

MINUTES
BOARD OF REGENTS

January 28, 2025

The Board of Regents met as a Committee of the Whole at 10:45 a.m. on Tuesday, January 28, in the Louisiana Purchase Room 1–110, Claiborne Building, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Chair Misti Cordell called the meeting to order and welcomed three new members to their 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
Terrie Sterling, Vice Chair
Phillip May, Secretary
David Aubrey
Blake David
Ted Glaser III
Dallas Hixson
Darren Mire
Kennedy Orr, Student Member
Wilbert Pryor
Christy Reeves
K. Samer Shamieh
Collis Temple III
Judy Williams-Brown

Mgmt. Board representatives present were:

LSU System representative, Remy Starns
LCTCS representative, Stevie Smith

Mgt. Board representatives not present were:

Southern System
UL System

Absent from the meeting were:

Christian Creed
Stephanie Finley

Appendix A
Guest List

OATHS OF OFFICE

Board Officers (Vice Chair and Secretary)

The newly appointed officers for 2025 were sworn in by Dr. Uma Subramanian, General Counsel. She administered the oaths of office to Regent Terrie Sterling as Vice Chair and Regent Phillip May as Secretary.

Members to Serve on the Executive Committee

The members of the 2025 Executive Committee, including Regents David, Temple, and Williams-Brown were sworn in by Dr. Subramanian.

Reappointed Members

Two reappointed members were sworn in by Dr. Subramanian. She administered the oaths of office to Regents Aubrey and Mire.

New Members

Three newly appointed Board of Regents members – Ted Glaser III, Dallas Hixson, and Christy Reeves – were sworn in by Dr. Subramanian. Chair Cordell welcomed the new members and noted that each new member brings unique skills and experience to the Board—Glaser in agriculture, Hixson in business, and Reeves in healthcare.

RATIFICATION OF COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS – 2025

On motion of Regent Sterling, seconded by Regent May, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted unanimously to approve the 2025 committee assignments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 11, 2024 MEETING

On motion of Regent Aubrey, seconded by Regent Temple, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2024, meeting.

AMENDMENT TO BYLAWS

Chair Cordell asked Dr. Subramanian to review proposed changes to bylaws governing the Nominating Committee. At the December 2024 Board meeting, a proposal was presented to address the issue of many off-cycle appointments to fill vacancies, recommending that the full Board, rather than the Nominating Committee, make recommendations for appointments to the Proprietary Schools Advisory Commission. The proposal was approved unanimously.

On motion of Regent Hixson, seconded by Regent Reeves, the Board voted unanimously to approve the proposed amendment to the Board Policies and Procedures BPP 4.1 to streamline the process of appointments to the Proprietary Schools Advisory Commission.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE – MEAUXMENTUM MOMENT – META PROJECT

Dr. Tristan Denley, Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Innovation, introduced Devin Harrison, Louisiana Economic Development (LED) Executive Director, to provide an update about the Meta project to establish a state-of-the art data center in Richland Parish. The center, for which ground was broken in December 2024, is slated to begin operations in 2027. It represents a \$10B investment for which Entergy has served as a collaborative and responsive working partner. The project will create 500 new direct jobs, 1,000 indirect jobs, and 5,000 construction jobs in areas ranging from carpentry to engineering. Meta will begin hiring permanent positions in 2027. Turner, DPR Construction, and M.A. Mortenson will build the facility. Information fairs to identify trade contractors will begin in the first quarter of this year. This project will present a need for Louisiana's higher education institutions to fulfill the educational requirements for staffing a project of this magnitude.

Regent Pryor thanked Mr. Harrison for attending the meeting and noted that this will be transformational for the northern part of the state. Regent Pryor also thanked Regent May for his input on the project through his current role at Entergy.

Regent Reeves asked if the Board has identified gaps in certificate or degree offerings which could impact the region's ability to produce workforce for such a large project. While Mr. Harrison said LED has not studied this, Commissioner Reed said the Board staff is evaluating any gaps and how to address them.

Chair Cordell added that at the ribbon-cutting ceremony in December, the Governor mentioned that the facility's physical plant will be the size of 70 football fields. Chair Cordell also asked Regent May to add any comments. He mentioned that the Meta data center is coming to Louisiana because of partnerships established beginning in 2024 and that this great accomplishment has put Louisiana on the map for other ventures in the future. It is changing the narrative about Louisiana.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AUDIT

EISNERAMPER INTERNAL AUDIT

Ms. Elizabeth Bentley-Smith, Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration, introduced Kristin Bourque of EisnerAmper to present a status update on the current internal audit of the LUMCON Vessel Daily Rate, which was completed on January 15, 2025. As of this report, EisnerAmper has obtained and reviewed policies and procedures, relevant vessel operations reports, and external review results, as well as conducted onsite interviews and walkthroughs with employees and management. Next steps in this process include completing testing procedures, drafting a report, holding a meeting with management to finalize the report, and presenting the report to the Audit Committee at the next Board meeting.

In addition, Ms. Bourque reviewed a proposed change to the audit plan, postponing the reorganization of the audit function to allow time for onboarding of new members and to substitute an assessment of the Human Resources area, to include processes of all programs.

On motion of Regent David, seconded by Regent Williams-Brown, the Board voted unanimously to approve the EisnerAmper Updated Internal Audit Plan for FY 2024–2025.

FINANCE

FIVE-YEAR FUNDING FORMULA APPROVAL

Ms. Bentley-Smith and Dr. Tristan Denley, Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Innovation, presented a proposed update to the funding formula, which aligns with the Board’s Master Plan goal, for Louisiana’s public higher education institutions.

Ms. Bentley-Smith reviewed the challenges in developing the formula since, at present, higher education is estimated to be underfunded by \$750M. While institutions have different missions, the outcome of student and institutional success is the same. The formula will work to protect institutions against drastic and rapid changes in funding levels. The workgroup focused on 1) aligning formula with workforce needs, 2) aiding all students across the state, 3) recognizing and rewarding all institutions, and 4) having the formula driven by clear and concise data. Developing the formula was a collaborative process involving representatives from the four higher education systems across the state. Feedback drove the development of the formula, which is workforce-centric, incentivizes students who complete two- and four-year programs, and is driven by the profiles of the institutions. The proposed formula model is composed of base (65%) and outcomes (35%) portions, with the cost category in the current formula transitioned to both base and outcomes categories.

Dr. Denley added that this approach is not just a reworking of the old formula but a complete overhaul. The proposed formula ensures that institutions are supported and rewarded for graduating students. Metrics that support student success along their educational journey are built into the formula. This is accomplished by making the proposed formula much simpler than those used in the past. Part of

this simplification is having the money follow the student. The proposed formula rewards 100% online students only if they are in-state and rewards four-year institutions for bachelor's and higher degrees and two-year institutions for associate's degrees and credentials. Research has a fixed allocation in the formula. For the first time, validated skills and credentials will be recognized.

Supervisor Stevie Smith, the LCTCS representative in attendance, asked for clarification of the graphic showing cost distributions, specifically where programs like HVAC programs and those training linemen fit in the formula. Dr. Denley responded that programs such as the ones cited by Mr. Smith are now included in the formula. LCTCS will report how long it takes students to obtain credentials, and those weighted credentials will be factored with that time as part of the consideration.

Mr. Smith noted that many of LCTCS's programs are short-term, with some lasting only a matter of weeks. He asked how allocations are determined between four-year and two-year institutions. Dr. Denley said part of the allocation is based on FTE, with 25% to two-year programs and 75% to 4-year institutions. Chair Cordell added that 50% of citizens in Louisiana have only a high school diploma.

Regent Aubrey asked for verification that the proposed formula would not be run unless the Board has the funding. Ms. Bentley-Smith confirmed this. Commissioner Reed added that the formula would be run when the Board gets new money and, at this point, funding is at a standstill though cuts are not anticipated. Regent Aubrey asked what determines new money. Commissioner Reed answered and explained when the formula is ran during the Legislative process.

Regent Aubrey asked if research would be figured using the current formula if no new money is given. He suggested that the Board have this conversation in June or July, during discussions about research funding. Ms. Bentley-Smith responded that this is typically discussed at the June meeting. Regent Aubrey agreed with Mr. Smith about fairness in funding for short-term programs but urged that the Board not forget about Louisiana's four-year institutions. Dr. Denley reminded the Board of the policy adopted last year to ensure that all institutions are included in the funding, in addition to grants and other means of support that are available.

On motion of Regent David, seconded by Regent Aubrey, the Board voted to approve the five-year funding formula. Representative Starns voted not to approve.

HR 169 TASK FORCE REPORT

Ms. Bentley-Smith presented a report about the task force mandated by HR 169 to study various aspects of optional retirement plans (ORP) within the state's Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL) that will help institutions compete with other states to develop and retain faculty and staff talent. Ms. Bentley-Smith reviewed the final recommendations, which included: 1) provide ORP eligibility to certain employees within LCTCS, 2) increase the irrevocable decision timeframe to seven years, 3) provide ORP membership participation on the TRSL Board, 4) increase employer contributions to ORP accounts while requiring unfunded accrued liability (UAL) savings be retained in higher education to offset costs, 5) request legislative study of phased retirement program, and 6) revise TRSL membership for new hires allowing those over 60 or those 55 and older with 40 quarters to opt for Social Security.

On motion of Regent David, seconded by Regent Hixson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the House Resolution 169 Task Force Report as submitted.

FACILITIES AND PROPERTIES

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&M: East Campus Apartments Boiler Replacement, Baton Rouge, LA – Louisiana State University and A&M College, Auxiliary Revenues, \$197,000
2. LSU A&M: Howe-Russell Suites W0151 and W0153, Baton Rouge, LA – Louisiana State University and A&M College, Operational Funds, \$180,000
3. LSU A&M: Renewable Natural Resources (RNR) Building Interior Painting, Baton Rouge, LA – Louisiana State University and A&M College, Operational Funds, \$200,000

4. LSU A&M: School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) Large Animal Hospital Floor Refinishing, Baton Rouge, LA – Louisiana State University and A&M College, Operational Funds, \$200,000
5. LSU A&M: School of Veterinary Medicine (SVM) Main Building Energy Efficiency Lighting Replacement, Baton Rouge, LA – Louisiana State University and A&M College, Energy Efficiency grant from the Louisiana Public Service Commission, \$700,000

On motion of Regent Aubrey, seconded by Regent Mire, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda, including the small capital projects report, as presented.

Additions to Board of Regents FY 2025–2026 Capital Outlay Budget

Mr. Herring mentioned that in October 2024, when these three additions to the FY 2025-2026 Capital Outlay budget were first discussed, they were assumed to be fully funded and did not need to be included in that budget; however, since that time, bids have come in higher. These projects include a central steam generator at Louisiana Tech, the Athletic Academic Center at Louisiana Tech, and a new annex adjacent to the Southern University Law Center.

Regent Aubrey asked how Louisiana Tech’s purchasing of energy from the city rather than producing it through self-generation will impact its budget. Mr. Herring responded that the institution will save money.

On motion of Regent May, seconded by Regent Temple, the Board voted unanimously to approve the addition of three projects to the Board of Regents’ FY 2025–2026 Capital Outlay Budget Recommendation as presented.

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Tristan Denley presented the Consent Agenda, consisting of four proposed new academic programs, three of which represent an effort to expand health-related programs across the state.

- a. **Routine Staff Approvals**
 1. **Fletcher TCC – AAS Radiologic Technology**
 2. **SOWELA – AAS Respiratory Care**
 3. **Northshore TCC – AAS Patient Navigator**
 4. **Southern University A&M – BA Digital Media Arts**

Regent Aubrey recognized representatives from Fletcher and Northshore in attendance at the meeting.

On motion of Regent Reeves, seconded by Regent Sterling, the Board voted unanimously to approve the four academic programs as presented.

NCI DESIGNATION UPDATE AND NEW RESEARCH CENTER

Dr. Denley introduced Dr. Lucio Miele, Director of the LSU-LCMC Health Cancer Center, who provided an update on achieving National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation for the LSU Center for Comparative Oncology. Dr. Miele emphasized the need for such a center in Louisiana, providing data points reflecting Louisiana's high cancer mortality rate, disparities in care, estimated cancer deaths, and prevalence of distinct types of cancer. LSU has established a partnership with LCMC Health in seeking the NCI designation from the National Institutes of Health. LCMC Health is assisting with multiple clinical recruitments: chief oncologist, thoracic surgeon, director of cancer genetics, neuro-oncologist, and HIV malignancies expert. Dr. Miele further discussed the pathway to NCI designation. Some required basic metrics include the following: 1) \$10M in peer-reviewed funding (50% or more from NCI), 2) funds from R01 or equivalent grants, 3) regional and national scientific impact, 4) inter- and intra-programmatic collaboration, 5) clinical trial oversight and accruals, and 5) shared resources. A successful NCI-designated cancer center has six essential characteristics: 1) physical space, 2) organizational capabilities, 3) transdisciplinary collaboration and coordination, 4) cancer focus, 5) institutional commitment, and 6) a center director. There are currently recruitment efforts underway for many positions. In addition, collaborative work includes Pennington Biomedical Research Center, the Global Viral Oncology Research Program, and the LSU School of Veterinary Medicine. Other resources are the Louisiana Tumor Registry, Gulf South Minority NCORP, LSU AgCenter Center, and the LSU Health New Orleans School of Nursing. The project will also deploy AI resources to identify and improve areas of cancer study. Clinical trials are already underway. Funding is being sought in various arenas including a grant submitted to the AI Copeland Foundation recently announced by Senator Bill Cassidy.

Regent Shamieh asked about the timeline for receiving the NCI designation and what happens following the award. Dr. Miele responded that the initial \$10M needs to be doubled, but when the designation is awarded, the center becomes eligible to support certain cancer research projects and can expand to become a magnet for cancer patients seeking treatment and for further research. This in turn has the potential to attract even more money.

Regent Sterling asked if there was a timeline for the project. Dr. Miele responded that the current timeline is approximately five years but will depend on numerous variables.

Commissioner Reed thanked Dr. Miele for his presentation and asked him to describe how the quest for the NCI designation will better results for cancer patients and their families. Dr. Miele responded that one component is prevention, to ensure fewer people are diagnosed with advanced forms of cancer, which this project can help to accomplish.

Dr. Denley then presented the proposal requesting approval to establish the Center for Comparative Oncology (CCO) at Louisiana State University and A&M College (LSU). He ended the presentation by reiterating that the LSU Veterinary School and the LSU Health Sciences Centers will work together on this NCI designation.

On motion of Regent Hixson, seconded by Regent Glaser, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Center for Comparative Oncology at LSU research as presented.

Dr. Denley added that programs are providing reports so that they can be assessed and decisions can be made, with some of those findings to be presented to the Board in March.

PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND PERFORMANCE

CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Susannah Craig, Deputy Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Student Success, presented the Consent Agenda, which included two initial applications for licensure of academic degree-granting institutions:

- a. Herzing University – Madison, Wisconsin

b. Lake Erie College – Painesville, Ohio

Regent Sterling asked if the Board requires schools to disclose their local facility for their surgical technician programs. Dr. Craig responded that while each school is asked to provide a list of information, that question was not listed. She noted, however, that students in the surgical tech program are required to do a clinical and when the school has an agreement for the practicum it will dictate which facility would be used.

On motion of Regent May, seconded by Regent Hixson, the Board voted unanimously to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.

TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Dr. Craig reported on the work of a task force mandated by House Concurrent Resolution No. 39 in 2021 relevant to teacher recruitment, recovery, and retention. In 2023, the work of the task force was extended by two years. Over the past few years, Louisiana has seen increased recruitment of and access to training for aspiring teachers. Currently, 1,724 high school students are in pre-educator pathways earning dual enrollment credits while still in high school. There has been an increase of 843 certified teachers in the last year. In addition, retention has increased through efforts to boost teacher pay, reciprocity in recognition of credits, and support for the Registered Apprenticeship Program, which gives students the opportunity to serve as residents in a classroom for a full year under the counsel of mentor teachers. The paraprofessional-to-certified-teacher program has enabled over 500 enrollees to work while earning their teacher credentials and a four-year degree. In 2023, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) reported a shift in the trend of fewer completers of Louisiana teacher preparation programs, with 1,554 completers in 2021–2022 increasing to 1,776 in 2022–2023. LDOE’s report that certified teachers represent 88% of those teaching in 2024 can be attributed in part to the following programs: 1) Para-to-Teacher Model, 2) the Pre-Educator Pathway, 3) Aspiring Principal Fellowships, 4) Recruitment and Retention Fellowships, and 5) Praxis vouchers for certified teachers instructing outside of their field to gain additional certification. Superintendent of Education Cade Brumley, moreover, credits the Let Teachers Teach initiative instituted this year for assuring teachers have adequate preparation time by

transitioning mandated training to a cyclical model, increasing flexibility in curriculum use, providing additional teacher compensation, continuing the New Teacher Experience, and providing upbeat principal coaching.

Dr. Craig confirmed that this report will be presented to the House Committee on Education on February 12.

Regent Hixson recounted the story of a paraprofessional in his district availing herself of the Para-to-Teacher program to earn a degree and certification to become a certified teacher and the importance of this program.

Regent Sterling asked whether there is a source to tell us where in the state most students entering teacher preparation programs are coming from. She also expressed concern about the decline in students entering teacher preparation classes from 2012 to today, despite the recent increase. Dr. Craig replied that some of the attrition can be attributed to a national decline in students choosing the teaching profession, issues with respect for the profession, lower salaries, and changes in licensure exams. She noted that the Department of Education's marketing campaign and the elimination of one Praxis exam for some candidates have helped and indicated she would provide further information.

Regent Aubrey expressed an interest in this information as well, mentioning that Louisiana Delta Community College had its first class complete a teacher preparation program. With many uncertified teachers in rural areas of the state, there is still a need for recruitment. Regent Glaser expressed the same concerns about his district and asked whether a teacher teaching out of their field would be considered certified or uncertified. Dr. Craig said that while certification numbers vary by parish, the situation described by Regent Glaser would be recorded as out of field.

Regent Aubrey inquired about money the Board could secure to help parishes in need. Regent Cordell noted a teacher preparation program at Grambling that focuses on Black male students going into the classroom and urged Board members to visit the Call Me Mister program.

On motion of Regent Reeves, seconded by Regent May, the Board voted unanimously to receive the 2024 Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Task Force Report and authorize Regents staff to submit this report to the House and Senate Committees on Education.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chair Cordell made the following comments:

- She mentioned time spent with student government leaders in Washington, D.C. and recognized Harold Boutte for his time and effort organizing and coordinating the event. The 2025 trip marked the 23rd time that he has been involved in this annual trip for SGA leaders.
- She asked Kennedy Orr, student member, to present her Student Board Member report. Regent Orr reported that students are happy to be back for the spring semester. She also enjoyed the Washington, D.C. trip, though it was delayed by winter weather here in Louisiana. The events afforded all SGA leaders opportunities to interact with House and Senate leaders. She announced an SGA meeting in Alexandria next month, where she will discuss the new funding formula and field questions about federal funds and the impact of possible changes on students in Louisiana.
- She thanked Ochsner and Christy Reeves for their contributions to the Washington, D.C. trip.
- She once again welcomed the three new Board members and noted that the appointment of Christy Oliver Reeves marks the first time a father-daughter duo has served on the Board in its 51-year history. Regent Reeves's father William A. Oliver served from 2002–2004.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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

- She also welcomed the three new Board members and noted how proud she is of Regent Orr's accomplishments.
- She had the opportunity to visit with student leaders during the Washington, D.C. trip.
- She mentioned Ms. Frances Shaw as an example of the dedication of teachers. She said that Ms. Shaw, who came out of retirement at the age of 80 to teach chemistry when there was a need in her district, will be featured in a national story by David Begnaud. Ms. Shaw will be invited to speak to the Future Teachers Honor Roll this year.
- She recognized the communication teams for meeting with all system communication teams throughout the state to coordinate Regents' campaign focusing on workforce and talent development. All systems are focused on messaging the work being done and how it contributes to the future of the workforce.
- She thanked Senator Cassidy and Congressman Fields, who announced last week that National Science Foundation had awarded \$8M to the Board of Regents to work with partners on STEM research, coordination, and outreach across the state.
- She mentioned that she will be serving as a panelist at SXSW EDU 2025 in Austin, TX in March.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Cordell asked if there was any other business to come before the Board. She noted that there is no meeting in February.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion of Regent Glaser, seconded by Regent Mire, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Appendix A

Board Meeting Guest List

Tuesday, January 28, 2025

NAME	AFFILIATION
Robert René	Southern University System
Paula Hellums	SOWELA Technical Community College
Kristine Stout	SOWELA Technical Community College
Jessica Lemoine	LCTCS
Joe Marin	LCTCS
Joe R. Salter	UL System Supervisor
Cynthia Bryant	Southern University
Harry E. Anderson	Southern University
Darrell Roberson	Southern University
Brian Roberts	BOR/LUMCON
Christi Marceaux	Northshore Technical Community College
Jackie Bach	LSU A&M
Remy Starns	LSU A&M
Jimmy Sautelle	CLTCC
Jimmy Genovese	Northwestern State University
Greg Handel	Northwestern State University
Jeannine O'Rourke	UL System
Kristin Bourque	EisnerAmper
Danielle Vauclin	Fletcher
Lindsay Henderson	Fletcher
Lucio Miele	LSUHSC-NO
Bonnie Hymel	Pennington Biomedical
Roderick Hampton	Town of Haynesville
Daniel Roberts	Northshore Technical Community College