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LERA GIVES RESEARCH IN EDUCATION
A LOUISIANA APPROACH

by ROBERT BLACKMON

Is the reorganization and revitalization of the Louisiana Education Research Association (LERA) desirable or feasible? That was the question addressed by twenty educators who met at LSU April 26, 1974. They found the answer to the question was "yes" in all respects.

Because acting LERA Executive Secretary Robert Blackmon felt that one of the causes of LERA's recent inactivity was its narrow base of support, he issued an invitation to more than one hundred persons, school boards, colleges, and education and professional organizations. In making the invitation Blackmon was acting under the old LERA Constitution which named the Director of the LSU Bureau of Educational Materials and Research as the continuing Executive Secretary.

In the April meeting the group studied and revised the LERA Constitution carried over from the era of distinguished activity which characterized LERA prior to a recent period of relative inactivity. An interim Advisory Committee was appointed to plan for a July meeting with an expanded representation. That Committee included Robert Blackmon, LSU, Interim Chairman; Arthur Greene, Louisiana School Boards Association; Herbert Gregory, Phi Delta Kappa of Louisiana and SLU; Ted Griffin, St. Landry Parish School Board; James Hobbs, McNeese State University; Joseph May, USL; William Parker, Xavier University; Kenward Viator, Iberia Parish School Board; and J. N. Williams, Visiting Teachers of Louisiana.

On the basis of input from the April meeting and conference with the Advisory Committee, Blackmon developed the statement of purposes which was accepted, with some revision, at a plenary session of LERA on July 17, 1974, at LSU. The purposes of LERA include the following:

1) Promoting and expanding interest in educational research activities in Louisiana;
2) Disseminating information on educational research programs in Louisiana;
3) Providing information about the research activities of colleagues;
4) Establishing between institutions, organizations, and individuals lines of communication for educational research;
5) Promoting membership in and support of regional and national educational research organizations;
6) Identifying areas of research needed in education, particularly as related to Louisiana;
7) Funding LERA research studies and publications;
8) Contracting for and performing educational research projects upon the request of organizations, institutions or individuals.

The new constitution abolished the automatic election of the Executive Secretary of the Louisiana School Boards Association as the LERA Secretary-Treasurer and the LSU Bureau of Educational Materials and Research Director as the LERA Executive Secretary. The reorganization created an Executive Council designed to provide for broad, rotating membership. The following LERA Executive Council was elected: Robert Blackmon, President; James Hobbs, Vice President; Arthur Greene, Treasurer; Dan Lewis, State Department of Education; Houston Jenks, St. Charles Parish School Board, Representative for Local Education Agencies; and Charles Smith, LSU Representative for Individual Members.

Also, at the July meeting, four committees were appointed. Two ad hoc committees were for the purpose of planning for the establishment of a refereed LER Journal and establishing the business operations of LERA. Two continuing committees were appointed to identify research problems appropriate to LERA's purposes and constituents and to develop a membership program to broaden LERA's base of support. A Plenary Session in July will include a business luncheon, paper reading sessions, and distinguished research organization mini-seminars. Suggestions for that session are invited.

As of October 1, 1974, the LERA membership consisted of 22 institutional members and 31 individual members. Institutional memberships included six colleges; eight school boards; seven professional organizations, including LTA's, ACT, and the Louisiana State Department of Education. Individual membership includes twenty-two college personnel, seven officials from local education agencies, one from a professional organization, and one from the Louisiana State Department of Education. Annual dues for Institutional Membership are twenty dollars, and annual dues for Individual Membership are five dollars. Individual members may be nominated for membership by an officer or any LERA institutional representative.

Changing circumstances, shifts in personnel and their duties, financial straits, and other factors led to a gradual decline in LERA activities in recent years as compared to the outstanding leadership, since LERA's beginning, by its successive Executive Secretaries, M. S. Robertson, C. W. Hilton, Donald E. Shipp, J. Berton Gremillion, and Red M. Smith. During their tenures as Director of LSU's Bureau of Educational Materials and Research, LERA maintained an effective working relationship with the Louisiana School Boards Association. Through the Bureau and with heavy support from LSBA, LERA productions included such books and research studies as School Finance in Louisiana, The Rivers and Bayous of Louisiana, Highlights of Progress in Public Education in Louisiana, In-Service Education Activities of Louisiana School Systems, and The Effect of Industrial Tax Exemptions on Local School Revenues in Louisiana. (Reprinted from Louisiana Schools, December, 1974.)

Editorial Note: This article was prepared by Robert Blackmon, a past president of LERA, to provide a historical perspective on the reorganization of the association.
STATEMENT OF EDITORIAL POLICIES

The LOUISIANA EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL is intended to serve educators of the State of Louisiana and to advance knowledge related to professional education. The editor is interested in publishing a variety of papers, including empirical studies, expository papers, scholarly discussions of points of view, selected abstracts of dissertations, and short descriptions of innovative educational programs.

Papers should deal with significant problems in educational research and should advance the state of knowledge in some generalizable way. Manuscripts should be clearly written and as concise as possible. Empirical studies should be appropriately designed and executed.

Manuscripts should be submitted in triplicate and conform in style to similar articles found in recent issues of the JOURNAL. This style is generally consistent with that found in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. An abstract of no more than 150 words must accompany the article. All figures should be drawn in black ink and be ready for photographing. A more detailed Style Sheet can be obtained from the Editor.

Manuscripts for inclusion in the JOURNAL will be selected by the Editorial Board of Referees. The usual procedure is for each manuscript and a review checklist to be sent, with the author's name deleted, to qualified reviewers. When the reviews and checklists have been received by the editor, he writes the author of his decision, the reasons for the decision, and frequently includes copies of one or more of the reviews. Generally two or three months may elapse between receipt of a manuscript and notification regarding its disposition. Shorter review times are not uncommon and longer review periods are sometimes needed. Specific suggestions for revision are offered frequently for papers which are rejected, sometimes with encouragement to the author to resubmit.

Manuscripts should be submitted to: Dan Jordan
Editor of LERA
U.S.L. Box 4-0310
Lafayette, LA 70504

SUBSCRIPTIONS

LETRA Individual members receive subscriptions to the LERA JOURNAL as one of the privileges of membership. Subscriptions are available to non-members at the current rate of $5 per year (2 issues). Rates will be increased soon. Make check or money order payable to: Editor, LOUISIANA EDUCATION RESEARCH JOURNAL. Send Change-of-Address notices (together with your address labels) and all other correspondence regarding subscriptions to the Editor.

NOTE: Since Individual Membership Dues for LERA are only $7.50 per year currently, potential subscribers will probably want to become members in order to receive also PERSPECTIVES (LETRA newsletter) and the occasional packets of materials sent to members. Institutional Memberships for professional education associations, state and local education agencies, and higher education units are
$25 per year currently and include 3 copies of each issue of the Journal (1 Institutional Representative and 2 Institutional Memberships) and of the mail-out materials packets.

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*PAST PRESIDENTS OF LERA:
1974 - 1975 - Dr. C. Robert Blackmon
1975 - 1976 - Dr. C. Robert Blackmon
1976 - 1977 - Dr. Dwight Hobbs**
1976 - 1977 - Dr. Houston C. Jenks
1977 - 1978 - Dr. Allen St. Martin

*The above served as President of the LERA since its reorganization in 1974.

**Resigned soon after his election.

CONSTITUTION
of the
Louisiana Education Research Association
12265 Parkwood Avenue
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70815
(As revised and approved, July 17, 1974 — and amended, July 19, 1977)

The Louisiana Education Research Association (LERA), a non-profit organization established in 1956, is an association of organizations, and individuals interested in improving education in Louisiana through research. The LERA adheres to the principle of non-discrimination in regard to race, color, sex, creed, or national origin. The LERA is a non-political organization and does not espouse or lobby for partisan causes.

PURPOSES

The purposes of the LERA include:

1) Promoting and expanding interest in educational research activities in Louisiana;
2) Disseminating information on educational research programs in Louisiana;
3) Providing information about the research activities of colleagues;
4) Establishing between institutions, organizations, and individuals lines of communication for educational research;
5) Promoting membership in and support of regional and national educational research organizations;
6) Identifying areas of research needed in education, particularly as related to Louisiana;
7) Funding LERA research studies and publications;
8) Contracting for and performing educational research projects upon the request of organizations, institutions or individuals.

MEMBERSHIP

Organizations eligible for membership include, subject to approval by the LERA Executive Council, educational associations, institutions, organizations, school systems, and other organized groups interested in education. Subject to approval by the LERA Executive Council, a person may be nominated by an officer of a LERA member organization for an individual membership.