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Date: August 24, 2012

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Higher Education Collaborates to Participate in Course Choice Program

BATON ROUGE, La. –Commissioner of Higher Education Jim Purcell announced today that all four higher education systems applied jointly under the name, *Louisiana's College Course Choice Collaborative (LA C4)* to become a provider in the Department of Education's Louisiana Course Choice Program. The course choice program recruits traditional and non-traditional providers from across the nation to offer classes to Louisiana high school students.

The Louisiana Board of Regents, as the coordinating board of higher education, initiated meetings this summer with the University of Louisiana System, the Louisiana State University System, the Southern University System and the Louisiana Community and Technical College System to reach agreement in submitting one application to continue to provide college-level general education courses similar to dual enrollment offerings.

"This is a great example of our public higher education community coming together to work jointly for the benefit of students in our state," said Commissioner Purcell. "Dual enrollment has been a wildly popular choice for parents and students for decades and our colleges and universities are energized by the opportunity to deliver even more postsecondary opportunities for high-achieving high school students through this new program."

"We support Commissioner Purcell's efforts to foster cooperative ventures among Louisiana institutions of higher education," noted Southern University System President Ronald Mason.

Collectively, Commissioner Purcell and the System Presidents believe their unified effort bring with it several important benefits including:

- Immediate access to rigorous courses due to the Louisiana Board of Regents' and university systems' strong infrastructure to support the delivery of postsecondary education,
- Flexibility of choosing rigorous coursework from ALL postsecondary institutions in the state instead of having to choose from a single institution,
- Access to a wide array of course offerings without the worry of transferability across institutions in Louisiana, and
- Portability of courses at regionally accredited institutions in other states if high school graduates decide to leave Louisiana for their associate or baccalaureate degrees

"Our colleges and universities are ready to meet the new demands of our changing educational landscape while at the same time offering students and parents peace of mind in knowing they are choosing courses from a local, trusted and accredited source," said Purcell. "This innovative approach will undoubtedly lead to more students getting a head start on their college careers and successfully earning a degree."

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"At a time when experts project two-thirds of all U.S. jobs will require some form of postsecondary education and training by 2020, the Louisiana's College Course Choice Collaborative will energize Louisiana's popular dual-enrollment programs, providing our students an invaluable opportunity to get ahead academically," said Louisiana State University System President William Jenkins. "The strength of the program's common course names, numbering, and descriptions will go a long way toward encouraging our most gifted young scholars to get a competitive head start not only on their college careers but their lifelong vocations as well."

"Louisiana's Community and Technical Colleges have a long and successful tradition of offering high school students access to college level work through our Dual Enrollment programs," said Louisiana Community and Technical College System President Joe May. "We know that students who have access and take advantage of such opportunities excel at the post-secondary level. We welcome the prospects of collaborating with our university colleagues on providing additional course choices to Louisiana's high school students."

"The University of Louisiana System's nine institutions have a strong record of successful dual enrollment programs with established partnerships between area schools. A unified approach of Louisiana's public postsecondary institutions to expand dual enrollment opportunities to every eligible high school student will enhance the educational goals of the state and further solidify PK-16 partnerships," said UL System President Randy Moffett.

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