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**John Bel Edwards**, Governor  
**Ava Cates**, Secretary

**Workforce Investment Council**

## Workforce Investment Council Meeting

Tuesday, April 19, 2022

9:30 AM

Renaissance Baton Rouge Hotel  
 7000 Bluebonnet Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA

I. **Call to order** **Call to order** – Vice Chair David St. Etienne called the meeting to order at 9:44am.

II. **Roll call** –

**WIC Director Jawanda J Givens**

**Quorum: yes Time: 9:44am**

19-April-2022				
First Name	Last Name	Member	Designee	Designee
Bruce	Busada			
Joseph	Ardoin		x	Corey Williams
Paul	Arrigo			
Valerie	Aymond			
Melissa	Bayham	x		Ken York
Ada	Bell	x		
Keith W	Brand		x	Shemar Dixon
Cade	Brumley		x	Jessica Vallelungo
Barbara	Carpenter			
Conrad	Carriere			
Jason	Cobb	x		
Ava	Cates		x	Tavares Walker
Michael	Danahay			
Stephen	David			
Jason	Dedon	x		
John Bel	Edwards		x	Sec. Ava Cates
Jason	Engles	x		Gary Warren
Thelma	French	x		
Larry	Frieman			
Randy	Hayden	x		
Charles "Chuck"	Henderson, Jr.			
John	Hopkins			

Edward R	Jones			
Gina	Jones			
Leigh	King			
Norisha	Kirts	x		
Kirk	LaCour			
James "Jimmy"	LeBlanc		x	Rhett Covington
Robert J. "Bob"	Lobos	x		
Melissa	Mann			
Roy O.	Martin III	x		
Gerry	Mims			
Brent	Moreland	x		
Susan	Nelson			
Barrow	Peacock			Margaret Corley
Sonia A.	Perez	x		
Don	Pierson		x	Susie Schowen
Kim	Reed		x	Dr. Lisa Vosper
Louis	Reine		x	Kellie Taylor-White
Ronald	Rosser Jr.		x	Darryl Magaha
Tracey	Schiro		x	Christina McKnight
Richard B. "R.B."	Smith	x		
Joshua	Sonnier		x	Andrea Morrison
David	St.Etienne	x		
Monty	Sullivan		x	Angela Day
Sandra	Thompson Herman			
Buck	Vandersteen	x		
Marketa	Walters		x	Lorrie Briggs
Thomas A.	Yura			
Z - Vacant	Z - Vacant			
Z- Vacant	Z - Vacant			
Z- Vacant	Z - Vacant			
Z-Vacant	Z - Vacant			

**III. Comments from the Vice-Chairman, David St. Etienne**

- Mr. St. Etienne welcomes everyone and thanks the members for participating.
- Assistant Secretary Tavares Walker also welcomes the WIC and details the agenda for the meeting.

#### IV. Review and approval of previous minutes:

Motion to approve minutes:

1<sup>st</sup> Jason Dedon

2<sup>nd</sup> Buck Vandersteen

Abstentions: Yes  None

Opposition: Yes  None

Approved: Yes  None

Unanimous vote

#### V. Review and Approval of TOPS Tech Eligibility List

- Dr. Lisa Vosper explains the TOPS Tech eligibility list details. The goal today is to certify the list for two academic years to ensure students have time to make enrollment decisions. Also up for approval is the list noncredit programs to match the list of in-demand industries and occupations. The list has been vetted and reviewed by partners and is a subset of MJ Foster Promise programs. She is asking the WIC to approve this list for academic years 2022-2024.
- Kellie Taylor-White asks to approve the noncredit program list without the last column detailing the various credentials offered.
  - Dr. Vosper notes that the list as presented is what was approved.
  - Secretary Cates notes that the law specified that these would be high demand, high wage job programs within a general occupation, rather than a specific job within that occupation.
  - Dr. Vosper sees no issue with sending forth the list without listing the specific credentials offered. The CIP code will be required so LOSFA will know what the occupation is.
- Secretary Cates moves to approve the list of noncredit programs including the industry, occupation in demand, the SOC code and the CIP code only.
  - Member R.B. Smith makes a substitute motion to include that the list is approved with inclusion that whatever curriculum is used by the institution. The result must be an industry-based credential.
  - Member Thelma French will second, but notes that the vote needs to be separated.
- All motions withdrawn. No motions currently on the floor.

- **WIC Member Jason Engles moves to approve the 2022-2024 proposed TOPS Tech Eligibility List for Academic Programs that are Vocation/Workforce-Focused.**

**1<sup>st</sup> Jason Engles**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Brent Moreland**

Abstentions: Yes  None x  
Opposition: Yes  None x  
Approved: Yes x None

Unanimous vote

- **Motion by Secretary Cates to approve the list of noncredit programs aligned to in-demand industries and occupations including the industry, occupation in demand, the SOC code and the CIP code only, with the inclusion that whatever curriculum is used by the institution, the result must be an industry-based credential.**

**1<sup>st</sup> Secretary Ava Cates**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Jason Dedon**

Abstentions: Yes  None x  
Opposition: Yes  None x  
Approved: Yes x None

Unanimous vote

- **Motion to receive and approve the TOPS Tech Eligibility List (as noted above)**

**1<sup>st</sup> Jason Engles**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Brent Moreland**

Abstentions: Yes  None x  
Opposition: Yes  None x  
Approved: Yes x None

Unanimous vote

## VI. Review and Approval of TOPS Tech Early Start Eligibility List

- Dr. Vosper notes that the only change in the list was the removal of one provider, St. James Online Schools. These providers are approved by BESE. The legislature approved these Early Start programs for high school students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The list is being recertified because of the recent change in training providers.
- Secretary Cates points out that it appears that TOPS Tech Early Start providers in 2022, there are only four on the list that we are approving.
  - Member Jessica Vallelungo clarifies that these are only the third party providers. The post-secondary providers are already approved.
- Secretary Cates asks, in other LCTCS programs, are regular application programs automatically on the Eligible Training Provider List also part of the TOPS Tech list?
  - Ms. Vallelungo responds that they submit the application; we process it and bring it to BESE. We welcome more providers. We received some applications after bringing the list to BESE but there are legal deadlines for eligibility consideration. This list is only third party providers. The cut off is early November to process it for the January BESE meeting. We will be opening applications soon for third party providers to submit. Any that were submitted late will need to be resubmitted electronically.
- Secretary Cates asks if a representative from LOSFA can explain in more detail the TOPS Tech Early Start (TTES) program
  - Deborah Paul explains that TTES is for students in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade at public high schools to take courses. They are required to take the ACT or PLAN, and must score silver or higher. With MJ Foster Promise, students 21 and over will get tuition and fees covered for the academic year. TOPS will go towards tuition first; MJ Foster is last hour in. If the student did not qualify or apply for TOPS, they can take advantage of MJ Foster Promise within the five main areas covered by MJ Foster. The Council will reconvene this year to perhaps add additional programming.
- Member Norisha Kirts asks how the program is advertised.
  - Dr. Vosper responds that it is advertised through social media channels, radio, TV, and LCTCS has a marketing campaign. If an individual is not on social media, the hope is that word of mouth will reach those people.
  - A representative from LCTCS explains that on social media, there are demographics to plug in to target those that need to see it.

- Secretary Cates asks whether students are steered toward tuition-based programs first.
- Ms. Deborah Paul notes that if an individual is working and makes over a certain amount, they are not eligible for TOPS/TOPS Tech, but may be eligible for MJ Foster.
- Ms. French encourages members to join their Local Workforce Development boards, as it is a struggle to find sufficient representation on local boards.
- Secretary Cates notes that LWC can certainly email blast anyone that has been on UI over the last 2 years. IWTP is another option that is funded by Louisiana businesses for Louisiana businesses, \$3500/employee and reimbursed within 30 days.
- Dr. Vosper suggests it could be helpful for us to have marketing materials that are sent out to also be sent to WIC members for their staff.
- Secretary Cates adds that as a founding board member of LCTCS, Vo-Tech schools took high school students away. This has been an ongoing battle. The same occurred with Corrections. The question becomes, does the money follow the student or the system?
- Ms. Vallelungo notes that they do have some funding sources set aside for dual enrollment systems. Schools should pay their fair share.
- **Motion to receive and approve the TOPS Tech Early Start Eligibility List (as noted above)**

**1<sup>st</sup> Jason Dedon**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Kellie Taylor-White**

Abstentions: Yes       None x  
 Opposition: Yes       None x  
 Approved: Yes x      None

Unanimous vote

## VII. Presentation and Review of Combined State Plan Updates

- Assistant Secretary Tavares Walker informs WIC members that the State Plan is the Governor’s plan detailing how we deliver workforce systems in the state. It is updated every 2 years and encompasses all various areas of workforce. We have a draft document for review that will go out for public comment soon. Members received this document a few weeks ago.

- Assistant Secretary Andrea Morrison explains that WIOA requires the Governor and the State to have a 4-year plan. We have had this plan in place for 2 years and it is not time for modifications. We have experts in respective workforce areas including Kenny Lynch, Quanda Charles, and Melissa Bayham. They can answer any questions members may have.
- Dr. Vosper asks if this plan must be approved today by the WIC.
  - Deputy Assistant Secretary Sonya Williams answers that this is a review only.
- Deputy Asst. Secretary Sonya Williams states that DOE and DOL mandate partnership. We needed to see common outcomes, including in employment and training. There are core partners and other required partners that must work together to implement the plan. After public comment, the plan will be submitted to the USDOL to approve for implementation. The timeline established and approved by USDOL included an original due date of March 15, however, we requested an adjustment and it is now due for public comments on April 22, 2022 for 30 days. The plan will be posted on the LWC website for comments. It will be due for submission on May 27, 2022. We want to make sure we submit before the program year ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>. We are here today to answer any questions or hear any suggestions for the plan.
- A representative from LCTCS notes that in Appendix 1, the negotiated targets were included but are not in there.
  - WIC Director Jawanda Givens notes that those are on page 230 in the plan.
- Dr. Vosper asks, under post-secondary education programs, is it possible to mention our state educational attainment goal of having 60% of working adults to have a degree or credential by 2030?
  - No objections heard.
- Ms. Williams notes that if any members have any other suggestions, email Ms. Givens. Be sure to look at the section that applies to your area closely.
- Secretary Cates states that collaboration is so important. Various departments that we have worked with have contributed to this work. Vocational Rehab is great for Corrections programs. These are then handed off to local workforce boards. There is a continuum of services for all programs to work together. It helps when asking the federal government for consideration of certain things, that they see how we are working together. We are also open to what other states are doing so please share any insight members may have.
- **Jason Dedon moves to accept the Louisiana State Combined Plan as presented with understanding that the plan has to undergo public**

comment. Absent substantive changes after public comment, the plan does not need to return to the Council.

1<sup>st</sup> Jason Dedon

2<sup>nd</sup> Thelma French

**Abstentions: Yes, Secretary Ava Cates**

Opposition: Yes  None

Approved: Yes  None

**VIII. Other Business**

- a. None

**IX. Public Comments**

- a. None

**X. Adjournment**

- a. Motion to adjourn by Secretary Cates
- b. Second by Dr. Lisa Vosper
- c. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:05am.

Minutes Submitted by: Kandice Doley

Minutes approved by: Quorum of WIC meeting 9/15/22