

House Committee on Appropriations

Minutes of Meeting
2019 Regular Session
April 10, 2019

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Cameron Henry, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, called the meeting to order at 9:12 a.m. in Room 5, in the State Capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The secretary called the roll.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Cameron Henry, Chairman
Representative Mark Abraham
Representative Beryl A. Amedée
Representative James K. Armes, III
Representative Tony Bacala
Representative Lawrence A. "Larry" Bagley
Representative John A. Berthelot
Representative Robert E. Billiot
Representative Gary M. Carter, Jr.
Representative Charles R. Chaney
Representative Rick Edmonds
Representative Julie Emerson
Representative Reid Falconer
Representative Franklin J. Foil, Vice Chairman
Representative Lance Harris
Representative Valarie Hodges
Representative Walt Leger, III
Representative Jack G. McFarland
Representative Blake Miguez
Representative Dustin Miller
Representative Scott M. Simon
Representative Patricia Haynes Smith
Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Steve E. Pylant
Representative Jerome Richard

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Alexis Normand, Attorney
Ms. Jane Schoen, Secretary
Ms. Adrienne Wood, Attorney

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

Ms. Faye Talbot, Sergeant at Arms
Ms. Vivian Hurst, Sergeant at Arms

III. DISCUSSION

Mr. Austin Wendt, Student Government Association President, Nicholls State University, 5349 Charing Way Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70817, (225) 936-3759; Ms. Jazelle Harris, Student Government Association Vice President, Southeastern Louisiana University, 4044 South Indigo Drive, Harvey, LA 70058, (504) 729-7651; Mr. Matt Flynn, Student Government Association President, Louisiana Tech University, 20481 Highway 2, Homer, LA 71040, (318) 553-2257; Mr. Adarian Williams, Student Government Association, Grambling State University, 1106 Dicks Store Road, Ruston, LA 71270, (318) 243-7338; and Mr. Jacob Ellis, Student Government Association President, Northwestern State University, 906 Parkway Drive, Natchitoches, LA 71457, (318) 532-1229, addressed the committee regarding the importance of investing in Higher Education.

House Bill No. 105 by Representative Henry

The following agencies contained in House Bill No. 105 were presented and discussed:

Special Schools and Commissions

Mr. Tim Mathis, Budget Analyst, House Fiscal Division (HFD), 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-9101, presented an overview of the Special Schools and Commissions.

Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts (LSMSA)

Mr. Mathis presented an overview and discussed the school's FY19-20 budget.

Dr. Steve Horton, Executive Director of LSMSA, 715 University Parkway, Natchitoches, LA, 71457, (318) 357-2520, discussed some of the accomplishments of LSMSA students and provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA)

Mr. Mathis presented an overview of the school and discussed the FY19-20 budget.

Mr. Kyle Wedberg, President of NOCCA, 2800 Chartres Street, New Orleans, LA, 70117, (504) 940-2787, highlighted accomplishments of certain NOCCA students and provided a handout, Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records.

Louisiana Schools for the Deaf and Visually Impaired (LSDVI)

Mr. Mathis presented an overview of the schools and discussed the FY19-20 budgets.

Dr. Erin Bendily, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-3745, and Ms. Meredith Jordan, Assistant Superintendent, Louisiana Special School District, 2888 Brightside Lane, Bldg. F, Baton Rouge, LA 70820, (225) 757-3200, discussed the schools' vacancies and efforts to recruit deaf student educators with Representative Smith.

Louisiana Special Education Center (LSEC)

Mr. Mathis presented an overview and discussed the FY19-20 budget for the school.

Kristy Flynn, Director, LSEC, 5400 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria, LA 71303, (318) 489-5484, discussed the school's primary goals and the services provided, and Ms. Cherie Bartell, Director of Health Services, LSEC, 5400 Coliseum Blvd., Alexandria, LA 71303, (318) 487-5484, discussed the school's Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) functions with the committee. Ms. Flynn discussed the department's funded vacancies and retention rates with Representatives Harris and Smith.

Ms. Flynn and Ms. Bartell discussed the process for transitioning students out of LSEC after aging out of the program and into community living with Representative Smith and also explained how the school's student population has changed over time with Representatives Billiot and Hodges.

Louisiana Educational Television Authority (LETA)

Mr. Mathis presented an overview of the agency and discussed the FY19-20 budget.

Ms. Beth Courtney, President, LETA, 7733 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, LA, 70810, (225) 767-4200, discussed the functions and benefits of Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB) and provided a handout, Exhibit C, which is included in the committee records.

Ms. Courtney and Ms. Joanne Gaudet, Chief Financial Officer, LETA, 7733 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, LA, 70810, (225) 767-4200, discussed the department's budgetary needs for repair and maintenance with Representative Foil.

Ms. Courtney discussed the Bright by Text program with Representative Bagley.

Representative Foil in the chair.

Board of Elementary & Secondary Education (BESE)

Mr. Mathis presented an overview of the board and discussed the FY19-20 budget.

Thrive Academy

Mr. Mathis presented an overview and discussed the school's FY19-20 budget.

Ms. Sarah Broome, Executive Director, Thrive Academy, 2585 Brightside Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 726-3355, discussed the school's accomplishments, student demographics, and funds needed to operate the new school building with the committee.

Representative Henry in the chair.

Ms. Broome explained the cost breakdown for an additional school building with Representative Foil.

Higher Education

Mr. Daniel Waguespack, Budget Analyst, HFD, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-7477, presented an overview and discussed the department's FY19-20 budget.

Mr. Waguespack and Dr. Jim Henderson, President, University of Louisiana System, 1201 North Third Street, Suite 7-300, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-6950, discussed the average faculty salaries of certain higher education institutions with Representative Bacala.

Dr. Kim Hunter Reed, Commissioner of Higher Education, Mr. Terrence Guinn, Deputy Commissioner, Board of Regents, 1201 North Third Street, Suite 6-200, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-4253, and Mr. Waguespack discussed the increase in mandated costs to colleges and universities and the Board of Regents' funding formula with Representative Zeringue.

Dr. Hunter Reed and Dr. Henderson discussed appropriate funding for the University of Louisiana at Monroe's School of Pharmacy with Representative McFarland.

The meeting recessed at 12:02 p.m. and reconvened at 1:31 p.m.

Dr. Hunter Reed provided and discussed a handout, Exhibit D, which is included in the committee records.

Mr. Guinn discussed the state's ranking for the total spent per student, and Dr. Hunter Reed discussed the shortage of nurses in the state with Representative Abraham.

Dr. Hunter Reed and Mr. Joseph F. Marin, Chief Operations Officer, Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), 265 South Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 922-1635, discussed the decline in student enrollment in community and technical colleges and the shortage of technical workers in Louisiana with Representatives Hodges and Smith. Dr. Hunter Reed discussed the correlation between student enrollment numbers and funding per student with Representative Henry.

Mr. Marin, Mr. Guinn, and Dr. Hunter Reed discussed enrollment in LCTCS credit and non-credit training courses with Representative Abraham.

Dr. Sujuan Boutte, Executive Director, Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance, 602 North Fifth Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 219-7294, discussed student enrollment numbers and student retention rates for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) with Representative Henry. Dr. Boutte also discussed the potential restructuring of the TOPS program and the TOPS Tech Program with Representative Smith.

Dr. Henderson addressed the committee regarding the technical programs offered through the University of Louisiana System and the economic impact of technology on Louisiana's students.

Dr. F. King Alexander, President, Louisiana State University (LSU), 3810 West Lakeshore Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 578-2111, addressed the committee regarding the amount of funding spent per student compared to the national average, the increase in student fees at Louisiana State University, and funding for mandated costs.

Dr. James Ammons, Jr., Executive Vice President, Southern University System, 801 Harding Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA 70807, (225) 771-2360, addressed the committee regarding improvements to the system's accreditation, mandated costs, and faculty retention.

Mr. William Richardson, Vice President, LSU AgCenter, 101 J. Norman Efferson Hall, Baton Rouge, LA 70803, (225) 578-4161, discussed the critical need for funding for the LSU AgCenter with Representative Henry.

Dr. Alexander, Dr. Ammons, Dr. Henderson, Dr. Monty Sullivan, President, LCTCS, 265 South Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 922-1643, discussed the impact of tuition and fee increases on student enrollment numbers with Representative Foil. Dr. Henderson and Dr. Sullivan also discussed the state's prioritization of investing in higher education with Representative Foil.

Dr. Sullivan provided clarity regarding enrollment numbers in the LCTCS system to Representatives Foil and McFarland.

Dr. Sullivan, Dr. Henderson, and Dr. Ammons discussed transfer credits for nursing programs and the shortage of nurses in the state with Representative Miller.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Berthelot offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 22 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Henry, Abraham, Amedée, Armes, Bacala, Bagley, Berthelot, Billiot, Gary Carter, Chaney, Edmonds, Emerson, Falconer, Foil, Lance Harris, Hodges, McFarland, Miguez, Dustin Miller, Simon, Smith, and Zeringue voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Cameron Henry
House Committee on Appropriations