



Committee for
**Educational
Excellence**

2011 STRATEGIC PLAN

A strategic plan document developed in 2011 by a volunteer committee of Baton Rouge area community leaders with the benefit of broader community input and cooperative support from the East Baton Rouge Parish School System.

INTRODUCTION

The charge of a school board is to establish strategic direction, set clear education and operations policy to guide management decision making, hire a Superintendent to manage the school system, and oversee the finances of the school system. Citizens located within the boundaries of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) elected a new School Board in late 2010. The newly-elected Board members were installed in early 2011 and soon thereafter began to assess the policy goals of the prior Board.

Typically, the EBRPSS Board has developed a new strategic plan every four or five years. The newly-elected Board decided that the current strategic plan (developed in 2008) was in need of an update.

One additional concern raised by the new Board was that community and parental involvement in schools and public education has decreased over the years. Given this concern and the need for a new strategic plan, the Board decided to use a strategic planning process borrowed from other districts around the country that brings the community into the process. The so-called community-led strategic planning process (utilized in districts such as Pueblo, Colorado and Montgomery, Alabama) invites community members to serve on a planning committee and encourages broad public input through topic-specific subcommittees. The goal of such a process, of course, is to create a robust plan that the citizens within the borders of the EBRPSS will own and support.

The EBRPSS Board selected Board member David Tatman to chair the community-led strategic planning process. Prospective members of the community-led planning committee were nominated by the EBRPSS Board and appointed to the Committee on Educational Excellence (CEE) in April of 2011.

To begin the planning process, the consulting firm American Productivity and Quality Control (APQC) was engaged to establish a data baseline of current community opinions and beliefs regarding the EBRPSS. This information was presented to the CEE in April of 2011.

In the spring of 2011 Baton Rouge-based SSA Consultants was engaged to facilitate the work of the CEE, including the drafting of this strategic plan document. The plan includes a “bold goal” that envisions a dramatic climb for the EBRPSS into the position of a top ten Louisiana school system by 2020. More significantly, the plan proposes fundamental changes in EBRPSS performance management policies and operating strategies that the CEE believes are essential to making that climb into the top ten.

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I. ORGANIZATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN MATERIAL

The content of the strategic plan is organized into four levels of detail:

1. **Bold Goal**
2. **Objectives**
3. **Strategies**
4. **Tactics**

A brief description of each level is provided here.

Bold Goal – the bold goal is a single high-level statement that provides a vision of achievement for the East Baton Rouge Parish School System, to be realized by the year 2020. Although written at a very high level, the bold goal is measurable, allowing for annual progress reporting.

Objectives – after the Committee for Educational Excellence (CEE) developed and approved the bold goal statement, members of the CEE were organized into these six subcommittees:

- Early Childhood Education
- Academic Expectations
- Governance/Accountability/Efficiency
- Culture and Safety/School Climate and Human Capital
- Neighborhood Schooling and School Choice
- Community and Parental Involvement

The first task of each subcommittee was the development of a written *objective* – a high-level statement defining a level of achievement focused on their subcommittee topic and consistent with the CEE’s bold goal.

Strategies – each subcommittee then developed a short list of *strategies* (policies, methods, and/or practices) that could help propel the EBRPSS to the level of achievement described by the subcommittee objectives.

Tactics – as a final step, each subcommittee created a short list of *tactics* for each strategy developed. Tactics are simply more detailed descriptions of methods, actions, and/or practices.

II. A BOLD GOAL FOR THE EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SCHOOL SYSTEM

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System
will be a top ten Louisiana district by 2020,
building an innovative and
globally-competitive educational choice
for all families.

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III. SIX OBJECTIVES FOCUSED ON THE BOLD GOAL

BOLD GOAL

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System will be a top ten Louisiana district by 2020, building an innovative and globally-competitive educational choice for all families.

1. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) will provide all pre-kindergarten children equal access to high-quality options that ensure young students enter kindergarten ready to learn.

2. ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

All students in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) will complete a comprehensive and rigorous academic curriculum that builds workforce and college preparedness, and cultivates an appreciation for knowledge.

3. GOVERNANCE/ACCOUNTABILITY/EFFICIENCY

The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board (EBRPSB) will lead the East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) to the 2020 goal of being a top ten school system by maintaining a focus on excellence and by holding accelerating student achievement as the priority focus of all governance policies, accountability mechanisms, and financial resource allocations.

4. CULTURE AND SAFETY/SCHOOL CLIMATE AND HUMAN CAPITAL

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) will recruit and retain only those teachers, school leaders, and administrators who provide an excellent education to all students and create a learning environment that drives high student achievement and safety. EBRPSS will identify and confront all barriers and constraints that prevent having an excellent teacher in every classroom and excellent leader in every school.

5. NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLING/SCHOOL CHOICE

Subject to capacity limitations at school sites, students shall have the right to choose to attend any school in the district provided they can meet that school's admissions requirements.

6. COMMUNITY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

All East Baton Rouge Parish School District schools will provide an inviting, trustworthy environment for a parents, families, and businesses to be involved in student learning and development.

IV. STRATEGIES AND TACTICS TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

OBJECTIVE:

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) will provide all pre-kindergarten children equal access to high-quality options that ensure young students enter kindergarten ready to learn.

STRATEGY NO. 1: Create a community and family culture that values quality pre-K as an essential ingredient for student success.

TACTIC NO. 1: Research all entering kindergarten students by pre-K provider to determine pre-K provider quality and need for instructional improvement.

TACTIC NO. 2: Raise community awareness of, and appreciation for kindergarten readiness data – emphasizing performance of pre-K participants to nonparticipants.

TACTIC NO. 3: Conduct annual provider Pre-K Round-Up Open House to advertise student vacancies (Pre-K Day).

TACTIC NO. 4: Coordinate existing funding streams and solicit all additional funding needed to provide universal access to pre-K for four-year olds.

STRATEGY NO. 2: Ensure families have awareness of, access to, and encouragement to utilize quality options for every level of pre-K development.

TACTIC NO. 1: Design and conduct a research study focused on providing a clear and accurate understanding of the current state of pre-K access and quality (public and private, at every level) in the school district. The study will include recommendations for EBRPSS engagement and collaboration with other pre-K providers.

TACTIC NO. 2: Develop a plan to encourage/support/establish a reciprocal relationship between pre-kindergarten programs in public school facilities and other settings that serve four-year-old children: child care centers, private schools, Head Start and/or family child day

care homes.

TACTIC NO. 3: Seek opportunities to for the School System to collaborate with the State Department of Education and other organizations such as United Way that have identified early childhood as a focus area in order to have greater efficiencies and funding opportunities.

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ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

OBJECTIVE:

All students in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) will complete a comprehensive and rigorous academic curriculum that builds workforce and college preparedness, and cultivates an appreciation for knowledge.

STRATEGY NO. 1: All students in the EBRPSS will be proficient in the curriculum standards for each subject.

TACTIC NO. 1: Apply a standard district process to develop and articulate curriculum goals and targets.

TACTIC NO. 2: Communicate curriculum goals to all stakeholders.

TACTIC NO. 3: Measure progress toward K-12 academic performance goals.

STRATEGY NO. 2: Implement instructional strategies in the classroom such as differentiated instruction, acceleration, and remediation interventions that build higher-order critical thinking and problem-solving skills to drive student achievement.

TACTIC NO. 1: Evaluate instructional strategies and student achievement yearly at the district and school level.

TACTIC NO. 2: Evaluate efficacy of intervention practices yearly at the district and school level.

TACTIC NO. 3: Complete and review formal observations and informal walk throughs to assess implementation of appropriate instructional strategies in EBRPSS classrooms.

TACTIC NO. 4: Provide professional development opportunities and peer leadership to support teachers in utilizing best practices.

STRATEGY NO. 3: All students in the EBRPSS will achieve proficiency in additional domains of learning.

TACTIC NO. 1: Provide access to a broad range of enrichment offerings at each school (i.e., art, music, vocational, technological, etc.).

TACTIC NO. 2: Align curriculum for enrichment offerings with post-secondary expectations.

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GOVERNANCE/ACCOUNTABILITY/EFFICIENCY

OBJECTIVE:

The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board (EBRPSB) will lead the East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) to the 2020 goal of being a top ten school system by maintaining a focus on excellence and by holding accelerating student achievement as the priority focus of all governance policies, accountability mechanisms, and financial resource allocations.

STRATEGY NO. 1: Establish a new level of openness to innovation and change to better support system operations excellence.

TACTIC NO. 1: Establish a new culture of excellence for the school system and board that:

- Reframes the system’s role as setting high standards of achievement and performance through maximizing school independence and effectiveness;
- Greets openly all proven and promising ideas to improve student achievement and governance;
- Embraces and promotes state and public accountability efforts and goals; and
- Welcomes transparency and community assessment and exhibits a customer service mentality in terms of being responsive, friendly, and helpful towards all questions, requests, or suggestions as offered by the community at large.

TACTIC NO. 2: Develop for Board member signature, a “commitment to the community” document that includes:

- Board governance parameters that clearly separates the proper role of governance (Board) from management (system management staff and school leaders);
- Gold standard ethics, Board decorum, and behavior standards;
- Commitment to represent the children and interests of the entire EBRPSS rather than single member districts; and
- Annual participation in visits to EBR schools beyond their member districts.

STRATEGY NO. 2: Institute student-based budgeting policies that maximize school-level funding and autonomy.

TACTIC NO. 1: Transition to an adaptive dollar per-student formula similar to the formula used by charter schools, or the state student-based budgeting pilot, or other proven budget models that allow school principals complete autonomy to set and operate within budgets.

STRATEGY NO. 3: Research and continuously pursue opportunities to improve cost efficiency and develop supplemental funding.

TACTIC NO. 1: Pursue privatization bids and intergovernmental collaborations for nonstudent-based services to regularly ensure that services are being delivered cost efficiently.

TACTIC NO. 2: Authorize an independent, comprehensive cost reduction study.

TACTIC NO. 3: Create a nonprofit foundation for EBRPSS to pursue grants to attract additional resources to the system.

STRATEGY NO. 4: Develop and continuously refine a community-friendly system of report cards that transparently documents key performance results and progress in comparison to past results and comparable districts, and publish these results on a frequent (at least annual) basis.

TACTIC NO. 1: Require that annually, after state reports are issued, members of the CEE reconvene to review progress against the strategic plan and make additions or changes to the report card and tactics as needed.

CULTURE AND SAFETY/SCHOOL CLIMATE AND HUMAN CAPITAL

OBJECTIVE:

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) will recruit and retain only those teachers, school leaders, and administrators who provide an excellent education to all students and create a learning environment that drives high student achievement and safety. EBRPSS will identify and confront all barriers and constraints that prevent having an excellent teacher in every classroom and excellent leader in every school.

STRATEGY NO. 1: Build highly-effective instructional teams in all schools.

TACTIC NO. 1: Establish mutual consent hiring between all teachers (new and veteran) and school leaders in all staffing decisions. Release personnel unable to secure a position via mutual consent.

TACTIC NO. 2: Recruit only new teachers from preparation programs that produce teachers more likely than other new teachers to improve student achievement. Of veteran teacher applicants, hire only those with demonstrated track records of improving student achievement.

TACTIC NO. 3: Provide principals of high-need, low-performing schools specialized supports in the staffing process, early access to the candidate pool, and earlier identification of vacancies.

TACTIC NO. 4: Train new principals, assistant principals, and other teacher leaders on how to identify and select candidates who will achieve excellent results.

TACTIC NO. 5: Provide principals one-on-one and school-site support/feedback (from HR and/or cohort of effective peers) with the selection and staffing model (e.g. making school visits, scheduling and observing candidate interviews, providing selection model review, etc.).

STRATEGY NO. 2: Implement a new individual performance management system (for teachers and school leaders) that prioritizes student outcomes in educator evaluation among multiple performance measures.

TACTIC NO. 1: Adopt teacher and leader competency models that define the key behaviors and characteristics of highly-effective teachers and leaders.

TACTIC NO. 2: Adopt evaluation tools that measure educator performance against identified competencies across multiple levels of proficiency (e.g. a five-point scale) and provide detailed descriptions of observable behaviors demonstrated by the teacher or leader for all included competencies.

TACTIC NO. 3: Train teachers, instructional coaches, school leaders, and Central Office staff on the new evaluation tools and measures of student growth to be incorporated into evaluations (per Act 54), to ensure deep understanding of the competency models, norming on ratings of classroom observations, and adequate investment in the new evaluation process.

TACTIC NO. 4: Conduct frequent inter-rater reliability checks throughout the year to ensure that all evaluators remain normed on the evaluation tool and receive individualized support if they are not normed at any point.

TACTIC NO. 5: Incorporate new measures of student growth, including value-added, into goal-setting and professional growth planning processes for teachers and leaders.

TACTIC NO. 6: Utilize the state’s Human Capital Information System (HCIS) to compile, share, analyze, and track educator effectiveness data, beginning with the 2012-13 school year.

STRATEGY NO. 3: Provide individualized professional development to teachers and leaders based on demonstrated areas of need.

TACTIC NO. 1: Provide principals with the guidance to allow more time within the school day for teachers to reflect on student data, learn about relevant instructional strategies, collaborate with other teachers in similar content areas/grade levels, and receive individualized supports in their areas of weakness from instructional coaches and/or other effective teachers.

TACTIC NO. 2: Create middle leadership roles for highly-effective teachers to provide ongoing coaching and support to other teachers, while still spending a portion of the day in the classroom. Incorporate the middle leadership role into the staffing model of each school.

TACTIC NO. 3: Use evaluation results to inform district-wide professional development planning, and allow for differentiation of professional development schedules for educators, based on demonstrated needs, including providing individualized coaching to teachers and leaders on areas of weakness.

TACTIC NO. 4: Measure the effectiveness of professional development efforts, based upon improvements in educator evaluation results and student outcomes, and allocate professional

development resources accordingly.

STRATEGY NO. 4: Make strategic retention and reward decisions, based upon individual performance/effectiveness data.

TACTIC NO. 1: Ensure effectiveness data (e.g. value-added results, scores on district performance evaluation tool) are the primary factors considered in staffing decisions (e.g. retention, reductions-in-force).

TACTIC NO. 2: Conduct informal effectiveness-retention assessment conversations with all principals to draw connection between teacher performance and student outcomes.

TACTIC NO. 3: Offer financial and other incentives to effective teachers who commit to teach in high-need, low-performing schools.

TACTIC NO. 4: Reward teachers who rank in the top 25% statewide of performance in terms of improving student achievement (i.e., using the statewide value-added assessment model) and remove those teachers who rank in the bottom 25% statewide of performance.

TACTIC NO. 5: Hold principals accountable for overall school performance, including staff effectiveness, via one- to three-year performance contracts. Remove principals who do not meet their performance objectives.

STRATEGY NO. 5: Create in each school a safe and supportive environment that promotes academic excellence, healthy choices, and personal character and responsibility.

TACTIC NO. 1: Create and publish a semi-annual school climate scorecard and use results to drive school-based decisions on culture and prioritize physical plant improvements.

TACTIC NO. 2: Establish a Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) at each school that supports curricular and extra-curricular choices.

TACTIC NO. 3: Create a daily connection for all students with an adult mentor (e.g., advisory class) to build character and academic skills.

TACTIC NO. 4: Create a Student and Parent Bill of Rights and Responsibilities that defines the responsibility of school personnel to address any student concern or behavior issue (real or perceived) and defines the responsibilities of parents and students to the EBRPSS and its personnel.

TACTIC NO. 5: Establish Student Resource Officers as student advocates first, law enforcement personnel second, and link student referral reports at each school to Resource Officers.

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NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLING AND SCHOOL CHOICE

OBJECTIVE:

Subject to capacity limitations at school sites, students shall have the right to choose to attend any school in the district provided they can meet that school's admissions requirements.

STRATEGY NO. 1: Build a more robust system to proactively inform families in the district of all available public educational choices.

TACTIC NO. 1: Create a "Choice" one-stop shop to disseminate all educational choices (within the school district) information. The role of the one-stop will include comprehensive information to facilitate the choice process (i.e. step by step details regarding access to your school choice including, but not limited to, application deadlines, test requirements, waiting periods, dress codes, etc.).

TACTIC NO. 2: Engage the help of stakeholders/business leaders in getting choice information to the larger community (i.e. small cell groups at local churches, lunch and learns, afternoon forums, etc.).

TACTIC NO. 3: Engage our local media outlets to provide assistance and support for ongoing community outreach related to educational choice.

TACTIC NO. 4: Design and execute efforts focused on recruiting area students not attending EBRPSS schools.

STRATEGY NO. 2: Recognizing that there are financial and practical limits to the school system's ability to provide transportation that fully accommodates every conceivable school choice, the EBRPSS will evaluate its transportation system to try to ensure that every student has reasonable access to competitive educational choices that meet their academic preferences.

TACTIC NO. 1: Ensure access to available educational choices by guaranteeing all requirements to access available choices are readily available (i.e. transportation, food service, full complement of staff, textbooks, etc.).

TACTIC NO. 2: As the objectives and strategies of this strategic plan are realized over the years leading up to 2020, and as more and more schools are rated as good to excellent, EBRPSS will evolve toward a system of assigning students to their neighborhood

school. These assignments, however, will be subject to the student’s continuing right to choose to attend a different school, though the school system’s ability to provide transportation to accommodate all such choices will be constrained by practical and financial considerations.

STRATEGY NO. 3: Conduct a review of current school attendance zones in an effort to re-create true neighborhood schools.

TACTIC NO. 1: Engage the community in a comprehensive conversation around the issue of school attendance zones.

STRATEGY NO. 4: Create a “Choice Accountability Council” to provide feedback and counsel to the whole school choice enterprise.

TACTIC NO. 1: Establish membership and organizational guidelines for this council – with a membership priority on EBRPSS parents.

TACTIC NO. 2: Establish operating and reporting guidelines for this council.

TACTIC NO. 3: Ensure relevant information is reported and shared, access to choice being properly granted, and the community is being significantly engaged.

COMMUNITY AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

OBJECTIVE:

All East Baton Rouge Parish School District schools will provide an inviting, trustworthy environment for a parents, families, and businesses to be involved in student learning and development.

STRATEGY NO. 1: Develop a unique cultural identity for each East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) school that enhances the existing sense of school pride and community.

TACTIC NO. 1: Establish parent centers in every school over the next three years.

TACTIC NO. 2: Establish a full-scale program of service learning projects – focused on school and the community.

TACTIC NO. 3: Establish a full-scale program of school rehabilitation projects focused on creating environments that inspire learning and bring together students, parents, faculty, and the community.

TACTIC NO. 4: Engage each school’s faculty, staff, and students on how they will interact with the community to include customer service training for the front-end staff.

STRATEGY NO. 2: Dedicate resources and share best practices to enhance school community partnerships/parental involvement.

TACTIC NO. 1: Dedicate a staff member at each school with the necessary knowledge and ability to optimally engage school volunteers.

TACTIC NO. 2: Create a method of sharing identified best practices for creating greater school community partnerships and parental involvement.

STRATEGY NO. 3: Expand and strengthen school and family access to information and programs that support parent involvement and family life.

TACTIC NO. 1: Coordinate a comprehensive set of parent expos each year – for elementary, middle, and high schools – that include transportation, parent education centers, student intervention specialists, social workers, choice parent resource centers, exceptional student service, parent liaisons, and other outreach services.

TACTIC NO. 2: Increase collaboration with family support agencies/organizations such as entities that address affordable housing, health, human services, and community development.

TACTIC NO. 3: Partner with a nonprofit organization to create and regularly distribute a parent guide that includes comprehensive information regarding available services, programs, and resources that support parental involvement and family life.

TACTIC NO. 4: Update the EBRPSS website for easier access to parent involvement program information, parenting tips, and other resources that help parents stay involved in their children's education.

TACTIC NO. 5: Partner with a local organization to create a parent university that focuses on parent/student relations and also support new teacher training, diversity initiatives, parent/teacher communication, etc.

STRATEGY NO. 4: Rally the business community to help meet the specific unmet needs of all EBRPSS schools.

TACTIC NO. 1: Collaborate with a local group to create a “Guide for Business Partnerships with the EBRPSS”.

TACTIC NO. 2: Establish a single point of contact at the EBRPSS Central Office to engage and effectively direct individuals and businesses interested in providing assistance.

TACTIC NO. 3: Compile, maintain, and promote a dynamic list of priority needs (at the district and school levels) that informs potential contributors and volunteers of the specific current needs that exist across the EBRPSS.

STRATEGY NO. 5: Explore and implement areas of cooperation with BREC to foster student learning and provide after-school activities.

TACTIC NO. 1: Conduct an initial study in collaboration with BREC leadership to identify practical opportunities to leverage BREC and EBRPSS resources to foster student learning and provide after-school activities.

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