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**LaSTEM Council supports approval STEM pathways and
reinstatement of STEM Teacher Education Program**



During the joint meeting of the Louisiana Board of Regents (BoR) and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) on Wednesday, June 20, 2018, Superintendent John White presented two initiatives supported and approved last week by the Louisiana Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (LaSTEM) Advisory Council at their monthly meeting. The initiatives include programs that will allow STEM educators to pursue college and postsecondary education courses free of charge.

"Our state and nation has seen and will continue to see a surge in the number of job opportunities available in the STEM fields, and it is critical our students be prepared," said State Superintendent John White. "A recent report shows 51 percent of Louisiana students have an interest in STEM majors and/or careers, but only 10 percent of them meet the STEM benchmark demonstrating their readiness for math and science coursework in college. As

we move forward, for the sake of our students and our workforce needs, we must ensure all Louisiana students have exposure to STEM-focused courses and credentials, starting in elementary school and continuing past high school graduation."

"The LaSTEM Council has highlighted the critical need for STEM coursework in Louisiana's schools. Louisiana's students will need access to state-of-the-art STEM experiences in order to prepare for the economy of tomorrow," said State Senator Sharon Hewitt (R-Slidell), author of the legislation creating the statewide LaSTEM Council. "The votes to create the STEM Fellows, the Classroom Teacher Enrollment Program, and new STEM course pathways are important steps forward. I commend BESE and the Board of Regents for valuing STEM education and taking our state in the right direction."

Both the Board of Regents and BESE voted to approve:

- **Two STEM-related Jump Start graduation pathways to begin in the Fall of 2018-2019.** The approval of the **Digital Design and Emergent Media and Environmental Protection and Sustainability graduation pathways** brings the total count of Louisiana Jump Start graduation pathways to 51. Upon completion, students will receive a STEM workforce credential as part of their career or university preparatory diploma experience. Any Jump Start regional team can adapt or adopt these graduation pathways. For the full list of Jump Start graduation pathways, [click here](#).
- **Re-establishment of the CTEP Program.** The Louisiana Classroom Teacher Enrollment Program (CTEP) allows public school teachers to attend LA public colleges and universities tuition-free on a space available basis if teachers are denied enrollment in a tuition program provided by BESE. Revised guidelines and application processes were also adopted by both state boards and will be made available online. This program will be reinstated pending the release of LA Department of Education funds. Educators teaching in STEM courses will work closely with the LaSTEM Council and LDOE as part of the STEM Fellows initiative.
- **Updates to STEM courses approved for TOPS eligibility.** Both state boards updated the list of courses that can generate credit for the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) as presented by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Aid (LOSFA), a program of the Board of Regents. Environmental Awareness and Physical Geography were the two courses approved by both state boards.

The LaSTEM Council meets again Wednesday, July 18. For more information on LaSTEM, visit <https://lastem.regents.la.gov/>.

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About LaSTEM

The Louisiana Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Advisory Council (LaSTEM) was created by Louisiana State Senator Sharon Hewitt in the 2017 Legislative Session, and is Chaired by the Louisiana Commissioner of Higher Education, Dr. Joseph C. Rallo. Under the auspices of the Board of Regents, the Council is tasked to coordinate and oversee the creation, delivery, and promotion of STEM education programs, to increase student interest and achievement in the fields of STEM, to ensure the alignment of education,

economic development, industry, and workforce needs, and to increase the number of women who graduate from a postsecondary institution with a STEM degree or credential.

Follow the hashtag: #LaSTEM

