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## **Postsecondary Education Review Commission Elects Chair, Vice-Chair**

*Focuses on Student Enrollment Mix*

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**BATON ROUGE, La.** – Members of the Postsecondary Education Review Commission unanimously elected a chairman and vice-chair during the first of day of a two-day meeting of the group. As chairman, Senator Ben Nevers will lead the efforts to evaluate and make recommendations for the future of higher education in Louisiana. Dr. Belle Wheelan will serve as vice-chair.

Senator Nevers chairs the Senate Committee on Education and owns an electrical contracting business in Bogalusa. He has emphasized the importance of the education to a thriving economy and is a past member of the Louisiana House of Representatives.

Dr. Belle Wheelan is the President of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, an accrediting organization for higher education. She received her Master of Arts degree from LSU and has served as Director of Academic Support Services at San Antonio College in Texas, Dean of Student Services at Thomas Nelson Community College in Virginia, Provost of Tidewater Community College in Virginia. She became the first female African-American President of Central Virginia Community College. In 2001, she was appointed as Secretary of Education to Virginia Governor Mark Warner.

The topic for the commission's two-day meeting is *Access, Success and Cost Reduction* with the focus specifically on the issue of Louisiana's enrollment mix among its 2-year and 4-year universities. Today commissioners heard presentations from Patrick Kelley, Senior Associate and Director of the National Information Center for Higher Education (NCHEMS), Curt Eysink, Executive Director of the Louisiana Workforce Commission and Dr. Loren Scott, President of Loren Scott and Associates regarding Louisiana's educational and workforce needs.

Commissioners also received information from Joan Lord, Vice President for Education Policy for the Southern Education Regional Board (SREB) concerning the regional enrollment mix of two-year and four-year institutions followed by a discussion of admissions requirements in the state by Theresa Hay of the Board of Regents. Dr. Joe May, President of the Louisiana Community and Technical College System also gave the commission a 10-year analysis of the development of the community and technical college system.

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The meeting continues tomorrow with a discussion about the impact of shifting enrollments on resources in Louisiana as well as an opportunity for public comment.

Those unable to attend the meetings in person can watch the proceedings live via the internet by logging onto the Postsecondary Education Review Commission's website, [www.laperc.org](http://www.laperc.org). Additionally, the public may provide input to the commission in two ways – by attending the meeting, or by clicking on the “Tell Us What You Think” section of the website.

The 2009 Louisiana Legislature, with strong support from Governor Jindal, passed legislation sponsored by House Speaker Jim Tucker (Act 309) creating the Postsecondary Education Review Commission to study the governance, facilities, funding, operations, and number and alignment of degree programs at Louisiana public colleges, and to provide a written report of findings and recommendations to the Board of Regents by February 12, 2009. The Board of Regents will review the report and submit comments to the Legislature no later than February 26, 2009.