

Agenda Item VII.A.

Response to HCR 16

Executive Summary

House Concurrent Resolution 16 of the 2013 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature (HCR 16) requests that the Louisiana Board of Regents (Regents), in consultation with the Board of Supervisors of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System, “study the feasibility of offering community college services in Livingston Parish, to determine how the State can best meet the educational, economic, and workforce development needs of this region and to submit a written report of findings and conclusions.” In response, Regents asked the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) to conduct a study and prepare a report responsive to the requirements of HCR 16.

In conducting the study, NCHEMS staff engaged in two primary types of research: data analyses and interviews with a variety of stakeholders. Based on this research, NCHEMS staff reached the following conclusions:

- The college participation rates of residents in the parish reveal that Livingston Parish is currently only marginally underserved with regard to the provision of community college services. The overwhelming majority (76%) of Livingston Parish residents aged 19 years and younger who seek postsecondary education prefer attending a four-year university.
- Much of the expressed desire for community college services in the parish revolves around convenience rather than real inability to access those services in Baton Rouge or Hammond.
- The projected population growth of Livingston Parish through 2030 does suggest the need to lay the groundwork for a potentially much greater demand for services.
- The fields in which there are unmet workforce needs in the parish are few in number. There is no persuasive evidence that there will be an on-going demand for graduates in these fields sufficient enough to justify permanent investment in programs.
- While the funds needed to build a physical facility in Livingston Parish were made available in Act 360 of the 2013 Regular Legislative Session, there is no provision for operating funds to support a comprehensive community college.
- There is no justification at this time for considering the establishment of a free-standing, new community college in Livingston Parish.

The study included the following recommendations:

In the short term:

- Northshore Technical Community College (NTCC) be responsible for assessing the needs in Livingston Parish and addressing those needs utilizing the instructional capacity of other institutions.
- NTCC and LCTCS seek an arrangement in which the number and array of classes taught in the existing Livingston Literacy and Technology Center in Walker be expanded.
 - o Possibilities include:
 - The first 18 credits of general education courses
 - BRCC should consider delivering core courses at the Livingston Center.
 - A certified medical coder program.
 - LPN and/or EMT programs.
- Increase staffing at NTCC to conduct on-going needs assessment, organizing cohorts of students or organizing continuing education programs delivered under contracts with employers and for providing financial aid and academic advising services.

In the long term:

- The NTCC Workforce Training Center designated in Act 360 be constructed in Livingston Parish and located on the site of the Livingston Parish Literacy and Technology Center in Walker.
- The LCTCS develop a financing model in which any marginal revenues obtained through the inter-institutional collaborative process recommended above are shared in ways that benefit both/all of the collaborating partners. .

In their totality the recommendations put forth by NCHEMS represent a prudent approach to addressing the needs of Livingston Parish residents and employers, in the short- and long-term. The overarching theme of NCHEMS's response to HCR 16 is to start slowly, make effective use of existing resources, and grow the enterprise over time.

The senior staff recommends that the Planning, Research and Performance Committee approve the response to House Concurrent Resolution 16 regarding the provision of community college services in Livingston Parish and authorizes the Commissioner of Higher Education to make whatever non-substantive changes necessary prior to its submittal to the appropriate House and Senate Committees of the Legislature.