

## **Louisiana Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Task Force**

Wednesday, December 6, 2023  
1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

Iowa Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor of the Claiborne Building  
1201 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Kim Hunter Reed called the meeting of the Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Task Force to order at 1:05 p.m.

### **ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Ms. Cara Landry called the roll and noted that a quorum was not established.

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Dr. Esrom Pitre	Senate Committee on Education
Ms. Em LeBlanc-Cooper	LDOE
Dr. Kim Hunter Reed	Commissioner of Higher Education
Ms. Cheryl Serrett (designee)	LA School Boards Association
Dr. Karen Peace	LA Association of School Executives
Dr. Paula Calderon	LA Assoc. of Colleges for Teacher Education
Mr. Barry Erwin	Council for a Better Louisiana
Rep. Barbara Freiberg (designee)	LA House of Representatives

<b>Members Absent</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Rep. Mark Wright	House Committee on Education
Mr. Mike Faulk	LA Assoc. of School Superintendents
Mr. Bruce Chaffin	LA State Assoc. of School Personnel Administrators
Ms. Sandy Holloway	BESE
Ms. Gladys Mouton	LA Association of Educators
Ms. Cynthia Posey	LA Federation of Teachers
Mr. Alex Jerrell	LA Assoc. of Public Charter Schools
Sen. J. Rodgers Pope	LA Senate

### **APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 25, 2023, MINUTES**

**Due to the lack of quorum, approval of the October 25, 2023 minutes were deferred to the next meeting of the Task Force.**

## **PRELIMINARY FALL ENROLLMENT TRENDS AND COMPLETER DATA FOR LOUISIANA**

Mr. Patrick Steck from Deans for Impact then discussed the *National Trends in Educator Enrollment and Completer Data*. He first shared the headline stating “Fewer People Are Getting Teacher Degrees. Preparation Programs Sound the Alarm.” He discussed the overall EPP enrollment and noted that the completion was trending slightly upward. He noted that white teacher candidates are overrepresented relative to the current student population and added that this holds true across pathways. Mr. Steck also shared that female teachers are overrepresented relative to student populations across pathways. He then presented graphs showing the percentage of K-12 students and teacher preparation program completers by race/ethnicity as well as male/female and further discussed preparing a diverse workforce. He noted that HBCU graduates represent 50% of black educators across America. He shared some state spotlights, including Washington, D.C., Illinois, Nevada, South Dakota, and Washington experiencing increased enrollment in the traditional Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) pathways. Mr. Steck shared that New Mexico, Tennessee, and Texas have expanded access to alternative IHE pathways (e.g., residencies) and that Florida and Texas lead the country in the number of non-IHE pathways. Mr. Steck noted that 283 new pathways were launched between school years (SYs) 15-16 and 20-21. He noted that 65% were within higher education, and the remaining 35% were outside of higher education and shared a map showing educator Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPS) by state. The number of RAPS has increased over the past few years. Lastly, Mr. Steck indicated that if we do not prioritize quality across all pathways, we will continue to see a revolving door of early-career teachers.

Dr. Michelle DeMeulenaere, Board of Regents, provided preliminary fall enrollment and completer data in Louisiana. She first shared educator preparation programs with increased enrollment, including Grambling, LSU A&M, and Southern University, followed by educator preparation programs with decreased enrollment, including LSUA, LSUS, Southern University at New Orleans, Louisiana Tech, McNeese State, Nicholls State, Northwestern State, Southeastern Louisiana University, ULL, UNO, and ULM. She indicated

that there had been a slight decrease in enrollment at HBCUs and noted that without SUNO HBCUs would have seen a 10% increase. SUNO is rebuilding its program, which accounts for its low enrollment. Dr. Calderon stated that, overall, universities have seen a decline in enrollment. Dr. Reed noted that fewer high school students than ever before are going to college after graduation. Dr. DeMeulenaere then shared enrollment rates by race and completers of in-state educator preparation programs and noted that completers in the traditional programs slightly decreased. She indicated that there has been a 36% increase in enrollment in alternate certification programs but added that alternate certification completers decreased by 7%. There was further discussion of teacher employment in Louisiana. Dr. DeMeulenaere stated that the number of teachers in Louisiana has increased to 51,965 and that this number includes teachers who have a certificate but may also be going through a program currently. Ms. Em Leblanc Cooper, Deputy Superintendent of Educator Development at LDOE, explained that those teachers who have a certificate and are going through a program are considered teachers of record. She stated that LDOE has seen more teachers in non-teacher roles, such as literacy coaches.

### **TEACHER EXIT SURVEY**

Ms. Cooper then provided information regarding the Teacher Exit Survey. She shared that R.S. 17:7(28) requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to report annually the results of teacher exit interviews conducted by local school systems. The purpose of the interviews and of the report is to gather information about teachers' reasons for leaving their classrooms, which could prove useful in developing strategies to improve teacher retention. She noted that during SY 22-23, LDOE received data from all 69 school systems in the state. She added that teacher exit data were not collected from charter schools as those schools are not required to report this information. The total number of teachers who left their current positions and their stated reason(s) for departing, as reported by public school systems, were included in Appendix A. Ms. Cooper indicated that, for the first time in four years, there was an increase in the total teacher workforce; in FY 22-23, there were 1,884 more teachers in Louisiana public and charter

classrooms compared to SY 21-22. She said that this is the largest teacher workforce Louisiana has seen in the last decade. Ms. Cooper then noted that the rate of exit from current positions has decreased, indicating a decrease of one percentage point compared to SY 21-22. Ms. Cooper indicated that the top three reasons for teachers exiting the profession have remained the same: 32% of teachers exiting their current position stated that they were leaving due to personal reasons, transferring to another Louisiana school system, or retiring. Ms. Cooper said that while the report shows the highest number of teachers “resigning” from their current role since SY 19-20, Louisiana currently has the largest teacher workforce in the last decade, with a total of 51,965 teachers.

### **LDOE UPDATES**

Ms. Cooper then presented the 2024 priorities and the final 2023 legislative report. She shared that the resolution further requested LDOE, in consultation with BESE, to pursue the following:

- Research on national practices regarding statewide certification policies.
- A review of each pathway to teacher certification or teacher of record to ensure consistency in statewide certification policies.
- A review of financial barriers and implications to students in each pathway.
- Consultation with deans and directors of teacher preparation programs, at both universities and private providers, to determine how candidates are impacted by the certification requirements implemented by LDOE and promulgated by BESE.
- Presentation of findings to the Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recovery Taskforce.

Ms. Cooper then discussed the definition of these terms. She shared that “pathway” refers to either traditional (undergraduate) or alternative certification (post-baccalaureate), that “program” refers to the individual certification program offered within a pathway by a provider, and that “provider” refers to the overarching organization (e.g., Cajun College of Acadiana or Pelican Private Provider, LLC). Ms. Cooper shared that the traditional (undergraduate) and post-baccalaureate (alternative certification) pathways are required to meet all policy requirements and presented a chart that describes the requirements for each type of program. She then discussed the Temporary Employment Permit (TEP). She noted that TEP 1: 10% of

Exam and TEP 4: Lack of GPA have the most consistency and alignment with the traditional and post-baccalaureate pathways, removing barriers for candidates to enter the field of education. She added that TEP 2: master's degree requires the least amount of policy alignment, with only a certified mentor being necessary. She shared that the Associate Teacher Program must follow the requirements of an undergraduate pathway, because it allows the candidate to serve as the teacher of record prior to certification. Dr. Craig asked why no special education is allowed on options two and three, though permitted in option one. Ms. Cooper indicated she will report back on this. Dr. Calderon stated that all universities must be nationally accredited but alternative certification programs do not have to be accredited.

Ms. Cooper then discussed key takeaways from national practices regarding statewide certification policies. She shared that many states have lowered (or removed entirely) academic requirements for entry into teacher preparation, noting that only 15 states now require candidates to pass a basic skills test for admission, down from 25 states in 2015. She added that half of the states now have initiatives to recruit and support individuals of color to enter the teacher pipeline. States are creating pathways, programs, and/or incentives to recruit high school students (32 states) and/or paraprofessionals (25 states) into the teaching profession. Half of states require elementary teachers to pass a content licensure test that separately scores each core area. She noted that 31 states require induction and mentoring support for new teachers in statute or regulation, 35 states set minimum qualifications for teachers serving as mentors, and 16 states restrict who can mentor a student teacher to classroom teachers who meet some measure of effectiveness. Ms. Cooper then transitioned to discuss financial implications. She shared that the total cost of completing a program is higher than the starting and average salaries of a first-year teacher. Ms. Cooper then discussed how focus groups held in September consisted of university and district-based providers. The statements below reflect the views of those who participated in the focus groups.

- Financial Barriers - Universities do not offer financial assistance other than what is already available (TOPS, Geaux Teach), while district-based programs are free
- Praxis Support - All programs offer tutoring via online programs or by a mentor

- Certification Requirements - Feel that policy changes and timelines cause stress to candidates, year-long residency is expensive for candidates, mentors are fatigued, and 120-hour cap is taking away from other courses
- Removal of Barriers - Enrollment has increased since Praxis I removal, TEP expansion, and flexible GPA have been put in policy; Associate Teacher Pathway is a concern because of when classes are offered
- Pathway Inconsistencies - Traditional programs feel that the bar is raised for them and lowered for others, pathways are duplicated, and some providers are not preparing candidates to teach Louisiana students; there is inconsistency between pathways, with only some mandating the Praxis and setting literacy requirements
- Recommendations for Consistency - More support for candidates who are not required to take a year-long residency, and more conversations with all stakeholders to ensure consistency

Ms. Cooper then discussed the Preparation Program Survey, conducted following the focus groups to gain additional information related to financial barriers for candidates, certification requirements, and the consistency between each pathway to certification.

- Majority agree that the removal of Praxis Core and GPA flexibility has a positive impact on enrollment.
- 69% of respondents state Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Pathway requirements should stay the same.
- 62% state Temporary Employment Permits (TEP) option 2 and 69% state TEP option 3 should be strengthened.
- Approximately half of respondents state that different pathways to certification prepare candidates for their first year of teaching.
- 62% of participants state that the various pathways do not have consistency related to statewide certification requirements.

Ms. Cooper then discussed the report recommendations. Based on national research, reviews of the pathways and financial barriers, and consultation with deans and directors, the LDOE recommends the following to create more consistency across pathways. Recommendations include exploring options for the TEP 2: Master's Degree and TEP 3: Bachelor's Degree to fulfill literacy requirements. LDOE allocates funding to pay the mentors for those on the TEP and the Associate pathways in all years.

### **New Teacher Survey Data and Report**

Ms. Cooper shared that the purpose of the New Teacher Survey was to learn more about the experiences of new teachers across the state. This survey was available to all second-year teachers. There were 154 responses with 35 school systems, Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup>-grade teachers, and most content areas

represented. She noted that only about half of the survey respondents reported completing a teacher preparation program, and only 38% held a level one teaching certificate. She indicated that teachers were asked to reflect on their Teacher Preparation Experience. Results showed that 82% of teachers agreed that the experiences and instruction during the teacher preparation program prepared them well for teaching on day one. Results also showed that:

- 90% of teachers agreed that they were provided clear expectations around their job and how performance would be evaluated;
- 85% of teachers agreed that their school/school system offered opportunities for advancement and promotion;
- 89% of teachers saw themselves teaching at their current school in 1-5 more years;
- 55% of teachers saw themselves teaching at their current school in 11-15 more years; and
- 50% saw themselves teaching at their current school for 16+ years.

Regarding teacher well-being, the survey revealed:

- 77% of new teachers agreed that they were valued as professionals,
- 88% of teachers believed that the school leaders' behavior toward the staff was supportive and encouraging,
- 65% of teachers stated that they were able to balance their workloads with other responsibilities outside of school.

Regarding teacher support, results indicated that:

- 94% of teachers agreed that they had access to professional learning through the school/school system;
- 87% of teachers felt supported by their mentor teacher;
- 84% felt supported by school leaders;
- 83% of teachers agreed that they were able to select professional learning opportunities that were aligned to their performance needs; and
- 73% of teachers agreed that they participated in weekly teacher collaboration with peers to unpack units and lessons and plan for addressing the needs of students.

Lastly, related to the new teacher experience, results showed that:

- 90% of teachers reported that participating in the Professional Learning Modules improved their teaching;
- 84% of teachers reported that working with a mentor teacher increased their likelihood of staying in the profession; and

- 73% of teachers reported that Affinity Groups were a good use of their time.

Dr. Reed asked if a report was needed for HR 90. Ms. Cooper stated that the report was due in January.

### **Pre-Educator Pathway Sustainability and Improvements**

Ms. Cooper discussed student enrollment data and the variety of support to school systems and preparation providers offered by LDOE throughout the year. Regarding curriculum status, she indicated that the department has 70 Educators Rising curriculum licenses available at no cost to school systems to support the growth of the program. Schools/school systems interested in receiving a one-year license at no cost must complete a brief survey and priority will be given to those schools/school systems using the curriculum to start a new program or expand the program to a new site. LDOE is in the final stages of the RFP process to create an open-source curriculum that will be available to all educators at no cost. This curriculum should be available in late fall 2024. In addition, LDOE has paid for 100 student registrations for the Educators Rising National Conference, to be dispersed to state winners who are planning to attend the national conference, then on a first-come, first-served basis. Ms. Cooper then discussed the Louisiana Aspiring Educator Summer Academy, a one-of-a-kind, five-day, hybrid summer camp and professional learning experience for high school students enrolled in the Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway or any other coursework aimed at attracting and developing future Louisiana educators. She noted that the tentative dates for the 2024 Academy are July 8-12, with further details to be provided in the upcoming months.

### **Human Capital Handbook**

Ms. Cooper shared that LDOE, in partnership with the Urban Schools Human Capital Academy, developed the Human Capital Handbook. The purpose of Louisiana's Human Capital Handbook is to provide relevant knowledge that school systems can use to implement a strategic Human Capital (HC) approach to ensure that school systems have a quality workforce, in particular effective teachers and principals. She noted that the contents of the Human Capital Handbook are based on the latest research and effective practices and



include examples of actions, resources, and references. Each chapter is structured with a summary of the topic; an explanation of why this work is important; important data points; key steps to take; and a story of impact. Ms. Cooper then shared the contents will be shared one chapter at time with a webinar. The webinar dates and times will be in the newsletter.

### **Marketing Toolkit**

Ms. Cooper then discussed the Marketing Toolkit developed and designed in partnership with MESH. She shared that this toolkit is designed to assist school systems in highlighting their accomplishments, attracting families and staff members to the school system, and improving the school system's visibility and reputation within the community. She added that the toolkit provides school systems with a variety of social media templates, marketing tools, and advertising designs such as fliers, brochures, and digital ads, which are completely customizable for the individual school system. MESH will conduct a webinar in December for school systems to be trained on the suite of resources along with best practices and tips for using the toolkit in their school systems. The training will be accessible on LDOE's professional learning platform, and additional sessions will be held for school systems throughout the spring and at Teacher Leader Summit 2024.

### **Virtual Programming Cohort**

Ms. Cooper indicated that in order to increase access to high-quality educators teaching a variety of hard-to-staff courses, the Louisiana Department of Education is developing a Virtual Programming Cohort to provide support, guidance, and resources to school systems to design and implement effective virtual programming for identified courses. Participation in the Virtual Programming Cohort is at no cost to school systems and participating systems will receive funding to support technology purchases. She shared that 15 school systems have indicated interest in joining the cohort that will launch in January. Virtual programming cohort participants will receive guidance, training, and ongoing support throughout spring 2024 to design and

implement a virtual program that will meet the needs in the school system's local context. Ms. Cooper discussed the Virtual Learning Summit, hosted by the Calcasieu Parish School Board, in which team members will learn how to implement this in their school systems.

### **2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

Dr. Susannah Craig, Deputy Commissioner of Strategic Planning and Student Success, presented the 2023 Annual Report, included in meeting materials, and noted that it will be submitted to the legislature in January. A motion was made to approve the report; however a quorum was not established. Members were asked to submit any changes or edits by December 15, 2023. No edits or changes on the report were submitted.

### **2024 TEACHER RECRUITMENT, RECOVERY, AND RETENTION PRIORITIES**

Dr. Susannah Craig introduced the 2024 TRRR Task Force Priorities and discussed each. Regarding teacher compensation, she noted that Louisiana must do more to make the teaching profession competitive and provide differentiated compensation options at the local level. Regarding *Strengthening of the Educator Pipeline*, the priority is studying and improving the quality and impact of entry points on the pipeline to ensure long-term success and sustainability. Dr. Frieberg asked the group to look to other states for reciprocity years of service and benefits and that reciprocity of teachers be placed on the tenure ladder. Ms. LeBlanc-Cooper responded that she thought it was in the legislation but would come back to the group with a response. School system leaders and preparation providers must be supported and included in recruitment and retention efforts specific to their local context. Regarding *Continued Elevation of the Teaching Profession*, the priority in this area is to encourage more interest in and willingness to enter the teaching profession. Dr. Craig noted that continued efforts are needed to elevate the teaching profession, promote the nobility of this profession, and spotlight the positive impact each teacher has on Louisiana's students.

She noted that the work of this Task Force will continue in the coming year, acknowledging the annual report and recommendations.

- January 2024 – Transmission of the annual report to the Legislature.
- March 13, 2024 – Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Meeting
- June 26, 2024 – Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Meeting
- August 14, 2024 – Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Meeting
- December 18, 2024 – Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Meeting

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.

### **ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES**

Patrick Steck, Deans for Impact