

DRAFT  
MINUTES  
BOARD OF REGENTS

October 23, 2024

The Board of Regents met as a Committee of the Whole at 12:19 p.m. on Wednesday, October 23, 2024, in the Magale Recital Hall, Creative and Performing Arts Annex, Northwestern State University, 140 Central Avenue, Natchitoches, Louisiana. Chair Misty Cordell called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

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

Present for the meeting were:

Misty Cordell, Chair  
Darren Mire, Secretary  
David Aubrey  
Christian Creed  
Blake David  
Robert Levy  
Phillip May, Jr.  
Kennedy Orr, Student Member  
Wilbert Pryor  
Gary Solomon, Jr.  
Terrie Sterling  
Collis Temple III  
Judy Williams-Brown

Mgt. Board Representatives present:

Valencia Sarpy Jones, LSU System

Absent from the meeting were:

Stephanie Finley  
Felix Weill

Appendix A  
Guest List

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 25, 2024 MEETING

**On motion of Regent Aubrey, seconded by Regent Mire, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2024 meeting.**

## CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chair Cordell made the following comments:

- She thanked the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and former State Rep. Taylor Townsend for hosting the Regents' Board Development Reception.
- She also thanked President Genovese and the team at Northwestern State University for their hospitality.
- She asked Student Member Regent Orr to provide an update to the Board:
  - Regent Orr noted that all campuses are bustling with homecoming activities.
  - She recognized that many institutions are hosting voter registration events.
  - She informed the Board that the next COSBP meeting will be held the following weekend at Southeastern Louisiana University.
- She acknowledged that Dr. K. Samer Shamieh has been appointed to the Board of Regents and that she looks forward to introducing him at the December Board meeting.
- She informed the Board that she and other Regents attended site visits to ULM, LA Tech, and Grambling to learn more about their current facility projects as well as their vision for the future development of each campus.
- She stated she has appointed the following members to the Nominating Committee and thanked them for accepting the nomination:
  - Gary Solomon, Jr., Chair
  - Robert W. Levy
  - David Aubrey
  - Darren G. Mire
  - Judy A. Williams-Brown
- She thanked former Chair Solomon for his work and presented him a gift to reflect the Board's appreciation.

## MEAUXMENTUM MOMENT – NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Tristan Denley, Deputy Commissioner for Academic and Student Affairs, introduced Dr. Greg Handel, Executive Vice President and Provost of Northwestern State University, to provide an update on how NSU is implementing the Meauxmentum Framework to improve student success. Dr. Handel explained how Northwestern State University is focusing on bringing together stakeholder groups to identify barriers for students. He advised that the institution has found it beneficial to help students persist in overcoming these barriers. He informed the Board of the First-Year Experience at Northwestern State and how that program has led leadership to begin focusing on the students' second-year experience and beyond. He stated that the institution has partnered with Career Compass of Louisiana to present the Beyond Graduation program, currently in its third cohort. This program focuses on assisting students with the barriers that they are facing. Dr. Handel then presented information on the FLAME (Faculty Led Assistance in My Education) initiative as well as the Supplemental Instruction that is provided to

students. He advised the Board that Northwestern has received grant funding for the Elevate U program, to support retention and graduation initiatives for Pell-eligible students. He then explained the use of academic and career mapping as part of the Elevate U program. He highlighted student-created podcasts that are part of a social media marketing strategy for various academic programs.

Chair Cordell asked Dr. Handel to provide information on the workforce partnerships that Northwestern has within its academic programs. Dr. Handel explained that workforce partners provide valuable feedback on how academic curricula can be updated to reflect the current needs of the workforce and to prepare students for careers.

## REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### **FINANCE**

#### APPROVAL OF HIGHER EDUCATION BUDGET REQUEST FOR FY 2025–2026

Mr. Matthew LaBruyere, Deputy Commissioner for Finance and Administration, presented an overview of the budget request for Fiscal Year 2025–2026 which, by law, must be submitted to the Division of Administration in November. He explained that, per instructions from the Division, budgets were prepared for possible \$100M and \$250M budget cuts. He noted that the FY 2025–2026 Higher Education budget request is \$142.3M; the cost to fully fund higher education is \$765M.

Ms. Elizabeth Bentley-Smith, Associate Commissioner for Finance and Administration, explained the budget request for FY 2025–2026, which includes funding to stabilize institutions as well as targeted requests, including for dual enrollment and scholarship programs. She provided a breakdown of the budget request for FY 2025–2026 and advised that there will be a one-time request totaling \$31.5M, which includes workforce funding, cyber programs, and campus safety, as well as a variety of other programs.

Regent May commented that affordability is the number one issue for students who choose not to seek higher education and that Louisiana is far below the Southern regional average for funding. He

stressed the importance of receiving this funding, citing specific ways a higher education degree improves quality of life.

**On motion of Regent David, seconded by Regent Creed, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted unanimously to approve the State General Fund operating budget requests for all higher education systems, boards, and agencies for FY 2025–2026.**

## FACILITIES AND PROPERTY

### BOR FY 2025–2026 CAPITAL OUTLAY BUDGET RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Chris Herring, Associate Commissioner for Facilities Planning and Emergency Management, presented a brief overview of the BOR FY 2025–2026 Capital Outlay Budget Recommendation. Regent Creed asked for an explanation of the request from Louisiana Tech to change the priority ranking of its proposed projects. Mr. Herring responded that based on the materials and timing of the projects, Louisiana Tech has asked to switch the priority rankings of the Forestry Building and Madison Hall projects. Regent Levy commented that the request from Louisiana Tech is vital to continue the growth of its Forestry program. Regent Aubrey asked if only the campus priority will be changed, or if the action will affect system priorities as well. Commissioner Kim Hunter Reed commented that the swap is only for the two projects, and BOR's priority ranking for those two projects would change, as that is what is requested. Regent Aubrey asked for a reason why the project cannot be higher on the list based on its importance. Mr. Herring responded that all the projects are important to their institutions and that the priorities also take into consideration the timing and status of each project. Regent Pryor asked for a status update on the gym at Southern University-Shreveport. Mr. Herring responded that the project was added during the legislative process but has not been funded. Regent Pryor also asked for a status update on the SUSLA Law Library and the SUNO cafeteria. Mr. Herring responded that he would need to follow up on the Law Library and that SUNO has designated the cafeteria as a need and design work on the facility has begun. Regent Aubrey asked for clarification on the classification of projects on the list and an estimate of the funds remaining once the priority projects currently under construction

have been funded. Mr. Herring responded, noting that a better picture of the funds available would be available in January.

**On motion of Regent Levy, seconded by Regent Creed, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted unanimously to approve the Board of Regents' FY 2025–2026 Capital Outlay Budget Recommendation and authorize staff to make any necessary changes resulting from action taken by the Bond Commission during its October 2024 meeting.**

## ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

### CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Tristan Denley, Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Innovation, presented the Consent Agenda items.

- a. **Routine Staff Approvals**
  1. **Louisiana Tech: Request to establish an Undergraduate Certificate in Environmental Sustainability (CIP 03.0103) and a Graduate Certificate in Health Informatics (CIP 51.9999) with a progress report on program implementation submitted as part of the institution's 2025 Academic Plan.**
  2. **Louisiana Tech: Request to change the CIP of the Graduate Certificate in Health Sciences from (CIP 34.0199) to (CIP 26.0102) to more accurately reflect the program's curriculum and purpose.**
  3. **Nicholls State University: Request to establish Undergraduate Certificates in Studio Art (CIP 50.0702) and Art History (CIP 50.0703) with progress reports on program implementation submitted as part of the institution's 2025 Academic Plan.**
  4. **Southeastern Louisiana University: Request to establish an Undergraduate Certificate in Medical Sales (CIP 52.1801) with a progress report on program implementation submitted as part of the institution's 2025 Academic Plan.**
  5. **University of Louisiana at Lafayette: Request to establish an Undergraduate Certificate in Data Science (CIP 30.7001), a Post Baccalaureate Certificate in Cancer Registry Management (CIP 51.0000), and a Graduate Certificate in Gifted Education (CIP 13.1004) with progress reports on program implementation submitted as part of the institution's 2025 Academic Plan.**
  6. **University of Louisiana at Lafayette: Request to make the following academic unit name changes:**
    - **Change the name of the Department of Biology to the School of Biological Sciences.**
    - **Decouple the School of Music and Performing Arts into the School of Music and the School of Dance and Theatre.**

**On motion of Regent Creed, seconded by Regent Solomon, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted unanimously to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.**

#### ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Dr. Denley then presented for approval the Associate of Applied Science in Health Information Technology at River Parishes Community College and the Bachelor of Arts Honors Traditions in Critical Thought and Scholarship at Louisiana State University and A&M College.

Regent Aubrey asked if there are any other honors colleges in the state that are awarding degrees. Dr. Denley responded that this is the first in the state, but there are others in the country. Regent Sterling asked if this would affect rankings. Dr. Denley responded that rankings can be affected by students' success and the rigor of the program.

**On motion of Regent Sterling, seconded by Regent Creed, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted unanimously to approve the Academic Programs as presented.**

#### M.J. FOSTER PROMISE PROGRAM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND REPORT

Dr. Denley presented the M.J. Foster Promise Program annual report to the Board. He informed the Board that there was a significant increase in both enrollment and completers from Year 1 to Year 2. He then provided an overview of the demographics of these recipients and cited the completions by industry in the top five fields, noting that the largest numbers are in healthcare. He added that in an analysis of post-completion data, it was found that for those graduates for whom both pre- and post-completion salary data were available, the median increase in salary was \$13,016, and the mean (average) increase was \$20,520.

Regent Levy asked if geographic information on the recipients is available. Dr. Denley responded that he can create a graphic to reflect the geographic locations but added that they are spread throughout the state. Regent Cordell asked if there is follow-up with those who have not completed. Dr. Denley responded that a majority of those who did not initially complete a degree program have returned and completed. Regent Aubrey asked if there are data that show the enrollments and completers broken down by campus and system. Dr. Denley responded that the data are available and can be provided. Commissioner Reed commented that there is the anticipation that the funds will be exhausted again this year and will be requesting additional funding. Dr. Sujuan Boutté commented on the acceptance rates in the program.

**On motion of Regent Mire, seconded by Regent May, the Board, acting as a Committee of**

**the Whole, voted to approve the M.J. Foster Promise Program Annual Report and authorized the Commissioner of Higher Education to submit the report to the appropriate legislative committees on behalf of the Board of Regents.**

#### TOPS REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND REPORT

Dr. Denley presented the TOPS annual report to the Board. He began with an overview of the program and its funding, noting that the report analyzes the ten-year performance of TOPS students, from 2014–2024. He noted that over the past decade, the acceptance rates across all awards have declined. He indicated a variety of reasons for this behavior in recent years, including that out-of-state institutions are being more aggressive in recruiting our students, often offering scholarships that provide much more than what a student would receive through the TOPS program. Dr. Denley informed the Board that the Legislature has asked BOR to conduct a comprehensive study of statewide financial aid programs to identify what is and is not working and provide possible recommendations.

Regent Cordell asked what can be done to make TOPS Tech awards more appealing to students. Dr. Denley responded that there have been conversations on how students can better use the award and how it can work with the M.J. Foster Program. Regent Pryor asked if there are data that show what states with program like TOPS are doing to retain their graduates and keep them from leaving the state. Dr. Denley responded that this is a topic that will be explored in the future report. Regent Aubrey asked if Regents can spend unused TOPS funds. Mr. LaBruyere commented that unused funds are removed from the TOPS funding and moved to other expenses in higher education or across the state budget.

**On motion of Regent Aubrey, seconded by Regent Creed, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted to approve the TOPS Report: Analysis of the TOPS Program from 2014–2024 and authorized 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**

##### APPOINTMENT OF ENDOWED CHAIRHOLDER WITHOUT A NATIONAL SEARCH: UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT MONROE

Ms. Carrie Robison, Deputy Commissioner for Research and Sponsored Initiatives, presented a request from the University of Louisiana at Monroe to appoint Dr. Jana Sutton to the Hanna Sission Spyker Eminent Scholars Chair in Education.

Regent Pryor asked how the lack of a national search provides the best staff for institutions and benefits to Louisiana. Ms. Robison explained that filling a chair allows funding to be used, and, in this

case, this allows retention of a talented faculty member. She stated that an appointee does have to meet the professional qualifications and minimum salary requirements to hold a Chair, as verified by a staff review or, if necessary, an external evaluation of the prospective holder's credentials.

**On motion of Regent Temple, seconded by Regent Creed, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted to approve the University of Louisiana Monroe's request. Regent Pryor voted Nay.**

## **STATEWIDE PROGRAMS**

Dr. Sujuan Boutté, Executive Director of LOSFA, presented the Consent Agenda items.

### CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **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**
- b. **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**

**On motion of Regent Mire, seconded by Regent Temple, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted unanimously to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.**

## **PLANNING, RESEARCH AND PERFORMANCE**

Dr. Susannah Craig, Deputy Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Student Success, presented the Consent Agenda items.

### CONSENT AGENDA

- a. **R.S. 17:1808 (Academic Licensure)**
  - i. **Renewal Applications**
    - a. **Oral Roberts University**
    - b. **Remington College**
    - c. **San Joaquin Valley College**
    - d. **United States University**
  - b. **Advisory Commission on Proprietary Schools**
    - i. **Initial Applications**
      - a. **GBR Dental Assistant Academy, Prairieville, LA**



- ii. **Renewal Applications**
  - a. **160 Driving Academy - Shreveport**
  - b. **Acadiana Area Career College - Lafayette, LA**
  - c. **Accelerated Academy - Baton Rouge**
  - d. **Accelerated Academy - Denham Springs**
  - e. **Accelerated Academy - Hammond**
  - f. **Accelerated Academy - Houma**
  - g. **Accelerated Academy - Lafayette**
  - h. **Accelerated Academy - Lake Charles**
  - i. **Accelerated Academy - Metairie**
  - j. **Accelerated Academy - Monroe**
  - k. **Accelerated Academy - Slidell**
  - l. **Advance Nursing Training - New Orleans, LA**
  - m. **Ark-La-Tex Dental Assisting Academy - Shreveport, LA**
  - n. **Baton Rouge School of Phlebotomy**
  - o. **Blue Cliff College - Alexandria**
  - p. **Blue Cliff College - Lafayette**
  - q. **Blue Cliff College - Metairie**
  - r. **Blue Cliff College - Metairie, Satellite Location**
  - s. **Camelot College - Baton Rouge, LA**
  - t. **Coastal College - Alexandria**
  - u. **Cross Road CDL Academy - Harvey, LA**
  - v. **Digital Media Institute - Shreveport, LA**
  - w. **Fortis College - Baton Rouge, LA**
  - x. **Healthcare Training Institute - Kenner, LA**
  - y. **Life Care - Marrero, LA**
  - z. **MedCerts - Livonia, MI**
  - aa. **Medical Training College - Baton Rouge, LA**
  - bb. **New Orleans Medical Assistant School - New Orleans, LA**
  - cc. **NOLA Institute of Gaming - New Orleans, LA**
  - dd. **Opelousas Academy of Nondestructive Testing - Opelousas, LA**
  - ee. **RelyOn Nutec USA - Houma, LA**
  - ff. **Remington College - Baton Rouge**
  - gg. **River Cities School of Dental Assisting - Shreveport, LA**
  - hh. **Smith Institute - Shreveport, LA**
  - ii. **Stick It Phlebotomy - Jonesboro, LA**
  - jj. **Synergy Massage Institute - Metairie**

**On motion of Regent May, seconded by Regent Williams-Brown, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted unanimously to approve the items on the Consent Agenda.**

#### REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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

- She thanked Northwestern State University for hosting both the Board development session and Board meeting. She noted the amazing work they are doing.

- She advised that the LASTEM Summit was held in Lafayette earlier this month. She thanked Regent David for hosting the keynote speaker for the event at dinner.
- She informed the Board of the recent panels and individuals that she, Dr. Denley, and Chair Cordell have spoken to regarding Master Plan success to date.
- She attended a centennial celebration at Southeastern Louisiana University.
- She and Regents Mire, Aubrey, and Temple attended the HBCU Advisory Council Meeting and the HBCU Utility Workforce Summit at Dillard University.
- She voiced her appreciation to the Council for a Better Louisiana (CABL) for its continued support of higher education.
- She mentioned The Advocate's special feature in the Living section highlighting former SGA presidents, and the paths they have taken since graduation.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Cordell noted that the proposed Calendar of Meetings for 2025 was included in the Board materials.

**On motion of Regent Aubrey, seconded by Regent Creed, the Board, acting as a Committee of the Whole, voted unanimously to approve the 2025 Calendar of Meetings.**

Supervisor Sarpy Jones thanked the Board and Commissioner Reed for coming to Natchitoches and invited the Board to return for the Christmas parade on the first weekend of December, where the National Champion LSU Gymnastics team will be honored, serving as the grand marshalls.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, on motion of Regent Mire, seconded by Regent May, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Appendix A

Board Meeting Guest List

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
Eric Turner	LAICU
Greg Handel	NSU
SuJuan Boutte	LOSFA
Jimmy Genovese	NSU
Jessica Lemoine	LCTCS