



RESILIENT LOUISIANA COMMISSION

CO-CHAIR DON PIERSON

CO-CHAIR TERRIE STERLING

Education and Workforce Task Force

May 20, 2020

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

Task Force Members Present:

- Ava Dejoie, Co-chair
- Kim Hunter Reed, Co-chair
- Doretha Bennett
- Bruce Busada
- Ali Bustamante
- 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
- Markey Pierre (Janet Pope) Susana Schowen
- Monty Sullivan
- Stephen Toups
- Angie White
- Lisa Vosper
- Sonya Williams
- 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 Sonya Williams conducted roll call.
 - Dr. Reed established a quorum in accordance with Governor John Bel Edwards' Executive Proclamation 2020-41
- Welcome by Co-Chair(s) Dr. Kim Hunter Reed, Commissioner of Higher Education, Louisiana Board of Regents (LBoR)
 - Dr. Reed welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Task Force for their participation.
 - Dr. Reed began by reminding the public that they are encouraged to share any comments via email at resilientlouisiana@la.gov or by calling 888-204-5984 code #1755460. This information is on the agenda and posted to the website. As we address the immediate needs of Louisiana in Phase I, we must focus on the structural redesign that will allow us to have a stronger alignment between education and workforce. Dr. Reed stated that the Task Force members were asked to participate because of their professional expertise and experiences. The thoughts and ideas generated from this Task Force will enrich the opportunities presented for conducting superior work on behalf of the great State of Louisiana.
- Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting
 - Dr. Reed asked for approval of the minutes from the May 13, 2020 meeting of the Resilient Louisiana Commission / Education Workforce Task Force.
 - On motion of Jason Droddy, seconded by Paul Helton, the Task Force voted unanimously to accept the minutes from the May 13, 2020, meeting of the Resilient Louisiana Commission / Education Workforce Task Force.
- Public Comments
 - Dorian Nunez submitted the following public comment:
 - “Louisiana, last in financial literacy, should engage college students now to get certificates in industry, i.e. real estate and insurance licenses, and engage HBCUs and community colleges. While unemployment is high, aid people to become self-employed (entrepreneurship). Also, it is hard to leave unemployment and return to work when health insurance is not available; this is a big obstacle.”
 - Dr. Reed thanked Dorian Nunez for the public comments and stated that they will be forwarded to the Task Force for review.
- Update from the LWC on Unemployment Data with Q&A
 - Dr. Reed welcomed Dr. Ali Bustamante, Chief Economist, Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC).
 - Dr. Bustamante began his presentation with a series of graphics:
 - *Louisiana Monthly Employment Rate (January 1976 to March 2020)*. This graphic depicts the current state of our economy, but the record highs

and low labor force participation rates are not yet available. On Friday May 22, 2020, Louisiana will have updated labor market data on the unemployment rate and significant job losses. The national unemployment rate is 14.7% -- the highest on record. Nationally, we have the greatest number of unemployed persons on record, and the lowest labor force participation rate on record.

- *Louisiana Unemployment Insurance Claims and Total Employment: May 9, 2020:* This graphic provides updated figures for the most publicly available unemployment compensation figures. Healthcare and Social Assistance (311,197), Retail Trade (221,229), and Accommodation and Food Services (207,408) have shed a significant number of jobs leading to mass unemployment. However, this pandemic-driven recession has affected all industries, some disproportionately.
- *Louisiana Unemployment Claims Share of Total Employment: May 9, 2020:* Arts and Recreation (44%) and Accommodation and Food Services (42%) are being disproportionately impacted. Based on previously reported employment levels, when comparing levels of unemployment compensation claims—continued claims and initial claims—they comprise approximately 40% + of labor force in these particular industries. However, there are other industries being disproportionately impacted, as well, such as information technology and construction.
- *Louisiana Weekly Continued Claims Growth by Industry (March 14 – May 9, 2020) – Vulnerable Industries:* When viewing how the disproportionate impact the pandemic has had on unemployment compensation across various industries, it provides insight on which industries will face the brunt of the pandemic. The data shows which industries have been more resilient, relatively sensitive, or vulnerable to this pandemic. This does not translate to other natural disasters, such as hurricanes, etc. Experiences in Louisiana provide a national perspective on identifying the main, vulnerable industries, which are those that have experienced over a 30x increase in the level of unemployment compensation claims. There are industries, such as Educational Services and Healthcare and Social Assistance, that have been uniquely impacted by the pandemic in ways that they would otherwise not be. Healthcare and Social Assistance suffers due to the decline in outpatient and elective surgeries and the closing of physicians' offices. Educational Services is suffering from a decline in the ancillary subindustries of K-12 and higher education.
- *Louisiana Weekly Continued Claims Growth by Industry (March 14 – May 9, 2020) – Sensitive Industries:* Sensitive Industries have about 15x to less than 30x increase in unemployment claims received at LWC. We are

seeing Management of Companies and Enterprise, Information, Real Estate, Rental, & Leasing, Transportation and Warehousing, Wholesale Trade, Mining, and Administrative and Waste Services. These industries have been less impacted by the pandemic but have not escaped it. In some cases, particularly mining, it is due to other forces, particularly the declining price of oil globally. There is ample space for mediation for facilitating reemployment in these particular industries. Unlike the more vulnerable industries previously identified in this pandemic, these employment losses can be regained with certain considerable interventions.

- *Louisiana Weekly Continued Claims Growth by Industry (March 14 – May 9, 2020) – Resilient Industries:* Resilient Industries have experienced less than 15x the increase in unemployment compensation claims. By definition, they seem to be resilient to the shocks of the pandemic, particularly Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, Utilities, and Public Administration. These are core industries that are expected to thrive because they are independent to the pandemic shocks reverberating throughout our economy. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, Manufacturing, and Construction are more insulated as they operate on longer-term horizons and remain not impacted by very quick fluctuations in business activity. It is important to note that although these industries have ultimately been not impacted by the pandemic, these industries are good paying, sustainable jobs for families. These are the key industries labeled as resilient and fundamentally sound in the face of a pandemic and other economic impact shocks. When contemplating proposed interventions, we can segment the interventions that promote jobs in resilient industries that lead for greater resiliency in the more vulnerable and sensitive industries, particularly those capable of escaping the negative impact shocks from the pandemic and other natural and human-made disasters. How do we mediate the effects of it with the Cares Act, the strong federal response, and the great response from the Louisiana Board of Regents (LBoR), LWC, and our K-12 institutions? We have been able to continue many services despite the impacts. Something for the Task Force to consider is not a one-size-fits-all approach to increasing resiliency, as we know that many industries are experiencing this pandemic in a number of various ways.
- Task Force Questions:
 - Question: Jason Droddy asked Dr. Bustamante, regarding the Accommodations and Food Services Workforce, if there is a way to separate the New Orleans convention business vs. local restaurants.

- Answer: Dr. Bustamante stated that LWC has the ability to break it down by industry and parish. Dining establishments (full-service and non-full-service) and bars are driving the Food Accommodations industry. These are the bulk of the claims, not just Orleans Parish but statewide.
- Question: Mr. Droddy asked Dr. Bustamante if there is a way to differentiate the reasons for unemployment claims since the Task Force's charge has one component related to COVID-19, but the long-term is actually not.
 - Answer: Dr. Bustamante stated that LWC has that capacity and due to the federal response, they were actually able to filter out the claims that are COVID-19 related, as well as non-COVID-19-related.
- Question: Mr. Droddy asked why the Information Technology sector is taking a hit.
 - Answer: Dr. Bustamante stated they are still exploring the reasons with industry-sector specialists. However, the broader recession, as other industries have been affected, has channeled and affected this particular sector leading to declines.
- Question: Monty Sullivan asked what job demand looked like pre-COVID-19 vs. the definition for job demand now, particularly as it relates to active hiring.
 - Answer: Dr. Bustamante stated that next week, he hopes to provide job market information reflecting data prior to March 15, particularly the two-month period between January 15 and March 15 vs. the two-month period post COVID-19. People are either being recalled back to their private jobs or people in the business community are actually posting new jobs. Therefore, reviewing the jobs posting data, as well as location of where continued claims are being diminished by industry and parish, should aid in identifying which industries or occupations were already on a downward spiral.
- Question: Dr. Reed asked Dr. Bustamante if there is way to predict if the vulnerable industries will bounce back faster or transition slower?
 - Answer: Dr. Bustamante stated that the LWC has a growth trajectory index for the graphics depicted. Accommodation and Food Services, Arts and Recreation, and Retail Trade are still sloping upward in when it comes to these continued unemployment claims, so these reductions are not yet visible for individuals currently on the unemployment compensation rolls. However, sensitive and resilient industries indicate a plateau or an actual decline, particularly in the sensitive industries that have experienced the worst. Some industries are improving at a much faster clip than others.
- Update on EWD Member Survey and Comments
 - Dr. Reed introduced Susana Schowen, Director of Workforce Initiatives, LED FastStart to note the survey comments and lead the discussion.

- Ms. Schowen began the discussion by stating that the RLC's longer-term report is intended to be released on July 1, 2020 and the RLC has asked for the Education and Workforce Task Force's input by June 12, 2020. Critical, time-sensitive questions are:
 - What are we doing right now to address the crisis?
 - What are we planning to do?
 - What do we need to do, but need help with?
 - Specifically, are there needs that must be addressed with CARES Act funding?
 - Are there policy barriers preventing us from addressing critical needs?
- Ms. Schowen stated that IT broadband has shown up in almost every Task Force's research, so the Task Force must identify the issues that are specific to education and workforce when it comes to the technology, and how equity relates to that issue. There have also been recommendations made relative to centralized procurement systems. There are minimal changes in terms of the themes elevated last week, with the exception of alignment and the digital divide.
- Child care and equity are also providing a clear consensus of critical needs. The survey indicated concerns relative to communications and marketing, and it is very important that each subgroup consider communications and any needed marketing efforts within their own work.
- Subgroup Reports and Updates with Q&A
 - Mike Palamone provided a comprehensive two-phase approach to rapid re-employment. Phase one consists of traditional training, which is current practice with an anticipated return of those jobs in the latter part of this coming year. The second phase consists of exploring linkage between K-12 and postsecondary education, focusing on those prospective students who are eligible to be trained, and putting them into jobs right after they complete high school. Mr. Palamone discussed funding mechanisms for certifications and degree programs by collaborating with Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) on IBC-type trainings, and long-term programs would be similar to Pell Grants, thereby allowing for associate-type degrees through LCTCS.
 - Mr. Palamone talked of developing a communication protocol to market the information on opportunities of careers, and creating or enhancing a pipeline to receive those job opportunities in the industries within their region. Industrial representatives can collect data on available jobs and report back to the boards. He also suggested that Louisiana Calling be invited to conduct a presentation to the Task Force relative to promoting jobs, in the traditional sense, that do not require a four-year degree, however, but could require IBC training or an associate's degree. The conversation evolved into further discussion regarding WIBs and collaboration with LCTCS to streamline the process of an individual jobseeker looking for a career, a job, improving their job, or obtaining

additional training. Mr. Palamone made it clear that LCTCS will not be engaging in the benefits portion of what WIBs provide, however, does wish to be engaged in the workforce portion. This process has been very successful in the Lafayette area and he will ask someone to provide an overview at the next meeting detailing the process and providing some statistics on the results.

- This two-phase approach streamlines the process when an applicant walks into an arena with both LCTCS and WIBs present, sitting at the same table and working with this individual. He suggested we move quickly, to have this system in place by the third quarter of this year. We must also ensure that our IT broadband systems are working, especially in the rural areas.
- *Early Childhood COVID-19 Updates:* Paula Polito began her discussion with a presentation entitled Early Childhood COVID-19 Updates. She noted that the department had prepared a host of resources to support schools, child care providers and lead agencies. She also walked through the details of the guidance that has been developed and shared to ensure the health and safety of children and staff.
 - *Early Childhood Strong Start 2020 Overview:* Louisiana has made considerable progress in unifying and strengthening its early childhood system and has been focused on three key priorities for early childhood: increasing early childhood classroom quality, expanding access for economically disadvantaged families, and supporting local governance.
 - The Early Childhood Strong Start 2020 planning guide provides priorities that early childhood communities and sites should use to ensure a strong start to the 2020-2021 school year and that this important work continues.
 - As the coordinators and leaders of early childhood community networks, early childhood lead agencies should develop and captain the implementation of a community-wide plan for reopening early childhood programs.
 - *Early Childhood Planning Guide:* To support the work of early childhood communities as they plan for recovery, the Department has released the Strong Start 2020 Early Childhood Planning Guide.
 - The Strong Start 2020 Planning Guide describes the priorities communities should consider and guidance regarding available funding sources, including:
 - COVID-19 Community Child Care Recovery Grants
 - A second round of Louisiana Child Care Assistance Provider (LaCAP) Relief Grants

- Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSERF)
- Additional Strong Start Topics of Discussion:
 - COVID-19 Child Care Community Recovery Grants
 - LaCAP Relief Grants
 - Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund
 - Planning Priorities Overview
 - Health, Safety, and Operations
 - Sustaining and Expanding Access
 - Classroom Quality and Continuous Learning
 - Family Engagement and Support
- Angie White provided updates on her subgroup findings and stated that the subgroup has three main action items. The first item is discussion, collecting and sharing data and job requirements in the recovery phase. The second is coordinating efforts of stakeholders in collecting data. The third is understanding shifting demand in the new economy going forward. She stated that the Louisiana Job Connection website has an outward focus that promotes migration from other states for external candidates. However, Ms. White recommended that the Louisiana Workforce Commission's (LWC) HIRE website be the primary go-to site for job seekers in Louisiana. She suggested a user-guide to aid job seekers in navigating the HIRE website. She asked and was informed that the HIRE website does allow for dual registration for HIRE and unemployment insurance under one username and password. Ms. White stated that the user experience is going to make or break whether or not jobseekers stick with HIRE. It must be as simple a process as possible. Everyone has a vested interest in sharing how people can find jobs, including non-profits and other state agencies. This must be communicated and marketed through media, etc., as everyone receives their information through different channels and forms of communication.
- Paul Helton began his discussion by stating that the digital divide issue is well-documented. Wayne Denley and Mr. Helton collaborated and narrowed four basic issues with the digital divide in Louisiana, specifically: (1) policy, (2) politics, (3) technical, and (4) infrastructure. From the perspective of Education Workforce Development being able to reskill and deliver the training that is needed, short-term and long-term, they identified two significant opportunities available. (1) The Broadband for Everyone in Louisiana (BEL) Commission has a plan in place to implement broadband in the rural areas, however, the target date extends to 2029. This must be one of those areas we aid in expediting and providing to support that plan.
- Mr. Helton stated that he is a member of the Louisiana Optical Network Initiative (LONI) Management Council. (2) The perspective of LONI falls into the politics and

- policy issues, and the perception is that LONI is limited to education and research use only. However, the policy does not prescribe education and research limitations, and the structure does provide for public sector use. Higher Education is connected to LONI, but very few K-12 sectors are involved. The use of Universal Service Fund monies, politics, and control of infrastructure are factors. Overall, there is no prohibition for LONI to be used or expanded across K-12 or any of other public sector.
- Wayne Denley asked that all Task Forces urge the BEL Commission to create urgency within their work and a new timeline. We have a much more urgent situation and taking ten (10) years to complete that task will not be acceptable. Schools and libraries were on their list of broadband priorities.
 - Markey Pierre added to the broadband discussion. She stated that the barriers in the K-12 industry are being addressed by the current legislation written by Senator Mizell (SB 406), which allows for use of existing servitudes from electrical co-ops. This is extremely helpful because they do not have to perform the actual digging. Additionally, there are some Senate concurrent resolutions encouraging Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) to identify those digital areas for the broadband companies.
 - RLC Task Force Review Reports
 - Hannah Dietsch brought to the committee additional guidance for their review noting that the previously approved guidance did not address transportation or athletics. Ms. Dietsch provided those updates. The previously approved memorandum from the Department of Health includes an additional set of guidelines from Public Health relative to safe transportation of students and adults on school buses. It also provides an update to the previously reviewed and approved supplemental guidance that is published under the Department of Education's cover as a supplemental guidance that now includes an updated section around transportation. Also included is a stand-alone memorandum that was developed in partnership with the Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA), which includes detailed guidance around athletics. Most notable is an updated categorization of contact in high-risk sports and activities, and then non-contact sports and activities that are safe this summer, with modifications that are also included in that document. The documents and the guidance were reviewed and approved by the K-12 subgroup of the Education and Workforce Task Force on Monday, May 18, 2020. As a starting point for Phase I of summer operations, the Department of Education will review the guidance again before it is included in guidance relative to the 2020-21 AY.
 - Mr. Drodgy asked if there are penalties for non-compliance of the athletic guidelines? Ms. Dietsch and her colleague, Ken Bradford, stated that any LHSAA penalties for non-compliance of guidance is something that would come from LHSAA. Dr. Reed asked for a vote to receive the Early Childhood Report, and to

- forward it to the Resilient Louisiana Commission to be placed on their agenda for consideration on Friday.
- On motion of Brittany Major, seconded by Markey Pierre, the Education and Workforce Task Force voted unanimously to accept the Report and forward it to the Resilient Louisiana Commission for consideration.
- Around the Room: Updates from Education & Training Partners on Action Steps during the Crisis Phase with Q&A
- Dr. Kenya Messer provided a presentation entitled LAICU: Education and Workforce During COVID-19 highlighting the work of the state's 10 regionally accredited, nonprofit private colleges and universities. These entities are Centenary College, Dillard University, Franciscan Missionaries of Our Lady University, Louisiana College, Loyola University New Orleans, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, Saint Joseph Seminary College, Tulane University, University of Holy Cross, and Xavier University of Louisiana. LAICU Colleges and Universities are comprised of the following diverse institutions types:
 - Small Liberal Arts
 - Faith Based & Seminaries
 - HBCUs
 - Research
 - Dr. Messer noted that our sector is a driver of the state's economic activity, job creation and supplier to the talent pipeline with graduates entering the workforce and graduate school. However, anticipated drops in enrollment risk private higher ed's contributions to grow the economy. Notwithstanding the present challenges, LAICU Colleges and Universities invest in students and encourage students to invest in themselves. As Critical Infrastructure during the pandemic our focus has been ensuring the following:
 - Providing access for all students, faculty and staff to successfully transition to remote learning
 - Support from the state to students with TOPS and SAP flexibility has been essential (removing barriers and burdens)
 - Relief from the CARES Act and additional funding is important so that students can continue to their degree progress and eventual degree completion Critical Infrastructure during the pandemic our focus has been ensuring the following:
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 - Relief from the CARES Act and additional funding is important so that students can continue to their degree progress and eventual degree completion
 - Promoting the talent pipeline to get students to work after graduation

- Mentorship and advising to connect students to internships and HIPS
- Connecting working students to jobs and resources to help them get back to work
- LAICU – Education and Workforce COVID-19
 - Consistency of learning – student support and faculty support/professional development- strengthen and invest in technology - planning for Summer and safely re-opening in the Fall
 - Continual assessment of the HIED landscape - understanding credentials and competencies and alignment of credentials and competencies
 - Innovate, adapt and collaborate - accelerated degree programs, certification and rapid response training programs, articulation agreements, engaging employers
 - Responsiveness and relevancy- connecting available workers to resources and jobs (campuses and the greater community)
 - Research – vaccine, causes, cure, health disparities, etc.
- Mr. Drodgy provided a report from LSU in three parts: (1) effort-to-date, (2) return-to-school plan, and (3) innovation during COVID-19. LSU physicians and professionals from both health sciences centers in New Orleans and Shreveport use their expertise and practical knowledge to affect progress in the direct fight against COVID and the deployment of the latest treatments and information from the around the world. The flagship campus converted the Pete Maravich Assembly Center into a PPE factory producing more than 20,000 reusable gowns, 100,000 face shields, and barrels upon barrels of hand sanitizer. The LSU Agricultural Center rushed into action to fill the curricular void of students who are no longer engaged in school, and collective nursing, healthcare professional, and medical programs expedited graduation of their students. LSU National Center for Biological Research and Training created a COVID-19- related training program for law enforcement and first responders, and also teamed with the state to create a contact tracing center. LSU online has made available more micro-credentials for those wanting to skill or upskill, as well as certificates all the way up to degrees. The online program is offering a 25% discount, and the flagship is offering a 15% discount on summer school.
- In the return-to-school plan, LSU is being strategic and methodical. Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center – Shreveport (LSUHSC-S) has licensed a high reliability viral test and will lead production of that for LSU, and we will also have free analysis centers across the state. Initially, LSU would deploy a cell phone-based app and has established its first contact tracing operation for internal use. The LSU Health Sciences Center is leading the return-to-school plan that other campuses will use to ensure the safest return possible. It is truly a comprehensive effort from across the state.

- Mr. Droddy also spoke on the innovation during COVID-19. The researchers at the LSU Health Sciences Centers jumped into the COVID-19 treatment trials for different types of drugs. The LSU Health Sciences Center-Shreveport used a gas treatment whereas New Orleans is using more of a pill-form treatment to address pain from COVID-19. Both are on the leading edge of research. Researchers at the flagship use their knowledge to turn everyday items into assets in the fight against disease, such as a novel UV light sanitizer that has caught the interest of the United States Army, as well as reusable, surgical gowns. He also stated that LSU is a ready resource for any COVID-19-related problem.
- Closing Remarks and Adjournment
 - Dr. Reed thanked the Task force and the subgroups for attendance, insightful engagement, and robust conversation. She stated that the minutes will be forwarded to the group and the next meeting for the Education and Workforce Task Force will be Wednesday, May 27, 2020 at noon.
- Acknowledgement and adjournment at 1:57 p.m.