

# LaSTEM Advisory Council Meeting

October 6, 2020

10:00 a.m.

The LaSTEM Advisory Council met on Tuesday, October 6, 2020, by Virtual Zoom.

## **Committee Members/Representatives Present**

Commissioner Kim Hunter Reed  
Mahyar Amouzegar  
Michael Gaudet  
Jim Henderson  
Representative Polly Thomas  
Bianca Deliberto  
Melissa Mann  
Calvin Mackie (Proxy-Lawrence Jackson)  
Kenya Messer  
Ronnie Morris  
Frank Neubrandner  
Janet Pope  
Susana Schowen  
Kellie Taylor-White  
Meridith Trahant  
Ken Tucker  
William Wainwright  
Nathan Corley  
Jaimee Williams (Proxy-Erin Babin)  
Clint Coleman

## **Staff Members Present**

David Lafargue  
Susannah Craig

## **Committee Members Not Present**

Larry Carter, Jr  
Trisha Fos  
Patty Glaser  
Crystal Gordon  
Kristen Reeves  
Scott Stevens  
Rachel Vincent-Finley  
Tom Yura

## **Welcome, Roll Call, and Updates**

Dr. David Lafargue, LaSTEM Program Administrator, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m., did roll call, and determined there was a quorum. Dr. Lafargue then introduced Commissioner Kim Hunter Reed.

Dr. Reed welcomed Advisory Council members and proxies. She stated she appreciated everyone's commitment to this work and continued focus on advancing STEM in Louisiana despite the pandemic and hurricanes. Dr. Reed stated that we have a vision of building a strong STEM ecosystem with a continuum of work from K-12 system through higher education system, aligned through the world of work. She believed this was a special gathering for all which brought together all partners needed to imagine accelerating work, removing barriers, and collaborating in a stronger and more effective way. Dr. Lafargue thanked Commissioner Reed for her comments.

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Dr. Lafargue stated that the meeting previously scheduled for August 24, 2020 was pushed back due to Hurricane Laura and Marco. This is the rescheduled meeting for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. In addition, meeting minutes were sent out prior to August 24 and resent again prior to October 6<sup>th</sup>.

*There was a motion from Mr. Nathan Corley to approve the amended minutes and a second from Dr. Reed. With there being no opposition, the amended minutes were approved.*

Dr. Lafargue mentioned everyone should have received the LaSTEM Summit Save the Date and schedule. Registration will be sent to all on the mailing list and last year's summit attendees by the end of the week through the Eventbrite platform. In addition, it will be posted to the website.

Dr. Lafargue provided an overview of the schedule, a change from one full day last year to two half days for the upcoming summit. He points out a scheduled keynote address from Cindy Hasselbring of the White House, who has oversight of the National STEM Strategic Plan and will be providing an update on the 5-year strategic plan now, where it's going in the next few years, and how it ties in to the STEM network in Louisiana.

## **Council Discussions**

Dr. Lafargue provided an update of each region in regards to two phases: (1) recognized as top candidate for each region and (2) accepted as primary representative of the Regional STEM Network Center (not official until contract agreement has been signed by both parties). Most are in phase 2 and finalizing contract agreements. A list is provided of the selected entity for each Region's STEM Network Center currently in phase two:

Region 2 – LSU

Region 3 – Fletcher Technical Community College

Region 5 – Calcasieu Parish School Board

Region 6 – Northwestern State University

Region 7 – Sci-Port

Region 8 – Louisiana Tech

Region 9 – Southeastern University

Dr. Susannah Craig noted that Northwestern is operating out of their Alexandria site. Mr. Lawrence Jackson asked if a list of these sites was available. Dr. Lafargue stated that no press releases have gone out, but we will work with each Region once contract agreements are finalized.

Dr. Reed addressed Region 4 (Lafayette) and Region 1 (Orleans) as they plan to continue conversations in each. Multiple applications were received in Region 1, so GNO Inc. will be convening all partners in the region to come together around a comprehensive plan. No applications were received from Region 4. We will have a Zoom meeting to talk to potential partners and make sure they understand the opportunity and collaborative nature of the work. Dr. Reed emphasized the need to be as transparent as possible and bring everyone to the table. She also stated that we will do everything we can to make sure we have strong, collaborative partnerships in both Regions.

Dr. Lafargue informed that as the legislation is written, the Vice Chair rotates on a tri-annual basis, and since September of 2017 was the first meeting, it is now time to rotate to the next Vice Chair. The next Vice Chair in rotation is the LDOE, in which Mr. Nathan Corley serves as the designee; therefore, he is the next Vice Chair for the LaSTEM Advisory Council. No vote was necessary as it was written into the legislation. Dr. Reed and others congratulated Mr. Corley and thanked Ms. Susana Schowen for her previous service as Vice Chair to the council.

Dr. Lafargue provided an update on the Cybersecurity Council. The first meeting was held on September 17, 2020. Mr. Greg Trahan was voted in as Chair and Ms. Susana Schowen is Vice Chair. The council was tasked

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with identifying the key areas in Louisiana, in regards to Cybersecurity, with the greatest demands to meet the workforce.

Mr. Corley, with LDOE, presented an update. They contracted with SREB and Ecorise to answer two broad questions (1) What do our employers need in the areas of environmental protection sustainability and what do our postsecondary institutions need from high school students who are graduating and going on to post-secondary institutions? And (2) What are the environmental education opportunities available for students in the state right now? They planned to take this information to reframe the pathway and design innovative, hands-on courses. Mr. Corley stated that if anyone wanted to get involved with the pathway to email him. Next, SREB and Ecorise presented their findings.

During the SREB presentation regarding labor markets, Ms. Susana Schowen noted that with the split among the north and south, there was a recommendation to focus on land and species management in the north. She added that water management remains very important all the way up the river and there is federal and state funding available. Nathan Corley stated they are following the recommendation of SREB to put a team together to look at the data and to decide what areas of focus to have for the environmental, protection, and sustainability pathways.

After the Ecorise presentation, Ms. Schowen asked if there was a way to access the data. Dr. Lafargue informed that the link to the information was previously sent out, and a webpage was created. The webpage can be found at <https://lastem.regents.la.gov/3rd-quarter-advisory-council-information/>.

Dr. Reeds asked Mr. Corley about next steps and how they are knitting together this information. Mr. Corley responded that they are taking this information from SREB, with input from state agencies and others, to craft the pathway and decide on which key areas environmental, protection, and sustainability should focus. Once determinations are made, surveys will be sent out looking for partners to provide curriculum, professional development, working with kids, etc. Mr. Corley noted if you would like to get involved or if your organization would like to be a provider, let him know by email.

## **Other Business**

The upcoming LaSTEM Quarterly meeting is scheduled for November 10, 2020 from 10:00am to 12:00pm. Dr. Lafargue made a recommendation to continue with a virtual meeting with no opposition from members. The 2021 meetings (February, May, August, & November) will most likely be in-person with a virtual option, considering there is no increase in health concerns. More information to come on specific dates, times, and locations.

*With there being no other comments or business, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Susana Schowen and a second by Mr. Nathan Corley. With all in agreement, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.*