



## Action Alert #8

# Senate Finance to Discuss Higher Ed Budget

April 19, 2023

On **Monday, April 24th, at 9:00 AM**, the Senate Finance Committee will discuss Louisiana's Higher Education budget for Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) which will begin July 1st ([Agenda](#)).

Unfortunately, additional funding for the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund was not included in the FY24 proposed budget ([HB1](#)). The legislature's help is needed to appropriate \$3 million in one-time funds to the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund to help provide our students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) the same opportunities that are available to students without disabilities.

More information about this issue can be found in the Council's [Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fact Sheet](#) and Know the Facts section below.

### How to Take Action

Share your personal story and explain how postsecondary inclusive education opportunities would impact you or someone you know.

1. **Email or call** the Chair and members of the Senate Finance Committee *before the committee meets* Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup>! Find your member(s) of the Senate Finance Committee at the end of this alert.
2. **Email** [sfnce@legis.la.gov](mailto:sfnce@legis.la.gov) your public comments about the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund:
  - Only statements emailed to the address above and received *at least 4 hours prior to the meeting* will be included in the meeting record.
  - With your comments, please include your name, address, phone number, email address and let them know you are writing about additional funding for the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund under the Board of Regents.

If you would like to watch the committee meeting, you can do so via the [legislature's website](#). When the meeting is in progress, click the camera icon to access the broadcast.

### Confirm Your Action

- Email your [LaCAN Leader](#) after you take action
- Why confirm your action? This helps the Council know how effective we are reaching you with important information and engaging members across our state in advocacy for systems change.

## Tips & Tools for Advocacy

Looking for tips and tools to help you in your advocacy? Check out the Council's [Advocacy 101](#) page. You can also find tips for:

- [Writing/emailing your legislators](#)
- [Calling your legislators](#)
- [Writing your story](#)

## Know the Facts

Postsecondary inclusive education programs are important to students with I/DD because it provides them with the full college experience in an inclusive setting while teaching them the skills they need to succeed in life and become independent. From the very beginning, they are taught life skills, how to be independent and get help growing their social and support network. These programs also help participants obtain and maintain competitive, integrated employment. In fact, 71% of graduates from these programs are employed compared to the national average of only 34%.

Act 682 of 2022 passed the legislature unanimously and created the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund. Included in the fund was \$1 million that current programs and those interested in starting a program could utilize to help with costs related to start-up and expansion. Currently, there are only six programs in our state, and most of the programs are in the south leaving north Louisiana students with I/DD very few opportunities for a postsecondary education. Fortunately, since the creation of this fund, 13 two and four year programs statewide have expressed interest in starting a new program. With the average start-up of a program costing about \$156,000, the \$1 million added to the fund last year won't last long.

This is why we need the legislature's help in appropriating additional funds into the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund. These are not recurring funds. Any money deposited into this fund is considered one-time dollars and can be used year after year.

## Contact Us

LaCAN is an initiative of the LA Developmental Disabilities Council. If there are any questions about the information in this email, contact the Council by replying to this email, or calling the toll free number listed below:

phone: 1-800-450-8108

email: [info@laddc.org](mailto:info@laddc.org)

website: [www.lacanadvocates.org](http://www.lacanadvocates.org)

facebook: [www.facebook.com/LaDDCouncil](http://www.facebook.com/LaDDCouncil)

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Find your member of the Senate Finance Committee!

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Committee Members are sorted by region. Find your region!

# Louisiana Regions

