

Regents Recap

Highlights of the Official Actions of the Louisiana Board of Regents

April 22, 2004

Regents Approve 2003-04 LEQSF Awards

The Board of Regents today awarded nearly \$22 million from the Louisiana Educational Quality Support Fund (LEQSF) to colleges and universities statewide to fund a variety of educational and research programs for FY 2003-04.

“Louisiana can be proud of the accomplishments of the Educational Quality Support Fund,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Joe Savoie. “Year-in and year-out, this program provides critical funding for a broad range of efforts that improve the quality of our colleges and universities. These awards help make possible everything from the purchase of up-to-date laboratory equipment to endowments for departmental chairs, and they contribute significantly to the economic vitality of our state.”

The program is funded through a permanent trust fund approved by voters in a 1986 constitutional amendment. The original \$540 million payment was part of a settlement between the state and federal governments over disputed off-shore oil and gas royalty (“8(g)”) funds. By 2003, the trust fund had risen to nearly one billion dollars. Approximately twenty-five percent of the fund’s earnings each year are reinvested in the fund. The Legislature appropriates half of the remaining interest to the Board of Regents for higher education and the other half to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education for grades K-12. The Board of Regents component of the fund is known as the Board of Regents Support Fund (BoRSF).

The Louisiana Constitution provides that the Board of Regents may use the fund to support any or all of the following programs: 1) carefully defined
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Regents Commend Universities For Teacher Education Performance

The Board of Regents adopted a resolution commending all public and private higher education institutions for increasing the percentage of teacher candidates who pass the PRAXIS examinations, for increasing the overall number of teacher candidates who complete their programs fully certified to teach, and for increasing the number of teacher candidates completing programs in teacher shortage areas.

Board Approves Amendments to Capital Outlay Budget Recommendation

The Board approved a request from the Southern University System on behalf of Southern University in Shreveport that the Board amend its FY 2004-2005 Capital Outlay Budget Recommendation to increase the funding on the Student Activity Center and Outdoor Facility project in light of inflation and adjustment to the project scope based on enrollment growth at the institution. These factors had resulted in an increase in the cost estimate from \$1,805,000 to \$2,405,000.

The Board also approved a request that the Naval ROTC Building Renovation project at Southern University and A&M receive supplemental funding to compensate for inflation. The project had an original budget of \$440,000. In light of the new information, the budget was increased to \$807,000.

In other action, the Board approved the withdrawal of three projects in the self-generated category by the University of Louisiana System on behalf of Nicholls State University. Those projects are: (1) the Recreation Center, (2) Galliano Cafeteria Renovation, and (3) Residence Halls Renovation. The institution intends to pursue these projects using alternative means of financing.



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Board Assumes Responsibility For LONI Governance

The Board of Regents approved a plan to assume responsibility for overall governance and direction of the Louisiana Optical Network Initiative (LONI) and authorize and direct the Commissioner to work with the LONI Steering Committee to design an administrative structure based upon proven and successful models of consortium governance.

In addition, the Board voted to authorize the Commissioner to appoint a Board of Regents' LONI representative to the National LambdaRail Board of Directors. The representative will serve as the Louisiana delegate to the National LambdaRail project and will cast votes as authorized by the Steering Committee until a governance structure is formalized.

Special Project, Lease Approvals

The Board approved a request by the Southern University System on behalf of Southern University in New Orleans to complete a list of work items to be performed under the provisions of Act 971 of 1985.

In addition, the Board approved a request from the University of Louisiana System on behalf of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette for the construction of additional chimpanzee research space at the New Iberia Research Center under the provisions of Act 959 of 2003. A total of 3,100 GSF will be added at a cost of \$490,000 from self-generated sources.

The Board also approved a request by the Louisiana State University System on behalf of Louisiana State University in Shreveport to lease 0.12 acres of university owned land to Willis Knighten Health Systems for the construction of a 3,800 GSF temporary pediatric clinic at a cost of construction of \$200,000. At the end of the lease, the building is to be donated to LSU-S for use as needed office space.

Small Capital Projects Report

The Board received a report that staff had approved two small capital projects costing less than \$350,000 since the previous report on March 24, 2004:

Louisiana State University Agricultural Center - W. A. Callegari Environmental Center Expansion.

Louisiana State University and A&M College - Student Health Center Elevator Replacement.

LEQSF (continued from page 1)

research efforts, 2) endowment of chairs for eminent scholars, 3) enhancement of the quality of academic research or agricultural departments or units; and 4) recruitment of superior graduate students.

The Board's approval today establishes the following award distribution:

Endowment of Chairs for Eminent Scholars - Total funding: \$3,200,000

Research and Development - Total funding: \$5,642,157

Enhancement of the Quality of Departments/Units - \$9,616,893

Recruitment of Superior Graduate Students - Total funding \$3,501,000

The BoRSF funds are awarded through a competitive, selective review process, incorporating the expertise of more than 400 out-of-state reviewers. For FY 2003-04, 928 proposals from 38 campuses were considered. The proposals represented a total requested first-year funding amount of \$71,706,369.

For campus-specific award information on the LEQSF awards (including amounts) visit the Regents website at and click on "What's New at the Board of Regents."

For more information on these and other Board of Regents actions, please visit our web site at www.regents.state.la.us.