

February 1, 2026

Robert F. Dodd

Dear University of Louisiana at Lafayette Presidential Search Committee Members,

My name is Robert F. Dodd. I am writing to introduce myself and declare my intention to become the seventh president of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (UL Lafayette). I am the proud father of four adult daughters and grandfather of one grandson. My father was raised in Baton Rouge, and my maternal grandmother, Dr. Carol E. Dodd, was an esteemed educator in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and Mandeville. My Louisiana roots run deep, as does my broad and varied experience in education and educational leadership.

In twenty-nine years of experience as an educator and educational leader at all levels from K-12 through higher education, I have developed the knowledge, skills, and abilities to help continue and expand upon the established success of UL Lafayette as a premier institution of higher education. As an educational leader, I have found that a combination of leadership styles such as situational leadership, servant leadership, and transformational leadership has been beneficial in collaborating with other administrators, faculty, and staff. In addition, I have experience in the areas of psychometrics, assessment, and accreditation, which provides me with the ability to effectively collaborate with other leaders to make data-driven decisions that are aligned with strategic priorities.

Through my own research on the constructs of trust, communication, and collaboration, I have concluded that the most effective educational leaders focus on improving communication and building trust within the organization. When communication and trust are high, collaboration also increases. I will apply these principles to every facet of my work as the next president of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

During my tenure with the Biomedical Research Alliance of New York (BRANY) TechSoftware division, I have had the opportunity to develop an increased appreciation for the importance of research in establishing and sustaining the viability of universities such as UL Lafayette. In this position, I have also gained valuable experience in the administration and management of grants and sponsored programs initiatives at a variety of universities and hospitals throughout the United States. In addition, as Director of the Institutional Review Board and the designated Human Research Protections Program (HRPP) official at Northcentral University (now National University), I applied my knowledge and experience in ensuring the university's compliance with all applicable regulations related to research and led the development and implementation of policies and procedures that supported an increase in research and funding opportunities for faculty and students. This experience will be invaluable as I lead UL Lafayette in its ongoing research initiatives and in maintaining integrity in all research and sponsored programs activities.

As an educational leader and principal in K-12 education, I gained valuable leadership experience that is transferable to leadership in higher education. During my tenure as principal of a K-8 school, I implemented a strategic planning process based on Edmunds and Lezotte's "Correlates of Effective Schools." We established a committee for each of the correlates of effective schools and developed goals, objectives, and tasks for each of the committees based on their relevance to the committee's purpose. The results were increased faculty engagement, clear priorities, improved collaboration, a more positive school climate, and increased student success. As president of UL Lafayette, I will ensure that similar processes are implemented at all levels across the university and that strategic planning processes are based on the body of knowledge and continuing research findings on the elements of exceptional colleges and universities.

At Appalachian State University, I led the development and implementation of an electronic system for demonstrating the proficiency of teacher and administrator candidates in the college of education's undergraduate and graduate programs. This system was developed to conform to state department of education requirements for teacher and administrator preparation programs in North Carolina. In this position, I also served as the college of education's liaison with the university's office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (IRAP). I ensured that every department and program in the college of education established a vision, mission, goals, objectives, tasks, and a systematic and continuous method for collecting data and evaluating progress, all of which were aligned with the university's strategic plan, assessment and evaluation processes, and SACS accreditation requirements. I also served as a member of the university's SACS reaffirmation committee. This experience will enable me to engage effectively with leaders and faculty at UL Lafayette to continue a cycle of strategic planning, evaluation, assessment, and improvement that is consistent with applicable accreditation standards and best practices.

As president of UL Lafayette, one of my priorities will be to leverage human and financial resources in a way that dramatically increases student retention and graduation rates. As I am sure you are aware, the third president of UL Lafayette, Dr. Joel Lafayette Fletcher, was known for his commitment to student success. While preparing to write this letter, I discovered a UL Lafayette web page summarizing the history of each former UL Lafayette president's contributions to the university. I was particularly impressed by the following statement describing Dr. Fletcher's commitment to student success:

Any student who was planning to resign from SLI was required to first talk with Dr. Fletcher so the president could determine whether anything could be done to enable him or her to stay in school.

Dr. Fletcher's tenure as president was during an era (1941-1965) in which such an initiative was more feasible in terms of student enrollment numbers than it would be today, but the importance of retaining students and supporting their success is as relevant now as it was then. We can and should do more to help our students "stay in school" and earn a degree from UL Lafayette.

The University of California Berkeley (ranked as the top public university by U.S. News and World Report in 2026) has a 4-year graduation rate for first-year students of around 80%, and an overall 6-year graduation rate of around 90%. During my tenure as president of UL Lafayette, I will be committed to

ensuring that UL Lafayette improves dramatically in these areas. If UC Berkeley can do it, UL Lafayette can do it and *do it better*. It will be a significant focus of my administration to align human and financial resources, including implementing salary incentives for faculty, staff, and leaders at UL Lafayette to set and meet annual goals for improving graduation and retention rates for UL Lafayette students.

To improve graduation and retention rates at UL Lafayette, as president, I will implement the following initiatives in collaboration with other university leaders:

- Prioritize recruiting, hiring, and retaining exceptional faculty members and providing these faculty members in a timely manner with the resources required for them to initiate and sustain innovative research and teaching activities. This will include upgrading laboratory facilities and equipment on campus where research occurs.
- Comprehensively evaluate and streamline degree program requirements without compromising academic rigor and within required parameters for maintaining university accreditation.
- Enhance academic advising and support for incoming students by hiring student advisors whose sole responsibility will be to support and improve student degree planning, retention, and persistence.
- Implement a systematic and sustainable method for outreach to students who are not making satisfactory academic progress and students who withdrew from UL Lafayette prior to degree completion.
- Provide more flexible alternatives to withdrawing from UL Lafayette, such as leaves of absence, for students who are experiencing life and/or financial challenges.
- Increase opportunities for student engagement within the university and in the community, including expansion of the Advance Student Research Experience (ASRE).
- Increase online degree program offerings with a more flexible academic calendar.
- Expand access to 4+1 Bachelor's to Master's degree programs and implement similar Master's to PhD/EdD programs.
- Expand access to the high school dual enrollment/University Connection program.

During the time that I worked in student affairs as an advisor for doctoral candidates, I became more fully aware that all students, regardless of degree program or level, need support. They need someone with whom to communicate about the challenges they are facing, remind them why they started on their academic journey, and support them until they achieve their goals, graduate, and hang that diploma on the wall with pride. When I become president of UL Lafayette, there will be nothing more important to me than ensuring that all students have access to this kind of support.

My commitment to student engagement, retention, persistence, and graduation is further evidenced through my work as an assistant principal at a high school in West Virginia. During this time, I participated in the West Virginia Principals' Leadership Academy, which was sponsored by the West Virginia Department of Education. Through participation in the leadership academy, I proposed an action research project to be implemented at the high school where I was an assistant principal. The proposal was based on a summary of research related to student retention and graduation rates in high

school. A key finding of the research related to the importance of ninth graders successfully completing credits required for graduation; a successful ninth grade year is a strong predictor that a student will graduate. A strong relationship between student engagement and graduation rates was also evident in the research.

I was recognized by the Principals' Leadership Academy as a Distinguished Scholar for proposing the implementation of a peer mentoring program for ninth graders in which faculty would nominate outstanding eleventh and twelfth grade students to serve as peer mentors for the ninth graders. Feedback from faculty and students after the implementation of the program was positive.

Community engagement will be one of my priorities as president of UL Lafayette – not only for myself, but also for the entire university, including leaders, faculty, staff, and students. A requirement when I graduated from high school was to complete one hundred hours of community service during my senior year. The high school I attended had a community service coordinator who managed assignments of students to provide service in various community organizations. My community service work in high school, and beyond, has been a transformative experience for me. While I will not initially advocate for community service to be a UL Lafayette graduation requirement, I will advocate for expanding relationships with community organizations and building internal capacity at UL Lafayette to encourage, facilitate, and provide incentives for students who choose to participate in community service activities.

In addition to my educational experience, for the past ten years, I have also been involved through my consulting business with coordinating care and support for senior citizens, one of the most under-supported and under-represented segments of our population. A priority for me as president of UL Lafayette will be to expand opportunities for students to participate in community service activities, especially those involving senior citizens. Imagine a UL Lafayette student, a music major, who visits an assisted living facility to perform for and entertain the residents. The student meets a resident who has had a prolific career in music and learns that the resident earned a degree in music from UL Lafayette. A connection forms. Both lives become enriched. This kind of experience can be life-changing for both the student and the senior citizen. As president of UL Lafayette, I will promote the expansion of such service opportunities for our students through engagement with community leaders and organizations.

It is my understanding that UL Lafayette is currently experiencing financial challenges both in terms of revenue and expenses. As president, I will be committed not only to preventing salary reductions for faculty, staff, and administrators, but also to determining how best to increase salaries in a responsible manner. Salary increases will only be possible when revenue is increased and/or expenses are reduced. It will be a priority for me to work diligently and collaboratively with other university leaders to accomplish both objectives after completing a comprehensive evaluation of the university's financial situation. Because I am aware of the current financial challenges the university is facing, I am willing to accept a first-year salary of \$350,000, which is approximately \$200,000 less on an annual basis than compensation recently paid to a UL Lafayette president.

I also want to address the importance of athletics at UL Lafayette. I have been a life-long athlete. Lessons I have learned through participation in athletics throughout my life have contributed

significantly to who I am as a person, an educator, and a leader. Athletics can contribute significantly to campus culture, institutional pride, community relations, and admissions. Direct and indirect participation in athletics can be an important part of the educational experience for students. When athletic programs run at a deficit, it is important to evaluate the less tangible benefits and contributions of these programs to the overall success of the university. I believe in the importance of expanding the success of the athletic programs at UL Lafayette, and I will work diligently with other university leaders, stakeholders, and community members to ensure that UL Lafayette is not only competitive, but exceptional in terms of the performance and financial viability of its athletic programs.

I will close with an analogy that I believe will be recognizable and resonant:

When I become the next president of UL Lafayette, it will be my first opportunity to lead a university. Sean Payton had never been the head coach of an NFL football team until the New Orleans Saints hired him in 2006. Three years later, the Saints won the Super Bowl. Jake Delhomme was never the full-time starting quarterback during his time with the New Orleans Saints, but when given the opportunity to be the starting quarterback for the Carolina Panthers in 2003, he led the team to an appearance in the Super Bowl. These men maximized their opportunities to lead after years of working and learning in their chosen professions and patiently waiting for an opportunity to demonstrate their abilities on a larger stage. Given the opportunity to lead the University of Lafayette into the future as this proud institution's seventh president, I will apply my broad and varied experience in education and educational leadership to ensure that the university reaches new heights in research, academics, student success, community engagement, innovation, financial viability, and athletics.

My CV contains additional details regarding my education and experience. I welcome any questions the search committee may have.

Respectfully,



Robert F. Dodd

Robert F. Dodd, PhD

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Twenty-nine years of progressively responsible experience in education and educational leadership as a higher education administrator, K-12 principal and assistant principal, school and district level administrator, teacher, university level doctoral candidate advisor, assessment coordinator, Institutional Review Board director; Extensive experience leading strategic planning initiatives, positively engaging stakeholders, and evaluating progress toward achieving strategic goals and objectives; Broad experience in the areas of research compliance and sponsored programs; Demonstrated ability to build strong relationships with diverse stakeholders and to effectively communicate data and analyses to a wide range of audiences; Strong ability to manage multiple projects of varying complexity, priority and length; Excellent oral and written communication skills, as demonstrated by the ability to articulate ideas, thoughts, and information in a logical manner to address complex issues with clarity, integrity, and transparency; Extensive experience developing and administering surveys and analyzing and presenting results; Demonstrated leadership and expertise in the areas of program evaluation, institutional assessment, accreditation.

EDUCATION

Northcentral University/National University 2020
PhD – Education, Organizational Leadership
Dissertation Title: *Leader-Follower Relationships in Educational Organizations: A Quantitative Correlational Study Examining Potential Moderating Effects among Trust, Communication, and Collaboration* (ProQuest ID: 27998551)

Appalachian State University 2010
Ed. S. – Higher Education Administration

University of Texas at Arlington 2001
M.Ed. – Educational Administration
Educational Leadership Cohort

University of Dallas 1997
B.A. – Elementary Education
Area of Concentration – English

TECHNOLOGY COMPETENCIES

IRBManager/OneAegis; Banner; TracDat; TK20/Taskstream; Qualtrics; MS Office - Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook; SPSS; Various K-12 and Higher Education Course Management, Survey, and Assessment Software Programs and Web-Based Utilities

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Support Team Specialist – Research Compliance 6/19 to Present
Biomedical Research Alliance of New York (BRANY) – TechSoftware Division

Support clients with development and implementation of OneAegis/IRBManager software. Clients include hospitals, VAs, universities (including UL Lafayette), and other organizations with human and animal research compliance programs, institutional biosafety committees, radiation safety committees, regulated foreign travel, and sponsored programs requirements.

Director, Institutional Review Board (IRB) 1/16 to 6/19
Northcentral University (San Diego, CA)

Led the human subjects research program for the university; Served as the designated Human Research Protections Programs (HRPP) administrator on the university's registration with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP). Aligned policies and procedures with federal regulations and in support of the expansion of research opportunities for faculty and students at the university; Ensured researcher compliance with university policy and federal regulations; Coordinated the hiring, training, supervision, and evaluation of IRB committee members; Collaborated with institutional officials and the IRB chair to support and expand university research initiatives.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Professional 2/15 to 1/16
Northcentral University (Scottsdale, AZ)

Managed the daily workflow and processing of IRB reviews; Processed and recorded IRB applications and related documents and information as they were received; Assisted the IRB director with development and implementation of standard operating policies and procedures; Provided ongoing support to faculty members and researchers; Coordinated the activities of the IRB Full Board.

Doctoral Student Advisor 11/13 to 2/15
Northcentral University (Scottsdale, AZ)

Served as the primary point of contact for approximately 500 doctoral candidates; identified at-risk students and educated and motivated them to increase their likelihood of progressing to graduation; Completed key daily and weekly operating tasks using metrics such as retention, course participation, and course acceptance rates; Served on a committee charged with development of a vision, mission, student learning outcomes, and means of assessment for the student services department.

Assistant Principal

8/11 to 6/13

University High School (Morgantown, WV)

Provided instructional and general leadership in support of the school and district mission and vision; Coordinated special education and all related services and programs, faculty, staff, and students; Managed student discipline; supervised English, world languages, business and technical education, and fine arts departments; Coordinated ACT and ACT PLAN, NAEP, WESTEST, and APTA, and COMPASS assessments; Managed Student Assistance Team (SAT) and Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) team; Provided training to school and district employees in non-violent crisis intervention as a Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) certified instructor; Coordinated field trips, fundraising activities, positive school climate initiatives and committee, and provided support for Professional Learning Communities.

Research Associate for Teacher Education Assessment

8/08 to 07/11

Reich College of Education, Appalachian State University (Boone, NC)

Coordinated all assessment activities for teacher and administrator licensure programs; Served on college and university level assessment and accreditation committees; Worked with the dean, associate dean, department chairs, and program coordinators to develop assessment plans and data collection instruments; Managed implementation of TK20 and TracDat assessment management software and provided ongoing training and support to faculty and students in all undergraduate and graduate degree programs; Integrated assessment data into reports related to program evaluation and improvement, and for accreditation purposes.

Assessment and Data Analyst

11/05 to 2/08

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (Charlotte, NC)

Coordinated training in value-added assessment reporting for leaders in all district schools, departments, and area offices; Administered, scanned, scored, analyzed and reported the results of the district's formative assessment program to a variety of stakeholders; Assisted with development and implementation of all aspects of the district-wide assessment and accountability system.

Test Content Editor

12/04 to 11/05

CTB/McGraw-Hill (Monterey, CA)

Initiated individual and team reviews of test items and passages; Facilitated groups of teachers performing test item review sessions for the Arizona and Colorado Departments of Education; Developed test forms meeting specifications for reliability, validity, and difficulty.

Principal

8/01 to 11/04

Desert Heights Charter School (Glendale, AZ)

Provided curriculum and instructional leadership, including strategic planning initiatives and processes; Represented the school in the community; Recruited, hired, and evaluated employees; Planned and coordinated professional development; Developed a comprehensive technology plan; Coordinated assessment; Ensured legal and regulatory compliance with state and federal programs, including special education; Projected, monitored, and managed revenues and expenses responsibly; Managed the maintenance and upkeep of the facility.

Assistant School Director

7/99 to 7/01

*Advantage Schools, Inc.**Oak Cliff Academy (Dallas, Texas)*

Performed approximately thirty classroom observations each week; Provided feedback to teachers based on data collected during observations; Planned and delivered formal and informal professional development for teachers based on data collected during classroom observations; Facilitated weekly grade level team meetings for all grade levels; Collected, analyzed, and interpreted data to monitor student progress and mastery of the curriculum; Provided ongoing training and instructional support to teachers.

Elementary School Teacher

8/97 to 7/99

*Advantage Schools, Inc.**Phoenix Advantage Charter School (Phoenix, AZ)**Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School (Worcester, MA)*

Taught all subject areas to second-grade and third-grade students; Worked collaboratively with administration and grade level team members to ensure horizontal and vertical alignment of curriculum and proper instructional pacing; Participated in student intervention team meetings and implemented interventions, accommodations, and modifications as needed; Communicated regularly with parents regarding students' progress; Served on school-wide committees and task forces.

Self-Employment**Owner and Chief Executive Officer**

2015-Present

Insight Educational Consulting, L.L.C. (Founded, 2013)

Provide consulting services to client agencies delivering non-medical, in-home help for senior citizens. Services offered include, but are not limited to: strategic planning, human resources assistance, caregiver and client scheduling and invoicing, caregiver and client recruitment and retention, payroll management, and marketing.