

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council
Executive Committee
July 30th, 2025

CHRISTI GONZALES: Good morning everybody. It is now 10:11. The quarterly meeting of the executive committee for the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council will now come to order. I want to thank everybody for attending. Ms. Ebony, could you please call the roll for attendance.

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, ma'am. Ms. Jill Hano.

JILL HANO: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Angela Harmon.

ANGELA HARMON: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Brooke Stewart. Ms. Renoda Washington. Renoda is being moved over so she is here. And Ms. Christi Gonzales.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Here.

EBONY HAVEN: You have four and you have a quorum. Ms. Renoda, can you just say present for me.

RENODA WASHINGTON: Present.

EBONY HAVEN: Thank you. And just remember in order to be counted towards the quorum you have to have your camera on. There we go. Thank you. You have four and you have a quorum.

CHRISTI GONZALES: At this time Ms. Haven will read the mission statement and the ground rules.

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, ma'am. The Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council's mission statement is to increase independence, self-determination, productivity, integration and inclusion for Louisianians with developmental disabilities by engaging in advocacy, capacity building and systems change.

The ground rules are members must be recognized by the chair before speaking. Be respectful of each other's opinions. Break for ten minutes every one and a half hours. Discuss council business in a responsible manner. Except as necessary restrict the use of electronic communication i.e. texting during council and committee meetings. Silence or turn off all cell phones. The mission statement is posted at every meeting. Be on time for meetings. No alphabets. And side conversations are kept to a minimum, done quietly and restricted to the subject at hand.

And I just want to remind everyone that there is an echo in this room so if you're having side conversations it is very hard for our transcriptionist online to hear so I'm just going to ask everyone to keep the side conversations to a minimum. If you have to have them you may want to step outside. And I'll ask all the committee members to speak loudly because there is an echo in here so that our transcriptionist can hear.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Thanks Ebony. To ensure the meeting runs smoothly and we can all participate please adhere to the virtual meeting protocols.

EBONY HAVEN: Okay. So our virtual protocols are to be considered present and counted towards quorum members have to display a live video of their face with their first and last names. Have microphones muted unless called upon by the chairperson. Electronically raise your hand to request to be recognized by the chair in order to speak. Once recognized by the chair your microphone shall be turned on. After speaking the microphone shall be returned to mute. If there are any technical issues in which the staff will monitor. We'll make sure that we have a quorum and if a quorum is lost because of technical issues the meeting will be recessed until we're able to regain the feed. To be allowed to participate for a vote, again, you just have to make sure your video is on and that your name is displayed.

CHRISTI GONZALES: The next item of business is the approval of the meeting summary for the April 30th executive committee meeting which was distributed. The meeting summary will not be read unless a member request it. Are there any corrections to the meeting? All right. Hearing none, the meeting summary is approved as distributed.

The next item of business is consideration of vendors for the FY 2026 action plan activities. The first activity is activity 2.1.2, accessible sexual education to middle and high school aged students. There are three vendor applications to consider. They are Louisiana State University, Mercy Family Center and Team Dynamics. First we will have feedback and discussion from committee members and afterwards we will have public comment. Ebony, do you have any insight to start the discussion?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, I do. Thank you Christi. For those in the public and for those that are online the executive

committee was given a scoring rubric to use in order to rate each proposal for this particular activity in our plan. I'm going to share that rating scale so that everybody can see it and understand how the proposals were rated.

So the first score was based on application elements. And basically the members just made sure that there was a cover sheet, everything that the council asked for, just made sure those elements were present. A cover sheet, a project summary, a work plan, a statement of need, goals, outcomes and action plan, a timeline, evaluation plan, a budget form and letters of support. And for that particular element in the scoring rubric is worth two points for that particular one. This next one...

CHRISTI GONZALES: Is the project summary?

EBONY HAVEN: I was just trying to share it. I'm not sure why...

CHRISTI GONZALES: I can go ahead and read it. The second part of the project summary the first question was were the goals and objectives realistic to achieve the project's desired outcomes. Number two, are the activities clear and specific. Are the timelines reasonable. Number three, does the applicant show they understand and are committed to fully including people with disabilities including those with intense support needs. Number four, does the summary include a plan for what happens after the project ends.

Then the third section was the applicant's qualifications. Question number one, does the applicant have successful experience with similar projects. Number two, can the applicant work well with other groups and agencies. Number three, does the applicant have a plan to involve people with disabilities and their families into the project. And number four, can the applicant handle the contract dollars responsibly.

The fourth area was the statement of need. Number one, was the applicant clear in explaining why the project was needed. Number two, does the project help people with disabilities become more independent and included in the community. Number three, is the target group clearly identified and does the proposal explain why they were chosen. Number four, does the applicant explain how many people will benefit and how will they be reached.

The fifth component were the goals and objectives. Number one, do the goals and objectives match the expected

project outcomes. Number two, do the goals match the needs and outcomes of the project. Number three, is there a plan for what happens after the project ends or how the project can be repeated by others.

The sixth component with number one, do the outcomes match the project's goals. Number two, were they clear and easy to measure. Number three, will the outcomes make a positive impact on the target group.

The seventh component was the action plan. And the first question was does the action plan show how the goals and objectives and outcomes connect. Number two, is the timeline realistic and well planned. Number three, does the action plan explain who will do each task and how it will be completed.

And the last component was the evaluation strategies. The first question, does it explain what data will be collected and when. Second question, will the evaluation plan explain how the data will show where the project met its goals. Number three, does the plan include ways to handle problems or risks that might come up. And it was an overall score out of 50.

EBONY HAVEN: So based on the scoring of rubrics that were turned in from the executive committee you guys each scored LSU, Mercy Family Center and Team Dynamics on all of these elements. And you all stated the average score for LSU was 43.2. The average score for Mercy Family Center was 35.2. And the average score for Team Dynamics was 34.6. And if you guys want to know where the differences were-- did you have a question Jill?

CHRISTI GONZALES: I put the averages here Jill.

EBONY HAVEN: Did you want me to say them one more time? I can.

JILL HANO: Are we reviewing the proposals?

EBONY HAVEN: For the first activity. So the average score for LSU was 43.2. The average score for Mercy Family Center was 35.2. And the average score for Team Dynamics was 34.6. So overall most committee members liked LSU's proposal. And if you guys want to know where the differences were in the scoring I can give you that. It looks like most of the differences were with the goals and objectives, the action plan and the evaluation strategies. One person gave evaluation strategies a two. Someone else gave it a four. For the goals and objectives out of six points someone gave it a four and someone gave it a three.

For the action plan out of six points someone gave it a four. And I would say most people gave it either a five or a six. So those were where the differences were in the goals and objectives, the action plan or evaluation strategy. But overall LSU received the most points from most committee members.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Is there any discussion from committee members? Is there any public comment? We will now entertain a motion regarding a vendor recommendation for activity 2.1.2.

JILL HANO: I do have a question. Is LSU the HEART initiative?

CHRISTI GONZALES: Yes.

JILL HANO: Okay. Sorry.

CHRISTI GONZALES: So do we have a motion? Anybody?

EBONY HAVEN: Do y'all have any questions about the proposal? Do you have a motion or if y'all have a question.

JILL HANO: So Ebony, you said HEART got the most?

EBONY HAVEN: Yeah. On average LSU HEART, it got the highest score. 43.2 is the average. One committee member gave it a 39. One gave it a 45. Another one gave it a 41. Someone gave it a 50, a perfect score. And someone else gave it a 41. But so did Mercy Family Center. Someone gave it a 50 as well.

JILL HANO: So according to the survey LSU won but I really like the Mercy one a lot. But I don't want to go against the grain.

EBONY HAVEN: If you want to tell the committee why you think Mercy should have the contract over LSU then I would pull out some of the elements that you liked in Mercy, the proposal for Mercy Family Center and just sort of discuss that with the committee.

JILL HANO: I just really thought the Mercy one, the proposal was more clear. And I was checking off boxes when like I saw they had (inaudible). I was like that sounds, like I thought they met the expectations. And then their proposal looked good. I just liked their work plan. I just didn't like the way HEART's proposal, I was looking for an easy way to check off boxes and I didn't see that. I read HEART's proposal but there was something specific that targeted that was above the rest. But I would have to go with Mercy. I'm really rusty at this. Sorry.

CHRISTI GONZALES: You're never rusty.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Just one thing for your consideration

if you want to go the Mercy route. I think their proposal is only focused on the greater New Orleans area. At least that's what they put on that first page and in some of their goals I think when they laid out their plan later it talks about the greater New Orleans area. Which is fine if that is what y'all would like to do and focus on that area initially. But that would be something you would have to determine if you wanted this initiative to be statewide.

CHRISTI GONZALES: And another, Jill, just as my opinion this one they're piloting it at the schools, the HEART one, and that's what I liked about it. It wasn't like they were out of school or the parents had to bring them. They were piloting at the school.

JILL HANO: Because when we talked wasn't HEART the one who because they had the sensory (inaudible)?

CHRISTI GONZALES: They had a lot of sensory things and a lot of graphics.

JILL HANO: Okay.

CHRISTI GONZALES: And then going into the schools I thought is what the kids need. Not having to do it out of school. That was a plus for me.

JILL HANO: But I didn't see or I don't remember where is the cover page for HEART?

CHRISTI GONZALES: Right here.

EBONY HAVEN: So for the packets it was like 80 pages so I only put what was really necessary. The LSU one, it will be the same cover page for both of their proposals. For the one that they submitted for women's health and the one they submitted for sex education. So if you want to look at that at the other cover page it's the exact same thing. We're trying to save paper because some of the proposals were very long. They were like 80 pages. So we only, in the packets we only included the actual proposal itself with the action plan, the goals. But you guys were sent everything.

JILL HANO: I didn't see the regions part of LSU.

STEPHANIE CARMONA: (Inaudible).

VIVIENNE WEBB: Are we going to focus on one tiny area or the entire state for this objective? Because if you only focus on a tiny area that's excluding a lot of people with disabilities population and it's important that everyone has accessibility in this. LSU also has a higher rate and chance of success because they have a bigger reach and they seem to want to include everyone in a way. They

mentioned reaching out to people with disabilities and hearing their voices (inaudible). It may not look as fancy as the sensory one but I think (inaudible).

JILL HANO: LSU had the sensory room?

CHRISTI GONZALES: They have an area to do it in. One of the things too, Vivienne, in some of the goals the questions were is there a plan for what happens after the project ends and can it be repeated by others. That's another way they can start in one area and they can repeat it in different areas after that. That was one of our questions we had to answer.

VIVIENNE WEBB: Yeah. But also how long is that going to take to get this out?

CHRISTI GONZALES: I think they have a calendar year, Ebony, I think in their timeline. I think it was a year for each project or a year and something. The timeline for each one I think was a little different.

EBONY HAVEN: If you have a packet, Vivienne, it's in the packet. So phase one which is the goal, design and the curriculum phase that's October to December. Phase two was feedback from January to March 2026. And that is where they do focus groups, surveys, school pilots and then finalize materials. Phase three is the training and implementation phase. That's from April to September. And that's basically where they launch educator models. They had LSU workshops. They do caregiver hybrid workshops and they do school pilots and group districts. Phase four is the evaluation and advocacy phase. So they give pre and post assessments, educator/caregiver survey and then they do policy advocacy using that pilot data that they collect. It's four phases all the way from October to September.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Across three districts.

EBONY HAVEN: And that's the April to September phase, training and implementation phase.

CHRISTI GONZALES: And they are including educators, which I think is a plus. It's not just them giving information to people with developmental disabilities. Here is the information. They're actually educating the educators on how to speak to the students as well, which I think is a plus.

JILL HANO: So to your point, Vivienne, you brought up something I was thinking about. But I really liked Mercy until Brenton or whoever said it was three regions and it's

not just that it's not statewide, it's only three regions. As much as I like it that kind of knocks it out completely for me because even though it is a pilot or whatever like (inaudible).

VIVIENNE WEBB: Yes, thank you. Also are we considering doing a virtual option for these?

STEPHANIE CARMONA: The virtual, like the actual planning of what options and the virtual option that's done internally when we speak to the contractor. If that's something that we're interested in it can be written into the contract, yes. I did want to just let y'all know I found the cover sheet for the LSU initiative and I just pulled it up and I did want to point out they also are not a statewide initiative. I think because both of them are a pilot program (inaudible). And I also just wanted to point out that the only SOP, solicitation of proposals, that does include statewide is Team Dynamics. Just giving y'all the information there.

CHRISTI GONZALES: They're going to pilot it first then they're going to have the option, that was one of the questions, can it be reproduced. So they don't want to make it so big to where, you know, they want to make sure it works first. And then we produce it and go from there. That's something we have to think about.

BRENTON ANDRUS: I just wanted to clarify one thing that I think you had said Jill. In this particular initiative they would do three regions but it's actually three school districts. I can't recall how many districts we have in Louisiana. It's quite a few. This would be three districts which I assume those four parishes are in there. But yes, it's a much smaller group than if you look at it regionally based. So just wanted to clarify that.

JILL HANO: This is where my mind is and I don't know how accurate this is. But I saw on the agenda tomorrow there is something for the 2026 action plan. Like can we make a change for it to be, like to get a pilot program that way we pick either one of these who are both pilot programs is still a lot with the action plan or is that set in stone?

EBONY HAVEN: So Jill, the way the activity is written, and this is how it reads, provide financial support to provide appropriate accessible sexual education to middle and high school aged people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. So that could come in the form of a pilot program. It could come in the form of any

way you guys want to structure that. I think that the way the activity is written in the action plan currently it will cover anything. I don't think you have to make any minor changes to say pilot program in the action plan.

JILL HANO: Okay. Thank you Ebony.

VIVIENNE WEBB: Can we get more specific about that. So like for the pilot program it's a smaller number of districts served but you can like increase that number maybe like each year. So it's still growing but you also know exactly what's happening still.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Thank you Vivienne. Do we have a motion regarding a vendor recommendation for activity 2.1.2? The choices are Louisiana State University, the HEART Initiative, Mercy Family Center, Sexual Education for Youth with Disabilities and their Families and Team Dynamics, Appropriate and Accessible Sexual Education, Understanding and Building Healthy Relationships. Angela, Renoda, would y'all like to make a motion?

BRENTON ANDRUS: So just a reminder this is in your action plan and you have to do it. So someone from the committee would have to make a decision to put a motion out there.

JILL HANO: I will motion to pick-- who had the highest rating Ebony?

CHRISTI GONZALES: The HEART initiative.

EBONY HAVEN: LSU had the highest rating.

JILL HANO: I motion that we pick the HEART initiative. I motion LSU.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Is there a second?

ANGELA HARMON: I'll second it. I can't hear you. I can't hear what y'all are saying. This is Angela. I'm sorry.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Can you hear me now?

ANGELA HARMON: It's like you're talking in a drum. Then it gets loud. Then it gets low. I apologize. I'm kind of missing what y'all are saying.

CHRISTI GONZALES: That's okay. Angela seconds. It is moved and seconded to go ahead and accept the Louisiana State University's vendor application, the HEART initiative. We recommend the proposal from LSU HEART initiative for activity 2.1.2. Made by Jill Hano and seconded by Angela Harmon. Is there any objections or abstentions? All in favor of the motion say aye.

{Collective aye}

EBONY HAVEN: You have a do a roll call vote. Ms. Jill Hano.

JILL HANO: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Jill Hano, yes. Ms. Angela Harmon.

ANGELA HARMON: Yea.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Angela Harmon, yes. Ms. Brooke Stewart. Ms. Renoda Washington.

RENODA WASHINGTON: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Renoda Washington, yes. You have three yeas.

CHRISTI GONZALES: All right.

EBONY HAVEN: Zero nays.

CHRISTI GONZALES: The yeases have it and the motion is adopted. The next activity we have is activity 2.3.1 accessible educational materials on women's preventative health. There are four vendor applications to consider. The vendors are Tulane University, Team Dynamics, Nicholls State University and LSU. We did use the same questions and rubric for this as well so that everybody knows. We will have feedback and discussion from committee members and afterwards we will have public comment. Ebony.

EBONY HAVEN: Okay. So again, we had Tulane, Nicholls, Team Dynamics and LSU apply for this activity. And this is to provide those educational accessible materials on women's preventative health. Whenever I got the totals for the scores, here they are right here in this table. The average for LSU was 42.2. The average for Tulane women's health was 33.2. The average for Team Dynamics was 35.8. And the average for Nicholls State was 21. So again LSU had the highest rating. And if you want to look at some differences in where the scores kind of vary the action plan for Tulane varied a lot. One person gave it a two and then two other people gave it a five and a six. For Team Dynamics I would say I guess the differences were for the goals and objectives. Well, not really. The statement of need. One member gave it a four. Two other people gave it an eight. So there were just some differences in I guess some of the information provided in those particular proposals in the statement of need and it looks like the action plan. For the most part the other ones rated pretty high. For Team Dynamics one member (inaudible). But again LSU did have the highest score, average score with Team Dynamics coming in second.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Are there any discussions from

council members? Angela, Renoda?

ANGELA HARMON: I heard my name but I'm not sure what you said.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Do you have any discussions?

ANGELA HARMON: On just the one we chose overall?

CHRISTI GONZALES: Yes. Team Dynamics was the second one. Tulane was the third one. And first was LSU.

ANGELA HARMON: I highly recommend LSU as well so I don't really have any discussion because I liked the fact they were even going to include like AT devices and they were going to put it in plain language. So that kind of won me over for both of their components. I'm in favor of it honestly. Can y'all hear me okay?

CHRISTI GONZALES: Yes, ma'am. Any public comment? Do we have a motion regarding a vendor recommendation for activity 2.3.1? We have Tulane University which scored an average of 33.2. Team Dynamics which had an average of 35.8. Nicholls had an average of 21. And LSU had an average of 42.2. Are there any motions?

JILL HANO: I really liked Team Dynamics.

CHRISTI GONZALES: So does anyone from the committee have a motion for which one we should choose?

EBONY HAVEN: I think the people online are having a hard time. They are probably having a hard time hearing me as well. So you may want to speak a little louder because Angela or Renoda may not be able to hear well and they may want to make a motion but I'm not sure.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Angela or Renoda, would y'all like to make a motion in favor of one of the programs or vendors?

ANGELA HARMON: I heard make a motion so I guess make a motion for LSU. I don't know what else I need to say for 2. whatever, whatever. I hear y'all loudness but it's more it's echoing so much I can't really understand what you guys are saying. That's all. So I would like to make the motion. Just kind of guide it along for me. For LSU.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Okay. Thank you. Is there a second? Jill or Renoda? So we have a motion from Angela to go ahead and accept the vendor from LSU. And do we have a second? Jill, did you second it? I'm sorry. I didn't hear you.

JILL HANO: I said okay.

CHRISTI GONZALES: So the executive committee recommends the proposal from LSU's HEART initiative for activity 2.3.1 made by Angela Harmon, seconded by Jill

Hano. Ebony, can we have a roll call.

EBONY HAVEN: Jill Hano.

JILL HANO: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Jill Hano, yes. Ms. Angela Harmon.

ANGELA HARMON: Yes.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Angela Harmon, yes. Ms. Brooke Stewart. Ms. Renoda Washington. Ms. Renoda, can you hear us?

I think she's going through a bad area right now. But you still have a quorum with Ms. Harmon online. That's two yeas and no nays.

CHRISTI GONZALES: So the yeases do have it and the motion is adopted. Motion passes. Is there any public comment at this time? Thanks everyone for their comments, questions and concerns. At this time we will have announcements read by Ebony.

EBONY HAVEN: Yes. The only announcements I have are the additional committee meetings that are going to be happening today from 12:45 to 2:30. We have the self-determination and community inclusion committee. From 2:45 to 4 p.m. we have our Act 378 subcommittee. And from 4:15 to 6:00 p.m. we have our education and employment committee. And that's all the announcements I have for now.

CHRISTI GONZALES: Is there any further business? Hearing none. If there is no objection we will go ahead and adjourn the meeting at 11:03. Hearing none, the meeting is now adjourned.