

House Committee on Education

Minutes of Meeting
2020 Regular Session
March 11, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Raymond E. Garofalo, Jr., chairman of the House Committee on Education, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. in Room 1, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Raymond E. Garofalo, Jr., chairman
Representative Beryl A. Amedée
Representative Kendrick "Ken" Brass
Representative Gary M. Carter, Jr.
Representative Rick Edmonds
Representative Aimee Adatto Freeman
Representative Barbara Reich Freiberg
Representative Stephanie Hilferty
Representative Patrick O. Jefferson
Representative Charles Anthony Owen
Representative Tammy T. Phelps
Representative Vincent "Vinney" J. St. Blanc, III
Representative Phillip Eric Tarver
Representative Polly Thomas
Representative Mark Wright, vice chairman

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative Blake Miguez

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Elizabeth L. Borne, legislative analyst
Lisa Lovello, legislative analyst
Jacqueline Snowden, committee administrative assistant

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

John Arrington, committee clerk
Angela McKnight, sergeant at arms

III. OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Garofalo welcomed members to the committee. He reminded members that Speaker Clay Schexnayder encouraged all standing committees to start meetings on time. He informed members that the subject matter jurisdiction on the House Committee on Education can be found on the House website. He said that k-12 and higher education issues were primary to the committee.

Chairman Garofalo laid the groundwork for witness testimony and explained how witness cards were to be completed. He urged persons who testify to present information that is true, factual, and accurate.

Chairman Garofalo asked committee members to introduce themselves and describe the area of the state they represent.

Representative Ray Garofalo, chairman, District 103, said he lives in St. Bernard Parish and represents all of St. Bernard, all of the east bank of Plaquemines Parish, and the easternmost portion of New Orleans that includes Venetian Isles and St. Catherine. He said the legislature has the resources, people, and the will to improve the education situation in Louisiana.

Representative Mark Wright, vice chairman, District 77, said he lives in Covington and that his district encompasses the west side of St. Tammany Parish. Representative Wright said this session marked his third year in the House of Representatives.

Representative Rick Edmonds, District 66, said he represents the southeastern portion of Baton Rouge from I-12 to the Mississippi River. It is his second year of service on the education committee but he has been involved in k-12 and early childhood education for three decades.

Representative Ken Brass, District 58, said he represents the river parishes including St. James, Ascension, and Iberville. He noted that he has served on the education committee for the last two years.

Representative Polly Thomas, District 80, said she lives in Metairie and represents the heart of Metairie. She is a professor emerita from the University of New Orleans.

Representative Beryl Amedée, District 51, said she represents portions of St. Mary, Terrebonne, Assumption, and Lafourche parishes. Her perspective on public education comes from being a student, a parent, a teacher, and now a grandparent. Representative Amedée said she has enjoyed

successful working relationships with all Louisiana state superintendents of education since the late Cecil Picard. As an education committee member, she said wanted to make sure that public education works.

Representative Patrick Jefferson, District 11, said he was formerly a vice chairman of the education committee and that he represented Grambling State University and a portion of Louisiana Tech University.

Representative Vincent St. Blanc, III, District 50, said his district encompassed most of St. Mary Parish and lower St. Martin Parish. Representative St. Blanc was a teacher for 10 years and has been in private business for 48 years. He is a member of the Louisiana Community and Technical College board of supervisors and noted that he has served under four governors.

Representative Tammy Phelps, District 3, said she represents the inner portions of Shreveport. She has an undergraduate degree from Louisiana Tech and was a school board representative in her area for six years. Representative Phelps said she worked with the Louisiana School Boards Association.

Representative Charles Owen, District 30, said he lives in Vernon Parish and represents the cities of Leesville and DeRidder in the western portion of Louisiana. He is the son of a former superintendent of schools and was a military officer. Representative Charles Owen said he wanted to be a voice for teachers, parents, students, and local school districts.

Representative Barbara Freiberg, District 70, said her district in Baton Rouge runs from south of the gates at LSU to Picou Lane. She has been a participant in some facet of education, from teacher to administrator to school board member, for most of her life.

Representative Phillip Tarver, District 36, said he lives in Lake Charles and represents the southern half of that city in Calcasieu Parish. He is a McNeese State University graduate.

Representative Aimee Freeman, District 98, was not present during member introductions.

Stephanie Hilferty, District 94, represents the lakefront of Orleans and Jefferson parishes. Representative Hilferty said she plans to advocate for early education during this term.

Representative Gary Carter, Jr., District 102, was not present during member introductions.

Chairman Garofalo commented that the committee membership possessed a wealth of educational experience and that he was humbled and honored to serve as chairman. He noted that he had 12 years of experience as an administrator at Loyola University of New Orleans and he hoped that experience would serve the committee's work.

IV. INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS AND STAFF

Chairman Garofalo introduced the education committee staff: Jackie Snowden, committee administrative assistant; Elizabeth Borné, senior legislative analyst; and Lisa Lovello, legislative analyst.

V. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Chairman Garofalo asked members to review a copy of the Committee Rules of Procedure. He noted that the rules would be presented for adoption at next week's meeting. He asked members to read over them and determine if there was an issue that needed to be addressed.

Chairman Garofalo asked members to submit to committee staff any amendments they might want for a legislative instrument heard in the committee at least 24 hours before the meeting in which the bill is heard.

VI. PRESENTATIONS

Chairman Garofalo stated that House education has no jurisdiction over matters related to appropriations, retirement, or deferred maintenance. He asked persons who would make presentations to keep their comments brief.

Dr. Kim Hunter-Reed, commissioner of higher education/Louisiana Board of Regents, informed committee members that she will have held the position of commissioner of higher education for two years this coming June. A native of Lake Charles, she shared that she was happy to be back home. She thanked committee members for their service to the state and commitment to education.

Dr. Reed narrated a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Louisiana Prospers: Driving Our Talent Imperative", that included the master plan for higher education in the state of Louisiana, the mission of the Louisiana Board of Regents, and an overview of its work. The presentation is encapsulated in a folder and brochure labeled Exhibit A and is included in the committee records. A copy of the presentation was distributed to committee members and staff.

Thomas "Tom" C. Galligan, Jr., interim president, Louisiana State University (LSU), Baton Rouge, LA, (225) 578-8608, shared that he had served as interim president of LSU for the last two months. He pointed out that there were eight campuses within the system. Information on the campuses that make up the system was contained in a package distributed to the committee and labeled Exhibit B in the records of this meeting.

Dr. Monty Sullivan, president, Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS), 2655 South Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA, (225) 922-1643, stated that he represented the 17-member board of supervisors, 12 institutions, and over 160,000 students matriculating in 12 colleges

statewide. He noted that the average of age of the LCTCS student is 27 years and that two out of every three students were female.

Dr. Sullivan referred members to the presentation, "Building Louisiana's Workforce", included in the records of this meeting as Exhibit C, for information on the LCTCS system.

Dr. Ray L. Belton, president, Southern University System, no witness card submitted, greeted the committee and mentioned that he was also chancellor of Southern University and A&M College, Baton Rouge. Dr. Belton said the Southern University System is the only historically black system of higher education in America. He believed the system has been instrumental in shaping the African American middle class in America. He noted that the system's focus was to ensure Louisiana's students were afforded opportunities aligned with the workforce needs of the communities in the state. Dr. Belton said 88% of the system's student body were Louisiana residents and the system contributes nearly \$160 million annually to Louisiana's economy. He noted that the system is comprised of five campuses in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Shreveport.

Committee members were given a packet labeled "2020, State of the Southern University and A&M College System", included in the records of this meeting as Exhibit D.

John White, state superintendent of education, Louisiana Department of Education, appeared before the members on what was his last day as state superintendent. Chairman Garofalo expressed gratitude to Dr. White for his attendance. Superintendent White referred committee members to the document, "Louisiana Believes", which is included in the records of this meeting and labeled Exhibit E. He said the document would provide a brief overview of the early childhood-12 system, the Louisiana Department of Education, and the minimum foundation program (MFP).

Dr. White emphasized the importance of a quality early childhood education, and explained reading comprehension and dual enrollment options offered in Louisiana schools.

Sandy Holloway, president, State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), no witness card submitted, narrated a PowerPoint presentation, labeled Exhibit F and included in the records of this meeting, that displayed an overview of BESE. Ms. Holloway directed members to information in the packet that explained the search process for the state's new superintendent of education. She announced that she had appointed BESE board member, Kira Orange Jones, as the chairman for that work group.

Tony Davis, vice president, BESE, P.O. Box 2783, Natchitoches, LA, (318) 348-1318, explained the minimum foundation program formula, which also was included in Exhibit F.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 3 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

Committee members received an information packet from Cami Geisman, vice president for External Affairs, University of Louisiana System, 1201 North 3rd Street, Suite 7-300, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7209, entitled "For Your Future. For Our Future." The packet is labeled Exhibit G and is included in the records of this meeting.

Committee members received an information packet from Dr. Sujuan Boutté, executive director of Louisiana office of student financial assistance (LOFSA), no witness card submitted, entitled "LOFSA Programs: Promoting, Preparing for and Providing Equity of College Access". The packet is labeled Exhibit H and is included in the records of this meeting.

Chairman Garofalo recognized persons from other education agencies who were present. He noted that the House would convene at 3:00 p.m.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Garofalo announced that the next meeting of the committee was scheduled for Thursday, March 19, 2020.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Thomas offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 15 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Garofalo, Amedée, Brass, Gary Carter, Edmonds, Freeman, Freiberg, Hilferty, Jefferson, Charles Owen, Phelps, St. Blanc, Tarver, Thomas, and Wright voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Raymond E. Garofalo, Jr.
House Committee on Education

Date adopted: