



Continuing Education

Volume 4 Number 4 - *The Weekly Newsletter of the SBBA* - January 26, 2015



Higher Education Quote of the Week:

"I'm not saying there are any plans to close colleges, I'm just saying if you take \$65 million dollars out of the budget, a University like LSU, is going to close major sections of it." - *LSU Baton Rouge Faculty Senate President Dr. Kevin Cope*



Quick Links

Colleges and

Dear Johnette,

The dire predictions of cuts to higher education - possibly as high as \$300+ million - that we've been hearing for the last few weeks were based on an expected state deficit next fiscal year of \$1.4 billion. Unfortunately, that deficit number is no longer considered accurate.

Since the Revenue Estimating Conference met last November, the price of oil has continued to decline, so at today's meeting, the Conference projected the deficit to be \$1.6 billion for the upcoming fiscal year. There will also be a second mid-year cut this year of \$103 million on top of the earlier mid-year cut of \$170 million. But like the prior mid-year cut, we expect the administration to take this \$103 million out of another pocket and not place the cut on higher ed.

There is no word yet on how the higher deficit projection might impact the size of the proposed cuts to higher ed in FY2015-2016.

Shreveport-Bossier Higher Education News

- The Patrick F. Taylor Foundation has voted to give \$920,000 to Louisiana Tech to be used to fund merit awards and first generation scholarships. Patrick Taylor is credited with spearheading the TOPS scholarship program which was named after him. ***Shreveport Times, 01.22.15***
- In Sunday's Shreveport Times, LSU President F. King Alexander highlighted the many LSU successes in NWLA. Of the LSUS Commitment Plan he wrote, "The plan has already reaped impressive results - results that directly impact every aspect of the community." ***Shreveport Times, 01.22.15***

Louisiana Higher Education News

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- State Treasurer John Kennedy says plans to cut the higher education budget by \$300 million would "gut" our colleges and likely lead to massive layoffs. His solution would be to cut all consulting contracts by ten percent. "I'd provide the postage through my budget," he said. "I think most of them would take it to keep getting paid." ***Shreveport Times, 01.23.15***
- The LSU leadership and faculty in Baton Rouge is speaking out on how a \$60 million cut to their university would harm the campus and devastate faculty morale. LSU President King Alexander said if the cuts come through, he will have to suspend up to 125 faculty and staff searches. ***NOLA.com, 1.26.15***
- In an effort to avoid \$300 million in cuts to higher ed, legislators are entertaining some unconventional options. "This year is different, and it's compounded by the price of oil," said State Representative Brett Geymann. "The decline in oil prices exposed the shaky ground we've been built on over the past decade. There's no other way out of it." ***The Advocate, 01.26.15***

National Higher Education News

- While President Barack Obama wants the federal government to start covering tuition costs for community college students, he wants to end the tax breaks for 529 accounts, a popular college savings vehicle for families. Senator Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn), who heads up the committee overseeing education, says the proposal is "sure to go nowhere in Congress." ***Wall Street Journal, 01.23.15***

For more information on higher education in Northwest Louisiana, please visit our website at www.sbba4he.org

Sincerely,

***Johnette Magner, Ph.D., Executive Director
Shreveport-Bossier Business Alliance for Higher Education***

You are welcome to forward this newsletter to others in your network who are interested in higher education.

For more information on becoming a member of the SBBA, or providing direct support for our work, please contact Dr. Johnette Magner at jmagner@sbba4he.org

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