



# RESILIENT LOUISIANA COMMISSION

CO-CHAIR DON PIERSON

CO-CHAIR TERRIE STERLING

Education & Workforce Development Task Force

May 8, 2020

Meeting called to order at 2 p.m.

## **Task Force Members/Representatives Present**

- Ava Dejoie, Co-chair
- Kim Hunter Reed, Co-chair
- Ashley Arceneaux (for Jason Droddy)
- Doretha Bennett
- Bruse Busada
- Julie Cherry
- Camille Conaway
- Wayne Denley
- Hannah Dietsch
- John Fraboni
- Henry Heier
- Paul Helton
- Brittany Major
- Darcy McKinnon
- Kenya Messer
- Andy O'Brien
- Mike Palamone
- Paula Polito
- Janet Pope
- Shane Riddle
- Stephen Toups
- Angie White

- Call to Order and Roll Call
  - Co-chair Ava Dejoie called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and Sonya Williams conducted roll call.
- Certification for Lack of Quorum
  - Ms. Dejoie established a quorum in accordance with Governor John Bel Edwards' Executive Proclamation 2020-41.
    - In accordance with Executive Proclamation JBE 2020-41, issued by Governor John Bel Edwards on April 2, 2020, the Resilient Louisiana Commission ("RLC") is providing for attendance at essential commission and task force meetings via teleconference or video conference as allowed during the pendency of the COVID-19 health emergency. Pursuant to Section 4 of JBE 2020-41, the RLC Education Workforce Task Force will provide attendance for the 2:00p.m. meeting on Friday, May 1, 2020 via Zoom and livestream and in a manner that allows for observation and input by members of the public, as set forth in the Notice posted on April 30, 2020. The Education Workforce Task Force is unable to operate in person in order to establish quorum as doing so may result in violating Governor Edwards' order that all public gatherings of 10 or more people be suspended or postponed.
- Welcome from Co-Chairs
  - Ms. Dejoie welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended gratitude to Dr. Kim Hunter Reed for her multitasking efforts as she attended the Legislative Session on behalf of higher education.
- Approval of Minutes from the Previous Meeting
  - Ms. Dejoie asked for approval of the minutes of the May 1, 2020 meeting of the Resilient Louisiana Commission/Education Workforce Task Force.
    - On motion of Julie Cherry, seconded by Bruse Busada, the Task Force voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the May 1, 2020 meeting of the Resilient Louisiana Commission/Education Workforce Task Force.
- Public Comments
  - Ms. Dejoie stated that there were no public comments submitted.
- Update from the Resilient Louisiana Commission Director:) Andrew Doss, Director/Coordinator, RLC
  - Ms. Dejoie welcomed Andrew Doss, Director/Coordinator, RLC.
  - Mr. Doss stated that Governor Edwards is devising a plan relative to the expiration of the May 15, 2020 stay-at-home order. In an effort to aid the Governor in immediate decision making, the RLC has put forth a request for a snapshot of interim recommendations being developed by other Task Forces, including those that have not yet convened. Recommendations and comments

from the Education Workforce Task Force have been submitted and received by the RLC and are currently under review. The RLC is meeting on Saturday, May 10, 2020 and extended invitations to Ms. Dejoie and Dr. Reed. The initial phase provided a single suggestion:

- To create a centralized data group within the RLC that serves as a shared resource for the Commission and the individual Task Forces, and acts as a resource team of the RLC rather than as an additional Task Force. Each Task Force may, if it chooses, delegate members and/or staffers to serve on the data group and qualified experts selected by RLC and Task Force members may be nominated, as well.
- Mr. Doss noted that the RLC is expecting a Charge 1 Report on immediate COVID-19-related issues and is currently awaiting feedback from the RLC and other Task Forces in order to develop a structured template to define the process, expectations, outcomes, and timeline. Mr. Doss asked if there were any data questions or requests, and Mike Palamone suggested avenues for rapid-reemployment techniques.
- Lessons Learned from Crises of the Past – Implications of COVID-19 Pandemic
  - Ms. Sonya Williams, Interim Assistant Secretary of Workforce Development, LWC, began her presentation on Disaster Recovery – Lessons Learned from Crises of the Past by providing information on services available from the State of Louisiana, utilization of those services, and rapid reemployment. Louisiana has experience in responding to crises over the last number of years.
  - Ms. Williams discussed the major disasters in Louisiana and disaster declaration processes.
    - Timing is Everything: United States Department of Labor issues
    - Dislocated Worker Grant Opportunity
      - 15 days to submit the application
      - 60 days to submit a fully implemented plan
      - Grant cycle is normally 12-24 months
      - Disaster-relief employment
      - Employment and training services
    - Dislocated Worker Grant (DWG):
      - DWGs are time-limited (discretionary) funding assistance grants in response to major economic dislocations or other events that cause significant impact on states and local areas that exceed the capacity of existing formula funds and other relevant resources.
    - Types of DWGs:
      - Disaster Recovery
      - Employment Recovery
      - Special Population

- Dislocated Service Members
- Disaster Recovery DWG:
  - Provide temporary disaster-relief and humanitarian assistance employment, as well as employment and training services, as appropriate, to minimize the employment and economic impacts of declared disasters and emergency situations in disaster-declared areas.
  - Qualifying Events:
    - Emergencies and major disasters
    - Emergencies or disaster situations of national significance, natural or man-made, that could result in a potentially large loss of employment
    - Relocation of a substantial number of individuals
- Employment Recovery DWG:
  - Provide resources to states and other eligible applicants to respond to major economic dislocations, such as large, unexpected layoff events that cause significant job losses
  - Qualifying Events:
    - Plant closures and mass layoffs
    - Industry-wide layoffs
    - Community impact
    - Closures and realignments of military installations
- Eligibility - Participant:
  - Disaster Recovery DWG:
    - Temporarily or permanently laid off as a consequence of the disaster
    - Dislocated worker as defined in WIOA Section 3(15);
    - Long-term unemployed worker
    - Self-employed individual who became unemployed or significantly underemployed as a result of the disaster or emergency.
- Eligibility - Participant:
  - Employment Recovery DWG:
    - Dislocated worker as defined in WIOA Section 3(15);
    - Civilian employee at a military installation that is being closed, or that will undergo realignment;
    - Individual who is employed in a non-managerial position with a Department of Defense contractor; or

- Member of the Armed Forces who meets certain requirements such as was on active duty or full-time National Guard duty; is separated from active duty or full-time National Guard duty; is not entitled to retired or retained pay; and applies for employment and training assistance within 180 days of that separation.
- Allowable Activities:
  - Disaster-Relief Employment - Clean-up and recovery efforts including demolition, repair, renovation and reconstruction of damaged and destroyed structures, facilities and lands located within the disaster area and in offshore areas related to the emergency or disaster.
  - Humanitarian Assistance - Assistance in the immediate aftermath of the disaster or emergency including actions designed to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity.
  - Employment and Training Services
    - Career services - labor exchange services, initial and comprehensive assessments, development of an individual employment plan, job and supportive service referral, provision of labor market information, etc.
    - Training services - occupational training and work-based including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and customized training.
  - Supportive Services - Transportation, child care, work-related items, personal protective equipment (PPE), etc.
- Impacts of COVID-19:
  - Temporary job loss
  - Permanent job loss
  - Increased dislocated workers and long-term unemployed job seekers
  - Business
    - Retaining workers
    - Adding skilled workers
    - Downsizing production
    - Closing
  - Change in service delivery
    - Increased virtual and tele-activities
- Lessons Learned:
  - Include local workforce development boards and partner agencies during the development of the fully documented plan.

- Establish subgrant contracts with local workforce development boards and/or other service providers (Project Operators) within 45 days and no later than 60 days following funding award.
  - Issue policies and guidance on program services, performance outcomes, and compliance with contracts and agreements.
  - Assess progress monthly and quarterly and establish tracking mechanisms.
  - Clearly identify administrative costs and programmatic costs.
  - Continuously monitor contracts and agreements including Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), worksite agreements, training agreements, and expenditures.
  - Document and track all activities.
  - Identify program leads and program staff to ensure proper management and compliance.
  - Establish strong relationships with partners, especially local governments.
- Challenges:
    - Expenditures were slow at the beginning of the grant cycle.
    - Difficulties in monitoring worksites due to their locations.
    - Problems meeting planned enrollment numbers due to changes in recovery projects.
- Ms. Williams concluded her presentation with a depiction of HIRE, LWC's work-search program that matches unemployed individuals with potential jobs based on education, certifications, employment history, and experience. Ms. Dejoie stated that the State has a DUA grant in the amount of \$34M currently being used to connect unemployed individuals with skills and training for reemployment opportunities.
- Update from the LWC on Unemployment Data with Q/A Dr. Ali Bustamante, Chief Economist, LWC
    - Ms. Dejoie introduced Dr. Ali Bustamante, Chief Economist, LWC. Dr. Bustamante began his presentation by stating that we are currently living in a state of disaster and, unlike other natural disasters, the devastating impacts of this pandemic are not entirely visible.
    - Dr. Bustamante elaborated with the following data during his presentation:
      - The April 2020 unemployment data will not be available until May 22; however, the United States government released its national figures. The national unemployment rate is 14.7%, which is the highest rate since the Great Depression. The Louisiana Monthly Nonfarm Employment total as

of March 2020 is 1,974,000, which represents approximately 20,000 jobs lost since February 2020 (1,994,600). This calculation provides an approximate number of 400,000 jobs lost in the State of Louisiana. This takes Louisiana from a rate of 6.9% to a shocking and record-setting 20%.

- Supply chain disruption and consumer spending drop of 40%
- Dr. Bustamante’s presentation highlighted the State’s weekly UI claims – both initial and continuing – and the top sectors for UI claims. The top three are as follows: Healthcare and Social Assistance (311,197), Retail Trade (221,229), and Accommodation and Food Services (207,408). The State’s largest UI claims as a share of total employment as of May 2, 2020 were as follows: Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (45%), Other Services (except Public Administration) (42%), and Accommodation and Food Services (41%).
- Around the Room: Updates from Select RLC Task Forces:
  - Mr. Will Labar, Co-chair, IT & Communications Task Force
    - Mr. Labar provided an update on the group’s current position on the scope of the RLC’s Charge 1 and Charge 2. Charge 1 is being viewed from an IT & Communications sector to gain an internal perspective on what happened within the sector providers when the pandemic initially hit.
    - Mr. Labar asked the Education Workforce Task Force to provide any critical and urgent actions items related to IT & Communications infrastructure that may result from internal discussions.
    - Relative to Charge 2, the IT & Communications Task Force took a cross-sector approach by establishing liaisons to meet with points of contact from the Education Workforce Task Force. Brief interviews and conversations identified acute, short-term challenges during the distance-learning transition.
    - Mr. Labar indicated that the IT & Communications Task Force identified as a focus area mechanisms that can be created and/or strengthened in an effort to accelerate the creation of a workforce that can contribute to some of the more resilient technology- based jobs in the economy. The IT & Communications Task Force plans to partner with the Education Workforce Task Force to monitor the long-term progress. This data will be beneficial for recommendations provided to the RLC, and especially the Governor. The IT & Communications Task Force has provided five (5) survey questions related to all topics, which will be distributed across the State. Due to budget constraints, organizations are having to cancel long-term digital transformation and technology projects to focus on short-term needs; however, the cancellation of these projects may have long-term mission impacts to organizations. Mr. Labar concluded that the Task

Force plans to identify the initiatives that may or may not weather the storm without additional funding from the CARES Act to sustain the mission.

- Mr. Stephen Toups, liaison for the construction industry
  - Mr. Toups suggested that the key focus is to keep it simple and that Louisiana must be “easy to do business with.” He indicated that Louisiana’s demand has to return and we must attempt to articulate upskilling through higher education and additional certifications without difficulty. Ms. Dejoie responded that these activities can be supported through HIRE, Louisiana Workforce Commission’s work-search program, and salaries can even be subsidized.
  
- Ms. Camille Manning-Broome, Economic and Community Development Task Force,
  - Ms. Manning-Broome stated that the group’s recommendations have been submitted to the RLC. The Economic and Community Development Task Force also developed some key guiding principles to serve as a template for these recommendations. The guiding principles are data-driven and science-based, rooted in best practices, growth-oriented, actionable, equitable, and inclusive. The Task Force has tied the economic recovery/reopening recommendations to health, statistics, and transmission rates, as other states have done. Echoing the need for a centralized data infrastructure. In addition, a substantial number of the recommendations relate to adaptation of businesses, ensuring they are providing consumer and employee confidence. This pandemic is not a normal disaster that transitions from impact to immediate recovery. Science suggests simultaneous response, recovery, and planning for the long-term, going into the ensuing year. The Economic and Community Development Task Force plans to coordinate on any recommendations and looks forward in particular to feedback from the Early Childhood Development Task Force, which is critical to their recommendations, as well.
  
- Ms. Hannah Dietsch, K-12 Task Force,
  - Ms. Dietsch provided a high-level overview, guiding principles, and framework for the process of developing the guidelines and supplemental guidance that early childhood centers (campus and summer schools) will operate under during the transition to Phase I of reopening. The Adaptive Response Group, comprised primarily of medical professionals and public health officials, partnering with industry, began

developing guidelines for different sectors of the economy as the State transitions into phases of reopening. The team at the Department of Education, which oversees child-care centers, collaborated with the Louisiana Department of Health, LSU Health Sciences Center professionals, and a K-12 subgroup 9 of the Early Childhood Development Task Force, to develop the guidance provided.

- Ms. Dietsch stated that the guidance prescribes the operating guidelines for child-care centers, summer schools, summer camps, and extra-curricular activities operating during summer 2020. The guidelines are outlined in three high-level categories:
  - Approach to social distancing in a context that serves students
  - Plans for monitoring students and staff for symptoms
  - Specialized environmental cleaning and hygiene procedures.
- Ms. Dietsch stated that most noteworthy are the guidelines for social distancing. Public health officials have recommended that static groups remain together for the maximum duration of the summer school or camp experience and disallow interaction with any other groups of students or adults, indoors or outdoors. During Phase I, the group size is 10. In Phase II, the group size is 25, and in Phase III, the group size is 50. Facilities with shared spaces, such as cafeterias and art rooms, must be professionally cleaned prior and subsequent to use.
- Ms. Dietsch provided highlights of the recommendations developed in collaboration with the State of Louisiana public health team:
  - Assess symptoms on arrival, including temperature check for all students and adults who enter the facilities.
  - Manage physical space: static groups must pass individually through entry and exit points to prevent congregation of students or adults and the potential for contagion.
  - Restrict contact sports in Phases I and II. Phase III allows contact sports within the static grouping guidelines.
  - Base environmental cleaning and hygiene recommendations on the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC's) recommendations, including hand washing, frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces (bathroom fixtures, door knobs), and cleaning every hour.
- Ms. Dietsch concluded her presentation by commenting on areas requiring supplemental guidance, such as transportation and athletics. There has been a request to further define contact sports, limited contact sports, cleaning of sports equipment, etc.
- Ms. Paula Polito, Early Childhood Development Task Force
  - Ms. Polito stated that children are carriers of COVID-19 and this must be taken into consideration. The child-care industry is starving for

information and employs some of the most vulnerable members of the population. Ms. Polito echoed statements of Ms. Dietsch and stated that the K-12 subgroup of the Task Force met to receive the following guidance:

- Persons with a temperature of 100.4 or above or other signs of illness will not be admitted to the centers.
  - Forwarding information to parents relative to the new guidelines is critical.
  - Isolation and use of disinfectants are important for sick individuals.
  - The group sizes are as follows:
    - Phase I – for infants under 12 months, no more than 5, which is inclusive of teacher and children; for all others (ages 1 and up), the maximum group size is 10.
    - Phase II – Ages 2 and under – follow BESE Bulletin 137 and for all others the maximum group size is 25.
  - Establish Static groups for child care.
  - Change parent pick-up and drop-off to curbside.
  - Screen children and staff upon arrival, with an isolation room available for sick individuals and intensified cleaning.
  - Sanitize toys and bedding and remove toys that are difficult to sanitize.
  - Ensure proper washing, feeding, and holding of children.
  - Teachers must wear masks; babies and toddlers cannot wear masks
  - Ensure proper hand hygiene and washing techniques.
  - Ensure healthy food preparation and meal service. Students will not be allowed to eat in the cafeteria and must eat in their classrooms.
  - In terms of vulnerable and high-risk groups, the Task Force is asking teachers to obtain guidance from physicians before returning to work.
- Task Force member Angie White stated that it is important to market and communicate the wealth of safety protocols to parents who fear for the safety of their children, which may prevent them from returning to work. A previous survey conducted indicated that 43% of parents listed child care as a barrier for employees returning to work.

- Following all Task Force updates and questions, Ms. Dejoie asked for a vote to accept the Task Force recommendations.
  - On motion of Mr. Bruce Busada, seconded by Mr. Stephen Toups, the Education Workforce Task Force voted unanimously to accept the recommendations of the IT & Communications Task Force, the Economic and Community Development Task Force, the K-12 Subcommittee and the Early Childhood Development Subcommittee, and to forward the report to the Resilient Louisiana Commission.
- Open Discussion and Reporting Requirements
  - Mr. Mike Palamone stressed the importance of implementing a rapid re-employment strategy and collaborating with LCTCS as the central point of contact for upskilling and reskilling.
  - Mr. Busada discussed expediting the process of transitioning participants to training providers, and then to employers.
  - Ms. Dejoie stated that Sonya Williams will present a re-employment plan in the future, and work-search will be re-instituted shortly.
  - Dr. Reed joined the Task Force after attending the Appropriations Committee at the Legislative session to discuss higher education's critical role in rapid response to workforce needs and the importance of continuing to support the research and development that will aid in our post-COVID recovery.
  - Dr. Reed stated that members will be sent an email to consider urgent action items, thoughts needing immediate attention, findings, and recommendations. She also noted the need to discuss rapid re-employment efforts and to allow more time in the meeting for active Task Force discussions. The next Resilient Louisiana/Education Workforce Task Force will meet on Wednesday, May 13, at noon.
- Adjournment
  - Secretary Dejoie asked for a vote from the Task Force to adjourn the meeting. On motion of Mr. Busada, seconded by Ms. Brittany Major, the Education Workforce Task Force voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

**The meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.**