and Honors core curricula. The Act provides that this credit will be obtained as a math elective or a science elective for either core. Students pursuing the TOPS Tech core may also earn this credit as one of the nine credits in Jump Start course sequences. Students pursuing the TOPS Opportunity, Performance, and Honors core can earn this credit as an alternative to foreign language. The LOSFA Advisory Board recommends that the Board of Regents

authorize the Executive Director of LOSFA to publish the final rule to implement Act 211 of the 2024 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature which amends Sections 301, 704, 804, 1203 and deletes Chapter 13 of the Scholarship and Grants Rules.

- C. Chafee Educational and Training Voucher (ETV) Program Rulemaking - Rulemaking to implement provisions of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 that provide that the Chafee ETV shall be awarded without regard to financial need.

Ms. Lively explained that LOSFA administers the Chafee Educational and Training Voucher (ETV) program in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). This rulemaking indicates that a student may receive the full Chafee ETV even if they have other sources of financial aid that meet their full cost of attendance, and the Chafee ETV is not to be included as other financial assistance when determining a student's eligibility for federal financial aid. The LOSFA Advisory Board recommends that the Louisiana Board of Regents authorize the Executive Director of LOSFA to publish a notice of intent to make these rules permanent.

- D. Regional Contract Program (RCP) Exception – Request for exception to the Regional Contract Program requirement that a student begin the obligation to work in Louisiana or to repay the amount received within 6 months of completing their program of study.

Ms. Lively informed the Regents that one request for an exception to the Regional Contract Program requirement that a student begin the obligation to work in Louisiana or to repay the amount received within 6 months of completing their program of study was reviewed and approved by the LOSFA Advisory Board at its meeting of December 4, 2024. The student presented facts and documentation that the student believes justify the granting of an exception as an exceptional circumstance, and the LOSFA Advisory Board recommends Board of Regents approval.

- E. TOPS Home Study Exceptions – TOPS statutory provision that requires a student to begin a home study program no later than the conclusion of the tenth grade.

Ms. Lively informed the Regents that two requests for an exception to the deadline to begin a home study program were reviewed and approved by the LOSFA Advisory Board at its meeting of December 4, 2024. The students presented facts and documentation that the students believe justify the granting of an exception as an exceptional circumstance, and the LOSFA Advisory Board recommends Board of Regents approval.

- F. TOPS and M.J. Foster Exceptions – TOPS regulatory provisions that require students to remain continuously enrolled and to earn the annual credit hours required during the academic year and to the M.J. Foster requirement that a student maintain continuous enrollment in school.

Ms. Lively informed the Regents that twelve requests for exception to the TOPS requirements were reviewed and approved by the LOSFA Advisory Board at its meeting on December 4, 2024. One request for exception to the M.J. Foster continuous enrollment requirement was reviewed and approved by the LOSFA Advisory Board at its meeting on December 4, 2024. The students presented facts and

circumstances that the students believe justify the granting of an exception as an exceptional circumstance, and the LOSFA Advisory Board recommends Board of Regents approval.

On motion of Regent Creed, seconded by Regent Orr, the Statewide Programs Committee voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda items in globo.

OTHER BUSINESS

Robyn Lively updated the Board of Regents on funding remaining for the M.J. Foster Promise Program for the 2024–2025 academic year.

PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND PERFORMANCE

Dr. Susannah Craig presented the Consent Agenda, which included one renewal application for licensure of academic degree-granting institutions, as well as two initial applications and 26 renewal applications from the Advisory Commission on Proprietary Schools.

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. R.S. 17:1808 – Academic Licensure**
 - 1. Renewal Applications**
 - a. Pepperdine University**
- b. Proprietary Schools Advisory Commission**
 - 1. Initial Applications**
 - a. AGI CDL Driving Academy – Lake Charles, LA**
 - b. Shreveport-Bossier City Massage Academy – Shreveport, LA**
 - 2. Renewal Applications**
 - a. 160 Driving Academy-Metairie – License #2340**
 - b. Academy of Interactive Entertainment, Lafayette – License #2136**
 - c. Ayers Career College, Shreveport – License #828**
 - d. Becker Online, Downers Grove, IL – License #2368**
 - e. Clinical Lynks, New Orleans – License #2376**
 - f. Coastal College, Baton Rouge – License #2019**
 - g. Coastal Truck Driving School of New Orleans – License #2200**
 - h. Crescent City School of Gaming and Bartending, New Orleans – License #594**
 - i. Delta College, Covington – License #947**
 - j. Delta College-Slidell Branch – License #2066**
 - k. Diesel Driving Academy, Shreveport – License #369**
 - l. Durham Transport Academy, Shreveport – License #2341**
 - m. Joshua Career Institute of Louisiana, Shreveport – License #2307**
 - n. Lafayette Dental Assistant School – License #2251**
 - o. Mia’s Medical Academy, Baton Rouge – License #2202**
 - p. National Aesthetic Laser Institute, Baton Rouge – License #2295**
 - q. New Orleans Dental Assistant School, Metairie – License #2252**

- r. **Over Drive Truck Driving School of Louisiana, Deville – License #2283**
- s. **Pelican Chapter-ABC-Baton Rouge – License #2172**
- t. **Pelican Chapter-ABC-Southwest Campus, Westlake – License #2173**
- u. **Road Ready Driving Academy, Houma - License #2367**
- v. **Shreveport Dental Assistant School - License #2253**
- w. **The Microblading Institute, Maurice - License #2324**
- x. **Thomas Training and Developmental Center, Franklin - License #948**
- y. **Unimed Academy – New Orleans - License #2378**
- z. **Woodland Healthcare Training, Denham Springs - License #2284**

On motion of Regent Sterling, seconded by Regent Aubrey, the Planning, Research and Performance Committee unanimously recommended that the Board of Regents approve the items listed under the Consent Agenda.

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

Dr. Tristan Denley presented the Consent Agenda, consisting of routine items including Staff Approvals.

CONSENT AGENDA

a. Routine Staff Approvals

1. **Central Louisiana Technical Community College: Request to change the title and CIP of the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) Cloud Computing (CIP 11.0902) to AAS Cyber Security (CIP 11.1003) to more accurately reflect the program's curriculum and purpose.**
2. **Delgado Community College: Request to change the title of the AAS Polysomnographic Technology to AAS Sleep Technology to more accurately reflect the program's curriculum and purpose.**
3. **Fletcher Technical Community College: Request to change the titles of the following programs to more accurately reflect the programs curriculum and purpose: AAS Integrated Production Technologies to**
 - **AAS Energy Production Technologies**
 - **AS Cardiopulmonary Care Science to AS Respiratory Therapy**
 - **AAS Office Systems Technology to AAS Administrative Office Management**
4. **Louisiana Delta Community College: Request to change the title of the AAS Information Technology to AAS Computer and Information Technology to**

more accurately reflect the program's curriculum and purpose.

- 5. Louisiana State University A&M: Request to change CIP Codes for the Bachelor of Science (BS), Master of Science (MS), and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Kinesiology from (CIP 13.1314) to (CIP 31.0505) to more accurately reflect the curriculum and purpose of the degrees.**
- 6. Northwestern State University: Request to establish an Undergraduate Certificate (UC) in Honors Professional Ethics (CIP 38.0104) and a UC in Honors Critical and Analytical Thinking (CIP 38.0101) with a progress report on implementation submitted as part of the institution's 2025 Academic Plan.**
- 7. University of Louisiana Lafayette: Request to change the names of the following Academic Units to more closely align with national best practices across major universities and professional organizations:**
 - Department of Biology to School of Biological Sciences**
 - School of Music and Performing Arts to School of Music and School of Dance and Theatre**
 - Department of Visual Arts to School of Visual Arts**
- 8. University of Louisiana Monroe: Request to establish a Graduate Certificate (GC) in Marriage and Family Therapy (CIP 51.1505) with a progress report on implementation submitted as part of the institution's 2025 Academic Plan**
- 9. University of New Orleans: Request to establish an Undergraduate Certificate in Wind Energy (CIP 14.4899), an Undergraduate Certificate in Aerospace Manufacturing (CIP 14.0201), and a Post Baccalaureate Certificate in Accounting (CIP 52.0301) with progress reports on program implementation submitted as part of the institution's 2025 Academic Plan.**

On motion of Regent Creed, seconded by Regent Williams-Brown, the Committee received and recommended Board of Regents approval of the items on the Consent Agenda.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Dr. Denley then presented for approval the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation at Nicholls State University, the Bachelor of Science in Data Science at Southern University at New Orleans, the Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience at the University of New Orleans, and the Master of Science in Allied Health at Northwestern State University.

Dr. Denley invited System President Rick Gallot, Nicholls President Jay Clune, Dr. Jeannine O'Rourke, Dr. Claire Norris, and Captain Kelly Denning to discuss the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation at Nicholls State University. Dr. O'Rourke noted that the maritime industry has a large impact on the economy of both Louisiana and the United States. She explained that to meet the demands of the maritime industry, the Universities of Louisiana Maritime Academy was established. Dr. Norris described the strategic partnership between the University of Louisiana System and the maritime industry and their work to develop partnerships and establish an advisory council. Dr. Clune

presented information on the Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation and explained how the program is critical for graduates to work in the maritime industry. He then described the curriculum and noted that it meets core requirements within the maritime industry and the United States Coast Guard. Captain Denning then provided information on the next steps in continuing to develop the program and stated that they will work with Coast Guard-based instructors to create courses.

Regent Aubrey asked about the funding for the program and whether Nicholls will be seeking additional funding. President Gallot responded yes, and that they have already received a commitment from Representative Letlow for the seed money for the program. Regent Aubrey followed up by asking if this would fall in the high-cost program category and President Gallot responded that it would. Regent Aubrey asked Dr. Denley if the curriculum could be provided to the Board.

Commissioner Reed asked Captain Denning how she thinks about how to position the program for an evolving workforce. Captain Denning responded that there is an opportunity to study technology as it pertains to the maritime industry.

On motion of Regent Creed, seconded by Regent Aubrey, the Committee approved the four proposed new programs as presented.

NEW RESEARCH CENTERS

Next, Dr. Denley presented for approval the establishment of the Center for Environmental Research at Southeastern Louisiana University and the Center of Excellence in Equine Health and Sports Performance at Louisiana State University A&M.

On motion of Regent Creed, seconded by Regent Orr, the Committee recommended approval of the two new research centers as presented.

REPORTS

Dr. Denley then presented for approval the 2024 Articulation and Transfer Report. He described the work done in the previous year, including the Universal Transfer Pathways, and noted that there is still additional work to be done.

On motion of Regent Creed, seconded by Regent Williams-Brown, the Committee recommended approval of the 2023-24 Articulation and Transfer Report and to authorize the Commissioner of Higher Education to submit the report to the appropriate legislative committees on behalf of the Board of Regents.

Dr. Denley also presented for approval the 2024 Postsecondary Inclusive Education Report. He invited Mr. Mitch Dillon, a member of the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council as well as graduate of the Bridge to Independence Program at Nicholls State University, to speak to the Board about his experiences in the program as well as how it has prepared him for what he is doing now.

Commissioner Reed commented that Mr. Dillon had testified during the 2024 Regular Legislative Session and assisted in securing an additional \$1 million dollars awarded this year. She also added that Mr. Dillon is a member of the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council, which works to create new and expand existing programs in the state.

On motion of Regent Williams-Brown, seconded by Regent Creed, the Committee recommended approval of the 2023-24 Postsecondary Inclusive Education Report and to authorize the Commissioner of Higher Education to submit the report to the appropriate legislative committees on behalf of the Board of Regents.

RESEARCH AND SPONSORED INITIATIVES

DIVISION OF ENDOWED CHAIR INTO ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIPS: LSU AND A&M COLLEGE

Ms. Carrie Robison indicated that LSU A&M requests to divide the Paul M. Horton Chair in Chemical Engineering, a \$2 million endowed chair held by LSU and A&M College, matched by the BoRSF in FY 2006–07, into two Endowed Professorships, as follows:

- Paul M. Horton Professorship in Chemical Engineering #1, with a corpus of \$1,200,000 (\$720,000 non–state/\$480,000 BoRSF)
- Paul M. Horton Professorship in Chemical Engineering #2, with a corpus of \$800,000 (\$480,000 non–state/\$320,000 BoRSF)

She noted that LSU A&M has certified that the original donor approved this conversion. LSU Board of Supervisors approval was granted at its October 10, 2024 meeting.

On motion of Regent Mire, seconded by Regent May, the Committee recommended approval of the division of the Paul M. Horton Chair in Chemical Engineering into two (2) endowed professorships, as follows: (1) Paul M. Horton Professorship in Chemical Engineering #1, with a corpus of \$1,200,000 (\$720,000 non–state/\$480,000 BoRSF) and (2) Paul M. Horton Professorship in Chemical Engineering #2, with a corpus of \$800,000 (\$480,000 non–state/\$320,000 BoRSF).

FY 2025–26 BOARD OF REGENTS SUPPORT PLAN AND BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Ms. Robison provided an overview of the constitutionally designated Board of Regents Support Fund and the requirement to provide a budget to the Governor and the Legislature for the coming fiscal year for consideration during the 2025 Regular Legislative Session. She reviewed recent trends in revenue generation and summarized the process for identifying a base funding level for the next fiscal year. She also noted that Act 1 of the Third Extraordinary Session of 2024, if approved by the voters in March 2025, will repeal the Support Fund effective immediately, so this Plan and Budget may not be taken up by the Legislature or enacted.

Following the background review, Ms. Robison indicated that a base budget of \$17 million was recommended by staff and committees advisory to the Board. She noted that the recommended budget is aligned with the official estimate provided by the Revenue Estimating Conference. She noted that though continuing extremely low revenue estimates threatens the viability of Support Fund programs, the recommended budget is appropriate and sufficient to retain all existing programs.

Ms. Robison then provided a breakdown of the budget request by program and subprogram, acknowledging prior commitments, administrative costs, and funds for new projects, as well as contingency plans if revenues in FY 2025–26 exceed or fail to meet the base budget level.

On motion of Regent May, seconded by Regent Shamieh, the Research and Sponsored Initiatives Committee recommended approval of the FY 2025-26 Board of Regents Support Fund Plan and Budget, with contingencies, as presented.

PERSONNEL

APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION POSITION

Commissioner Kim Hunter Reed presented the recommendation to approve the appointment of Ms. Elizabeth Bentley-Smith as Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration. Commissioner Reed shared that Ms. Bentley-Smith has been with the Board of Regents since 2021 and currently serves as the Interim Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration. Prior to her time at the Board, Ms. Bentley-Smith worked at the Office of Planning and Budget within the Louisiana Division of Administration and taught classes in American Government as a faculty member at multiple universities. Commissioner Reed provided additional comments on the work accomplished by Ms. Bentley-Smith while at Regents.

On motion of Regent Temple, seconded by Regent Sterling, the Personnel Committee approved the appointment of Elizabeth Bentley-Smith as Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration.

MEAUXMENTUM MOMENT

Dr. Denley announced that the Ascendium Educational Foundation has pledged \$3.8M to support student success reforms in Louisiana. The funds will be used to help implement the Meauxmentum Framework across institutions, in addition to continue the annual Meauxmentum Summit.

Dr. Denley also highlighted several other national organizations supporting the Meauxmentum Movement in Louisiana, including Arnold Ventures, which has pledged \$200,000 to support academic planning.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Commissioner of Higher Education Kim Hunter Reed presented several items to the Board:

- She congratulated LSU Eunice and River Parishes Community Colleges, which were among 200 colleges recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for their efforts to increase degree completion.
- She mentioned the recent allocation of \$50M in grants for higher education institutions through Gumbo 2.0. These grants are to develop talent in computer science, cybersecurity, and healthcare.

- She asked Chair Cordell and Regent May to discuss the recent announcement of a \$10B investment in northeast Louisiana by Meta to establish a data center. This facility will be the first of its kind in Louisiana, promising 500 new jobs and immense potential for further growth. It is the most advanced AI and data center ever to be built.
- She announced that Dr. Tristan Denley received a national honor, the Stan Jones Award, for his outstanding innovative work in higher education.

OTHER BUSINESS AND ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion of Regent Temple, seconded by Regent Creed, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Appendix A
Board Meeting Guest List
Wednesday, December 11, 2024

NAME	AFFILIATION
Shelly Gill	LSUA
Samantha Evans	LSUA
Amy Mathews	Treasury
Lindsay Schexnayder	Treasury
Mary Kathryn Drago	Treasury
Jessica Lemoine	LCTCS
Simone Champagne	BESE
Nicole Foster	LSU
Tameka Moten	
Andrea M. Miller	
Mary Pritchard	Feeding Louisiana
Wendi Palermo	LCTCS
Margaret Trich	LSU A&M
Joe Salter	LSU A&M
Jackie Bach	LSU A&M
Darrell P. Kruger	University of New Orleans