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Second-Quarter LASTEM Advisory Council Meeting May 1, 2025 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

The LASTEM Advisory Council met on Thursday, May 1, 2025, at the Claiborne Building in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Committee Members/ Representatives Present

Blake Bertuccelli-Booth
Mark Bond
Dr. Suresh Chiruguru
Robin Cosenza (arrived after roll call)
Dr. Bianca Deliberto
Emily DiPalma
Commissioner Kim Hunter Reed
Dr. David Lafargue
Dr. Calvin Mackie (Proxy – Dr. Lawrence Jackson – arrived after roll call)
Dr. Francesca Mellieon-Williams (arrived after roll call)
Jamie Mixon
Ronnie Morris
Dr. Frank Neubrandner (arrived after roll call)
Dr. Wendi Palermo (Proxy – Dr. Jessica Lemoine)
Christen Timmins (Proxy – Jean May-Brett)
Richard Vath
Sara Wolfe

Committee Members Not Present

Kaneisha Akinpelumi
Larry Carter, Jr.
Dr. Patty Glasser
Crystal Gordon
Camille Ivy-O'Connell Bentin

Taya Loupe
Dr. Lealon Martin
Senator Beth Mizell
Representative Vincent St. Blanc
Jolen Stein
David St. Etienne
Tom Yura

Staff Members Present

Clint Coleman
Christine Norton
Carrie Robison
Jennifer Stevens

Guests & STEM Center Directors

Jamie Hebert, LDOE
Lindsay Henderson, Fletcher Technical Community College
Dr. Tabitha Jones-Thomas, FranU
Dr. Toni Thibeaux, LSUHSC-S
Angela Boxie, Region 4 STEM Center
Summer Dann, Region 2 STEM Center
Jennifer DePriest, Region 6 STEM Center
Dr. Heather Kleiner, Region 7 STEM Center
Denise Washington, Region 1 STEM Center

Welcome and Roll Call

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed, Commissioner of Higher Education, welcomed all attendees and called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. Dr. Coleman called roll, noting quorum was not obtained.

Approval of First-Quarter Meeting Minutes

The approval of meeting minutes was delayed until quorum was obtained.

Consideration and Approval of the LASTEM Artificial Intelligence Education Working Group

Dr. Coleman introduced the update on the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Education Working Group, noting the new Council member, Blake Bertuccelli-Booth representing LED, had requested the Council approve the creation of a working group to provide information about the artificial intelligence education landscape in Louisiana. Dr. Coleman stated this information would be developed by Mr. Bertuccelli-Booth, who would then develop a report for LED and present his findings to the LASTEM Council at the next quarterly meeting. He added that this group had already begun meeting and, with approval, would complete its feedback, allowing Mr. Bertuccelli-Booth to provide LED and the Council with a full view of the AI education landscape in Louisiana.

Mr. Bertuccelli-Booth provided details about his background in working with AI in schools in New Orleans and his upcoming initiatives. Mr. Morris applauded Mr. Bertuccelli-Booth's initiatives. Dr. Reed clarified that the group met once already and would complete its work to be reported to the Council in August. Mr. Bertuccelli-Booth noted the research, with which LASTEM is assisting, will influence some of the philanthropic work he is independently doing, which has a K-12 focus. Dr. Coleman added that once group discussions began, the LASTEM team identified the need to bridge this work to higher education, so additional work has begun at some of the Regional Centers to connect AI to the classroom and to workforce opportunities. Dr. Reed noted this is a great time for the Council to be focused in this area as Meta is coming into the state and Louisiana's AI footprint is expanding.

Following the arrival of additional members, quorum was obtained. Dr. Reed called for a motion to approve the LASTEM Artificial Intelligence Education Working Group.

On motion of Mr. Ronnie Morris, seconded by Mr. Richard Vath, the Council approved the LASTEM Artificial Intelligence Education Working Group.

Commissioner Reed also called for a motion for approval of the first-quarter meeting minutes.

On motion of Ms. Jean May-Brett, seconded by Dr. David LaFargue, the Council approved the first-quarter meeting minutes.

Dr. Lawrence Jackson asked if there had been any discussion about who would participate in the work group and how those interested could join. Dr. Coleman stated there was another meeting in the afternoon, starting at noon, and anyone could join. He also mentioned an invitation was sent via email about a month ago. Dr. Reed suggested, now that the work group had been approved, Dr. Coleman send it out again in case anyone else was interested in joining. She added that Dr. Coleman would keep everyone updated about upcoming meetings. Dr. Jackson emphasized the importance of working with AI and young

children, as early as kindergarten, an approach STEM NOLA has already adopted in some of its summer programming. He expressed interest in collaborating further with Mr. Bertucelli-Booth in this area. Mr. Bertucelli-Booth was enthusiastic about collaborating and shared some of his experiences with four-year-olds and AI.

Utilizing Clinical Simulation to Prepare the Next Generation of Nurses and Allied Health Students for Clinical Practice

Dr. Coleman welcomed Dr. Tabitha Jones-Thomas, Associate Dean at FranU, who provided an overview of FranU's simulated teaching environment. After the presentation, Mr. Morris asked about opportunities for K-12 engagement. Dr. Jones Thomas indicated that FranU partners with AHEC (Area Health Education Center) and HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) in providing opportunities for high school students to explore potential careers in healthcare. Questions were asked about the simulators' abilities, and it was indicated that the simulations are recorded for teachers and students to review and discuss afterwards.

Workplace Development: Identifying Best Practices to Promote LSU Health Shreveport's Educational Programs

Dr. Coleman introduced the next guest, Dr. Toni Thibaux, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student and Community Engagement at LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport, who provided an update on LSUHSC-Shreveport's recruitment and engagement strategies. Questions were raised regarding data tracking of students, including ACT preparedness programs, in-state versus out-of-state students, the cultural breakdown of students, the AHEC pipeline, and the UGRAP (Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program) summer internship program. In addition, the process for engaging high school counselors was explained. Dr. Thibaux noted she would share LSUHSC-Shreveport's website and performance goals with the Council via Dr. Coleman. Dr. Reed asked if Dr. Thibaux could also share the success numbers on the pathways.

Cardio-Sonography Program

Ms. Lindsay Henderson, Associate Dean of Allied Health and Workforce at Fletcher Technical Community College, presented on FTCC's allied health and cardio-sonography programs. Mr. Morris asked about credentialing programs, to which Dr. Reed responded that BOR maintains a list of all the certificates, certifications, and degrees in higher education. He also asked Ms. Henderson about her experience with dual enrollment. Ms. Henderson noted that students are able to take some courses, though some programs have clinicals with an age requirement of at least 18 years old. Dr. Lafargue noted that the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) had an industry-based certification (IBC)-focused list that the Department of Education may utilize and is different than the Board of Regents' list. Dr. Reed stated that she would check with LWC to make sure the lists mirror each other, to ensure students have one clear pathway.

Updates on Math Standards Review

Dr. Coleman introduced Ms. Jamie Hebert, Director of Math at the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), who provided an update on the ongoing math standards review. Mr. Morris thanked Ms. Hebert and her team and noted concern about the number of students required to take remedial math courses. He also shared, as LDOE is going through these reviews, he hopes to adopt a framework that both presents a concept and helps students to appreciate its application and see

its relevance, as well as identify clear pathways to the workforce and incorporate touchpoints of AI.

LASTEM Report-Out

Dr. Coleman stated he would provide a written recap of LASTEM and the STEM Center work over the second quarter of the year.

Other Business and Adjournment

Dr. Coleman announced that the next quarterly meeting will be held at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL) in August.

Ms. May-Brett provided announcements including the National Marine Educators Association (NMEA) will hold its annual conference at ULL during June 28th-July 3rd. She stated a Student Day is scheduled on July 1st for students aged 13 and older and scholarships are available. In addition, Ms. May-Brett noted that the administration is considering reducing and possibly eliminating the Sea Grant program. She stated the group cannot make any statements, but reminded everyone that they do have the right to contact their legislative members individually. Last, she stated there will be a joint math and science conference this year which will take place at the Raising Cane's River Center during November 6-7th. She noted the importance of this as LASTEM will not be hosting a statewide summit this year and indicated that she hoped to provide LASTEM with presence at the event.

Dr. Lawrence Jackson, on behalf of Dr. Calvin Mackie, provided thanks to Dr. Coleman for acknowledging STEM NOLA's receipt of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Math, and Engineering Mentoring at the first-quarter LASTEM Council meeting. He also shared STEM NOLA's Louisiana Impact Map and national map. Dr. Reed thanked Dr. Jackson and asked him to provide the maps to Dr. Coleman.

A member of the public noted challenges with recruitment of cytotechnologists in Louisiana. He focused on the difficulty of obtaining licenses from out of state and the lack of cytotechnology programs in the state. Dr. Reed stated she would connect him with the correct staff to discuss licensure and academic programs.

Dr. Reed invited any other comments or new business. With no additional comments or items for discussion, through unanimous consent of the members, the Council adjourned at 11:47 a.m.