



RESILIENT LOUISIANA COMMISSION

CO-CHAIR DON PIERSON

CO-CHAIR TERRIE STERLING

Education and Workforce Task Force

May 13, 2020

Meeting called to order at: 12:00 p.m.

Task Force Members Present:

- Ava Dejoie
- Kim Hunter Reed
- Doretha Bennett
- Bruce Busada
- Julie Cherry
- Camille Conaway
- Wayne Denley
- Hannah Dietsch
- Jason Droddy
- John Fraboni
- Henry Heier
- Paul Helton
- Jim Henderson
- Brittany Major
- Darcy McKinnon
- Kenya Messer
- Andy O'Brien
- Mike Palamone
- Paula Polito
- Janet Pope
- Cynthia Posey
- Shane Riddle
- Grey Stream
- Monty Sullivan
- Stephen Toups
- Angie White
- Tom Yura

- Call to Order, Roll Call and Certification for Lack of Quorum
 - Co-chair Kim Hunter Reed called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. and Ms. Sonya Williams conducted roll call.
 - Dr. Reed established a quorum in accordance with Governor John Bel Edwards' Executive Proclamation 2020-41
- Welcome by Co-Chairs
 - Dr. Reed welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Task Force members for their participation.
 - Dr. Reed began by addressing the charge of the Education Workforce Task Force and the importance of the work in supporting both industry and employee-specific needs as we reopen the economy and the structural redesign necessary in Phase 2 to accelerate workforce redevelopment. Governor Edwards announced on Monday, May 11, 2020 that the State will begin transitioning into Phase I on Friday, May 15, 2020. The bottom line for us is this: how do we support the 350,000+ unemployed individuals in our state and create a more resilient and stronger Louisiana as we advance this work?
 - Dr. Reed asked for approval of the minutes of the May 8, 2020 meeting of the Resilient Louisiana Commission: Education Workforce Task Force. Motion to approve by Mr. Mike Palamone, seconded by Ms. Paula Polito, the Task Force voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the May 8, 2020 meeting of the Resilient Louisiana Commission: Education Workforce Task Force.
- Public Comments
 - Dr. Reed stated that there were no public comments submitted.
- Update from LWC on Unemployment data with Q/A: Dr. Ali Bustamante, Chief Economist, LWC
 - Dr. Bustamante began his presentation with a graphic depicting Over the Year Change in Seated Diners (February 18 to May 11, 2020) for the following states: Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. The sources of the data include OpenTable, online orders, phone reservations, and walk-ins. Louisiana data showed a 100% decline in diners comparing March 2019 and 2020, and the loss continued through March 2020. He also shared seated diner information for the same states from April 24 to May 11, 2020. The data showed a mere increase of 17%, which is evidence that the restaurants in these states are open, yet still suffering. The data is startling and indicates continued challenges for that industry as economies begin to reopen.
 - Dr. Bustamante stated that consumer spending by parish as of April 30, 2020 showed the greatest declines in Orleans Parish and the Baton Rouge metro area, while other parishes actually did not suffer. Consumer spending and restaurant industries have prolonged losses to make up.

- Goldman Sachs provided its forecast report for the next two to three quarters and indicated prolonged bouts of unemployment throughout the country through the third quarter.
- Open discussion of Education and Workforce charge, objectives, drivers of success, data requirements and survey results
 - Dr. Reed stated that a survey was sent to the Education Workforce Task Force members and thanked those who had completed it. Dr. Reed stressed the importance of placing guard rails around the work and understanding the totality of the tasks and assignments placed before the Task Force. She emphasized accelerating success and focusing on the alignment conversation to continue to advance good work. Dr. Reed introduced Ms. Susana Schowen, Director of Workforce Initiatives, LED, to lead the discussion.
 - Ms. Schowen mentioned that the survey is still open and information, ideas, and reports are extremely valuable. A collaborative portal will be hosted and provided by the Board of Regents to upload documents, external reports, and third-party data for review and information-sharing. Ms. Schowen began the presentation with the Economic Workforce Development draft vision and framing principles provided to the Task Force, along with the survey.
 - Vision: Reinvigorate the Louisiana economy and maximize employment through strong, responsive, and aligned postsecondary and workforce development programs and policies.
 - Objectives:
 - Promote speedy reemployment and facilitation to reconnect employers with laid-off workers
 - Support reemployment strategies focused on family-sustaining careers with upward mobility
 - Increase the resiliency and stability of jobs during crises
 - Ignite the new Louisiana economy through phased talent development strategies that will improve outcomes, increase equity and strengthen Louisiana's ready workforce
 - Focus on strategic uses of technology to deliver postsecondary coursework and assist the workforce to engage in a restarted economy, keeping in mind the need to erase the state's digital divide
 - Prioritize public health and safety at all times
 - Recognize and assess the interdependence of these goals and their importance to Louisiana's future resilience through sustainability and accountability measures
 - Drivers of Success:

- Maximizing robust workforce development efforts based on coordination among education, state industry specialists, businesses, and economic development offices
- Engaging data-driven policymaking that employs labor market information
- Evolving and modernizing the education system to offer high-quality, competency-based instruction, including career and technical education, while maintaining public safety
- Promoting widespread adoption of innovative work-based learning programs and practices, including on-the-job training, registered apprenticeship, customized training, and incumbent worker training to enhance the talent pool available to employers and reduce financial burdens in hiring, training and retaining workers
- Emphasizing efficient, competency-based learning models that shorten time to completion and assist dislocated workers in obtaining rapid reemployment
- Promoting the alignment and coordination of funding streams, including WIOA funds, CARES Act investments, and state funding, along with financial incentive programs, to support education to employment including work-based learning
- Developing and implementing ongoing evaluation and improvement plans to continually respond to rapidly shifting dynamics in the economy
- Data Requirements
 - Phases and timelines for reopening, prioritization of activities within each phase, and relevant public health metrics
 - Detailed data on obstacles to re-employment
 - Detailed data on job openings from multiple sources
 - Skills needed, both new skills related to COVID-19 and upskilling to improve the current workforce, assessments to evaluate these skills, and identification of populations to be trained
 - Long-term projections and modeling tools to develop scenario-based strategic plans
 - Gaps and opportunities
- Charge 1: Crisis Response. To issue industry-specific recommendations to respond to crisis needs as they evolve and help safely implement any COVID-19-related orders of the Governor
 - Charge 1 Outcome: Comprehensive Game Plan for a Resilient Louisiana: Crisis Response Phase

- Charge 2: Long-Term Resilience. To examine Louisiana’s economic vulnerability and build a long-term comprehensive game plan for a more resilient future Louisiana economy.
 - Charge 2 Outcome: Comprehensive Game Plan for a Resilient Louisiana: Long-Term Phase
- Ms. Schowen stated that these two charges were provided to all fifteen (15) Task Forces by the Resilient Louisiana Commission (RLC). The primary function of the RLC is to provide recommendations from industry-sector task forces to Governor Edwards that will aid in illuminating and informing his decisions for transition phases to reopen the economy beginning on Friday, May 15, 2020. The role of the Education and Workforce Task Force is not to determine how the education and workforce development industry sectors are going to reopen, but primarily to understand how the reopening of the other sectors affects our work as education and workforce development professionals, and how we must respond. The reporting requirements will also appear different than those of other task forces.
 - Regarding Charge 1: Crisis Response, the industry-specific task forces were asked to provide recommendations for the reopening, and there will continue to be recommendations from those task forces that will inform the phases of reopening. We need to produce a comprehensive strategy for a resilient Louisiana to constitute a set of recommendations to the Governor for policy changes on a model for the reopening phases. Ms. Schowen echoed Dr. Bustamante in highlighting the magnitude and scope of the real-time crisis we are currently facing. Businesses are struggling to reopen and they need employees, while the unemployed need jobs, though many jobs are not coming back. How do we help people find new careers? We must focus on mitigating the crisis while maximizing the economic potential for our employers by providing excellent workers who have been dislocated and are seeking refuge. Ms. Schowen stressed that the Charge 1: Crisis Response strategy must be completed by the end of May.
 - Charge 2: Long-Term Resilience is very different from the immediate, crisis response, and the RLC is designing a template and some required elements for the upcoming report, to focus on building a more resilient future Louisiana economy. While this is a long-term view, there is a sense of urgency, with those reports due at the end of June. Charge 2 takes us from the old to a new Louisiana economy, and we must spread the benefits of a reigniting economy to our people. A key focus is the transformative redesign of Louisiana’s education and workforce development systems, such as apprenticeships, residency concepts, and competency-based programs, while balancing public safety. These promising programs will be challenging to implement in the current

environment of social distancing and mitigation, but there is sense of urgency to collaborate on the themes outlined for development of ideas within the timeframe. Charge 2: Long-Term Resilience must be completed by the end of June.

- Over half of the Task Force members responded to the survey and the major themes were outlined prior to the Task Force discussion.
- Themes Emerging from the Survey Responses: Top Concerns:
 - Alignment of education and training with needs of employers in the new economy
 - Availability of childcare connected to concerns about pay
 - Overall equity in employment and pay
 - Digital divide
 - Need data: who is hiring and for what, what is happening now, what is changing?
 - Reemploy rapidly with safe, speedy, responsive training, including OJT
 - New opportunities
 - Coordination, communication
- Themes and Task Force Member Discussion:
 - Alignment and data
 - Education and training in the new normal: safety, speed, responsiveness, innovation
 - Coordinated efforts
 - WDBs
 - LWC Industry Sector Specialists
 - Economic development
 - Education and training providers
 - Industry
 - Communication
 - Digital divide
 - Childcare
 - Equity everywhere
- Around the Room – Updates from Select RLC Task Forces
 - Ms. Schowen asked Ms. Angie White, North Louisiana Economic Partnership, to share information on hiring opportunities in north Louisiana. Ms. White mentioned that she reached out to colleagues in other regional economic development organizations for information, and also sent out a survey to area businesses to analyze the impacts of the pandemic, specifically around workforce. The majority of responses came from businesses with fewer than 100 employees; approximately 26-30% expected layoffs. However, while a little more than half expect these jobs to be reinstated, 47% believe it is too early to predict. Given the significant revenue declines expected, there is a large uncertainty about the ability to bring all workers

- back. Approximately 20-25% noted that skills are a critical need in industrial and skill-trade occupations, such as machinists, welders, fabricators, maintenance technicians, production workers, millwrights, etc. Additional responses regarding needed areas included commercial drivers' licenses, and broad administrative/professional-type technical services. Computer usage skills were also noted as essential, given that society was thrust into a remote-learning position
- by the pandemic. Ms. White also noted that worker-training grants may be used by companies in the future to ensure their workers are better trained in the event of another crisis.
 - Ms. White stated that childcare is a barrier to employees trying to return to work, especially in Phase 2. All of the regional economic development organizations are heavily interested in advocating for childcare resources. The organizations are also continuing to push the existing workforce and talent initiatives that were a high priority prior to the pandemic, as there is still a significant need.
 - Ms. White recommended One Acadiana, which has a website designed to help pair displaced workers with industry and retraining opportunities. Greater New Orleans, Inc. (GNO, Inc.) has similar matching programs it launched to connect companies and industries with job seekers. Ms. White indicated that her office is engaging work-ready community teams, which were originally created to push work keys. Ensuring all of these regional entities are working toward a common goal is very valuable as the State moves forward.
 - Ms. White continued that her team uses Emsi for workforce analysis in demonstrating job demands over the last three (3) years in the region. Research data points to career transition, which allows for more resilience for families, such as healthcare with short-term training and high-need job postings. This provides the impetus to place a large amount of effort into career counseling in high-demand areas. Every industry needs information technology, such as the cyber-security and remote working connectivity; however, this area has been more difficult to track.
 - Ms. Schowen stated that GNO, Inc. indicated that many restaurant and hospitality jobs are not coming back quickly. However, there is a potential for hiring in the manufacturing and IT areas, so transitioning service-oriented positions into those positions represents an enormous immediate opportunity that deserves attention.
 - Ms. Schowen spoke on education and training in the new normal: safety, speed, responsiveness, and innovation. She wishes to ensure that attention is given to braiding funding streams and ensuring that CARES Act funding is being utilized to its maximum potential in caring for the citizens of Louisiana. Ms. Schowen asked Monty Sullivan, LCTCS system president, to offer comments.
 - Dr. Sullivan spoke of a previous experience with a 2005-06 \$20M grant that connected one-time federal funding to ongoing revenue for the State of Louisiana subsequent to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Over 16,000 individuals were provided vouchers to become trained and certified in various construction fields for rebuilding

- the coast of Louisiana. Individuals began to earn a living, thereby paying taxes and stimulating the economy.
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 - Dr. Sullivan stated that he is currently working with regional stakeholders on developing a \$40M proposal called REBOOTING Louisiana. The focus of the proposal is similar to the previous project; however, the sectors would extend far beyond construction to focus on the highest-demand certifications to support training for Louisiana displaced workers at no cost to individuals and without red tape. This is a rapid response that is necessary for getting people back to work, and we must acknowledge that this should be conducted at a regional level because all economics are regional. The funds will not be used as infrastructure for training programs, but instead as a voucher for individuals who are Louisiana citizens and unemployed or under-employed. This \$40M investment would fund at least 20,000 individuals to become certified and trained to stimulate the economy. Over a period of one year (FY 2021-22), this group of individuals would generate roughly \$50M in tax revenue for the State of Louisiana, according to Dr. Sullivan.
 - Mr. Paul Helton, FastStart, LED, stated that we must become more intentional and deliberate in our mission to include industry partners in this initiative. High-skill, high-wage jobs cannot be filled with short-term certificates/certifications alone. He highlighted the importance of internships, apprenticeships, etc., to ensure that

- individuals are earning while learning, thereby allowing them to access funds to support their families, living conditions, and housing.
- Dr. Reed asked Dr. Bustamante if the State of Louisiana can support the educational journey of an individual who is displaced without that person losing unemployment benefits. Dr. Bustamante stated that the State of Louisiana has waivers for persons pursuing educational or training programs so they can maintain their unemployment benefits while in the process of training/upskilling. The CARES Act funding will expire July 31, 2020, so there is opportunity to target educational pursuits during this time period.
 - Ms. DeJoie stated that there are groups urging LWC to reinstate the work-search requirement, to ensure that when someone refuses employment, their benefits will be stopped. It is a balancing act.
 - Ms. Schowen mentioned that we must remember our four-year colleges, institutional education partners, and non-traditional education partners. They are part of the workforce development sphere.
 - Dr. Reed provided the following highlights from the discussion:
 - Understand industries that will lead and lag in terms of employers coming back, as well as skills match and educational awareness.
 - Understand the impact of benefits on consumer behavior.
 - Identify partnerships, local boards, LMA, regional economic development, education providers, and the requirements, rules, and regulations that we can accelerate.
 - Target messaging to ensure that individuals who are displaced know there is a place for them, and assist them in navigating that as easily as possible.
 - Ms. Schowen introduced Mr. John Fraboni, Operation Spark. Mr. Fraboni stated that most of their work is borderless, meaning there are no physical constraints on where work is actually performed. Software engineering provides an opportunity to diversify work in the economy. Foreign countries, such as Costa Rica, are stimulating their economy with the same borderless concepts.
 - Ms. Schowen led a discussion on the need for coordinated efforts. Ms. DeJoie stated that the LWC's HIRE website should be Louisiana's job board, where job postings are listed, thereby eliminating missed opportunities for job seekers. She stated that this can be a coordinated effort.
 - Ms. Schowen mentioned that one of the concerns is a set of proliferating data relationships and data sources that people are utilizing. It is critical for the Education Workforce Task Force to have this conversation to ensure that all groups are in alignment. The Task Force must look at coordinated efforts within all of these themes to streamline work with no duplication of effort and ensure that pockets of knowledge are not unavailable to other partners.

- Mr. Henry Heier, State Apprenticeship Council, LWC, recommended registered apprenticeship programs. He stated that these programs have been available for 80+ years in the construction and non-construction industries, and are proven low-cost training solutions that work.
- Mr. Palamone mentioned the need for conversation about daycare programs attached to training centers as well as funding mechanisms and supportive services.
- Ms. Dejoie elaborated on Mr. Palamone's statements and discussed the need for high-quality childcare. She introduced the concept of universities and technical colleges as innovators, allowing work-study students, on-the-job-training, and students partnering with operators and facilitators to focus on sustaining childcare in the State. Sanitation and sanitizing facilities would also be a huge part of the humanitarian response for safety.
- In response to a question, Ms. Hannah Dietsch, Louisiana Department of Education, also discussed a set of materials and a plan called STRONG START 2020, the framework for a strategic plan meant to guide K-12 school systems toward starting the 2020-21 academic year on a strong footing in light of school facilities' closures at the end of 2019-20. The department has surveyed school districts on their plans. The survey is due back at the end of May, so Ms. Dietsch will report those results back to the Task Force.
- Ms. Polito referenced Mr. Palamone's statements regarding childcare. She mentioned that there are great efforts happening locally with partnerships for potential childcare employees to obtain training. There is a robust system in place and an accountability system that speaks to quality and what that quality looks like.
- Darcy McKinnon offered insight on strategizing early childcare work and mentioned that childcare is a key component of leveraging the economy. The Agenda for Children would be a great partner, as it has been in the sector for a long time, with a rating system and training program. This group is familiar with every childcare center in southeast Louisiana. Another suggestion was for a partnership with Children and Families.
- Ms. Polito shared that there are lead agencies throughout Louisiana working with the accountability system and these agencies would be a great way to connect with those centers to create meaningful partnerships. Dr. Reed stated that, in reference to Phase I of the reopening, this will provide us with data on what is happening in terms of childcare centers reopening.
- Ms. Schowen moved on to discuss equity. She stated that equity was identified as a major priority for the Task Force in a number of different contexts. It is not a separate concept, nor is it a separate group of people working to determine ways of addressing questions of equity. Equity is woven into every solution, strategy, and proposal that the Task Force develops and is considered a high priority.
- Ms. Schowen asked Task Force members to volunteer their time to analyze the four different topic areas by sending an email to Emily Skaikay at

- emily.skaikay@laregents.edu. She also asked the Task Force to collaborate with small groups within the Task Force on the questions discussed and bring them back for further discussion.
- Education Workforce Taskforce: Actions Needed Now
 - Alignment and Data
 - Action: Develop coordinated strategy for collecting and sharing data on job openings, requirements, and shifting employment trends.
 - Next Step: Create an alignment and data group to form recommendations on:
 - Collecting and sharing data on jobs and requirements in the recovery phase
 - Coordinating efforts of stakeholders in collecting data
 - Understanding shifting demands in the new economy going forward
 - Education and Training in the New Normal
 - Action: Develop an asset map and set of best practices for safe, speedy, innovative, responsive training and education.
 - Next Step: Create group to survey current landscape, identify best practices and resources, including digital resources, CARES Act, OJT, and others.
 - Digital Divide
 - Action: Other RLC Task Forces have made recommendations.
 - Next Step: Create group to:
 - Review other task forces' reports and coordinate as needed to understand their recommendations
 - Determine whether to support existing and/or develop new recommendations to the Governor and other decision-makers.
 - Childcare
 - Action: Other RLC Task Forces have made recommendations/
 - Next Step: Create group to:
 - Review other task forces' reports and coordinate as needed to understand their recommendations; and
 - Determine whether to support existing and/or develop new recommendations to the Governor and other decision-makers.
- Ms. Schowen stated that the digital divide recommendation is also being made by the other task forces. Therefore, she suggested the initial task of this group would be to visit the RLC website and review the recommendations of the other fourteen (14) RLC task forces to identify whether we should support these recommendations or develop our own initial recommendations relative to the digital divide. This is an

- area in which recommendations to the Governor and other entities are likely more paramount than most other areas of our enterprise.
- As a summary, Ms. Schowen stated that equity needs to be addressed throughout these four (4) conversations, and to consider how communication fits into the conversation. We must consider whether the best approach is to develop communication strategies tied to particular themes or an entire comprehensive communication strategy.
 - Wrap-up, Closing Remarks and Adjournment
 - Dr. Reed thanked the Task Force members for their attendance, insightful engagement, and robust conversation. She stated that the minutes will be forwarded to the group, a link to the RLC website will be provided, and the next meeting for Education Workforce Task Force will be held Wednesday, May 20, 2020 at noon.
 - Dr. Reed asked for a vote from the Task Force to adjourn the meeting. Motion by Mr. Stephen Toups, seconded by Mr. Bruce Busada, the Education Workforce Task Force voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Acknowledgement and adjournment at 1:50 p.m.