A RENEWED GUARANTEE FOR TEACHER QUALITY AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN LOUISIANA

A Resolution

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education requires teacher candidates to pass the Praxis I teacher licensure test prior to entering teacher education programs.

WHEREAS, Louisiana’s cut-off scores are among the lowest of the 32 states that require Praxis passage for certification.

WHEREAS, 16 percent of Louisiana teachers are uncertified or teaching outside of their fields of certification.

WHEREAS, about 100,000 Louisiana children are taught by an uncertified teacher.

WHEREAS, the Education Trust, the National Association of System Heads and other national organizations stress that a highly effective teacher is essential to student success.

Be it resolved that the University of Louisiana system recommends the following actions:

1. UL System institutions raise Praxis I qualifying scores in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics up to four points for all teacher education programs in Louisiana via a modest phasing in over a three-year period (year 1 – two-point increase; year 2 – observation; year 3 – up to an additional two point increase).

2. UL System institutions commit to increasing not just the quality, but also the quantity of teachers they produce, especially minority teachers and teachers in critical shortage areas. Such efforts would include:

   • Formulation, by Fall 2003, of specific numeric goals for increased teacher production, both for the UL System as a whole and for each campus;
   • Aggressive efforts to identify and recruit talented candidates, especially minorities and candidates in the critical shortage areas of math, science, middle school and special education;
• Systematic efforts on every campus to identify, during the freshman year, candidates who may have difficulty with the Praxis I examination and to provide those candidates with assistance in building the knowledge and skills they need to succeed; and,
• Annual public reporting, for each campus and the system as a whole, on progress toward increased production goals.

5. BESE continue its drive to ensure that every school district be encouraged to hire and place teachers in classrooms within their primary fields of study or preparation.

6. UL System institutions, jointly with school districts, continue to provide support and job-embedded professional development to teachers, particularly in their first three years, to ensure the retention of teachers and the academic growth of their students.

University of Louisiana System Presidents

Dr. Sally Clausen, President
University of Louisiana System

Dr. Neari Warner, President
Grambling State University

Dr. Robert Hebert, President
McNeese State University

Dr. Randy Webb, President
Northwestern State University

Dr. Ray Authement, President
University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Dr. Daniel Reneau, President
Louisiana Tech University

Dr. Donald Ayo, President
Nicholls State University

Dr. Randy Moffett, President
Southeastern Louisiana University

Dr. James Cofer, President
University of Louisiana at Monroe