

Louisiana Department of Education

Create a World Class Education System for all students in Louisiana

MISSION

- Ensure high academic achievement for all students
- Eliminate all achievement gaps
- Prepare students to be effective citizens in a global market

High School Redesign

GOALS

- Reduce dropout rates & increase high school graduation rates
- Increase readiness for post-secondary education
- Increase career readiness of students
- Increase participation in post-secondary education

A Message From:



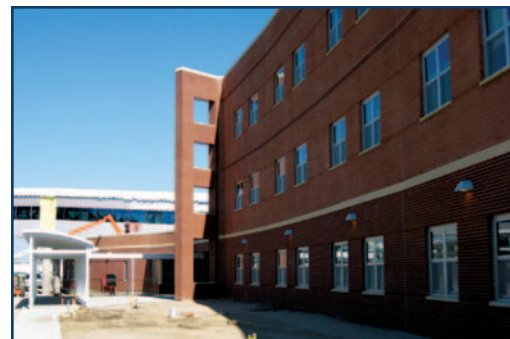
Paul G. Pastorek
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

"We hope this newsletter builds a better understanding of High Value High Schools and a greater appreciation for the positive strides Louisiana is taking toward ensuring that our graduates are college and career ready. Check out the new 'What's Up' section on the back to communicate how your school is contributing to the high school redesign effort."



New Ninth Grade Academy Building for Chalmette High School

St. Bernard Parish lost every school during Hurricane Katrina, however, the attitude of perseverance held by this community and school district has them coming back strong and in many ways surpassing their pre-storm condition. Chalmette High School opens its new Ninth Grade Academy this school year, featuring a state-of-the-art facility which has been constructed specifically around research-based best practices for a "school within a school." St. Bernard has been in the midst of a major rebuilding program since the parish's complete devastation during Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Chalmette High School is now the only 9th – 12th grade school in St. Bernard Parish, and it is quickly becoming one of the finest high school facilities in the state. Its students will soon have access to a new gym, Olympic-sized swimming pool, a 400-seat auditorium and two libraries. Student Baili Sagnivine said of the Academy, "People will see this and say, 'Oh my God! I love high school now, because of all of the different activities and everything.', and they will want to stay."



New Ninth Grade Academy Building



New Crosswalk to Gymnasium

The Ninth Grade Academy is located across the street from the 10th – 12th grade campus of Chalmette High School and is on the site of one of the elementary schools lost in Hurricane Katrina. Ninth graders have access to the main campus via an overhead walkway and will join the 10th – 12th graders in tuning in to all morning TV meetings with the principal. **[CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE]**

Glenny Lee Buquet




Ms. Buquet was first elected to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in 1992 and has served five terms as President, from 1998-2001 and from 2003-2005. Ms. Buquet serves as Chair

of the Board of Administration/Relations Committee, Vice-Chair of the High School Redesign Committee, and as a member of the Strategic Planning Study Group. She represents the Board on the Blue Ribbon Commission for Educational Excellence, currently serving as Co-Chair. She is also a member of the School and District Accountability Commission and the MFP Governmental Liaison Committee. A graduate of ULL and of Leadership Louisiana, Ms. Buquet is a former speech and English teacher, who later opened a tutorial school for children with reading disabilities. She is a member of the Louisiana Center for Women and Government, at Nicholls State University, and NASBE. Ms. Buquet was the 2004 recipient of the "Wild in the Wetlands Outstanding Educator's Award." Her special areas of education focus on reading, with special attention to students with learning disabilities, and improving teacher education in our colleges and universities.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE] There is state-of-the-art instructional technology in every classroom, and science labs feature the latest in technical equipment. This facility is also in the neighborhood with a new cultural arts center for the high school which houses dance and music studios, an additional library, and a performance theater. It is under construction and will be completed next school year.

According to St. Bernard Parish Superintendent of Schools Doris Voitier, the new building has been built with the curriculum as its main focus. "Each of the three floors of the classroom building will house its own cohort of about 100 students. Each floor offers a science lab, computer lab, and classrooms for each core area, and the students will be served by a unique 'team' of teachers. The students will only leave their 'floor' to go to PE in the new gymnasium,


also being constructed at the site. On each floor there is a planning room for the team of teachers assigned to that floor, and there is also a widened hallway at the end of each floor for cohort meetings."

Chalmette High's teachers began meeting last January to plan their new program. They researched, toured similar 9th grade programs already in operation in the state and met with several nationally-recognized 9th-grade academy consultants during the spring semester. The team also wrote and received an 8(g) grant this past spring aimed at assisting them with implementation of the program this first year. Teachers attended four weeks of professional development this summer, and they opened school on August 12th with an absolute command of the program and the firm belief that "failure is not an option!" 

The Superintendent's Delivery Unit

The Louisiana Department of Education has established a small team that will examine how the various programs in the Louisiana Department of Education contribute to achieving the State's primary educational goals. The team, the Superintendent's Delivery Unit (SDU), will examine program effectiveness, implementation, and scale to determine the extent to which the State is on track to meet key goals. The SDU will create ongoing routines examining implementation and effectiveness to help the Department become more effective in providing supports to schools that contribute to positive outcomes. Throughout the next several months, the SDU will focus on the State's one goal of an 80% high school graduation rate. Once the initial analytic work on the 80% graduation rate goal is completed, the SDU will broaden its focus as directed

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by the State Superintendent. The SDU will use data to identify problems with implementation and efficacy proactively and support improved program implementation. The SDU is generally based on the delivery model pioneered in British government by Michael Barber that has since been adopted by governmental agencies in the United States. The central objective of the SDU is to help the Department of Education improve program implementation to such a degree that the State achieves the critical goals that are necessary to achieve a world class education for Louisiana's children. 

Upcoming Events

High School Redesign Commission Meeting

Monday, September 21, 2009
9 AM - 3 PM @ First Baptist Church | Baton Rouge, LA

Middle to High School Transitions Task Force Meeting

Thursday, September 24, 2009
8 AM - 3 PM @ Claiborne Building | Room 3-230

Regional Action Plan Meetings:

Oct. 7, 2009 - Region 5	Oct. 8, 2009 - Region 8 & 3
Oct. 13, 2009 - Region 1	Oct. 27, 2009 - Region 7
Oct. 28, 2009 - Region 6	Oct. 30, 2009 - Region 2
TBD - Region 4	

Professional School Counseling Conference

December 1-3, 2009 | Marksville, LA

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Mr. John L. Bennett
Member-at-Large
Ms. Glenn Lee Buquet
3rd BESE District
Ms. Penny Dastuge
Member-at-Large
Mr. James Garvey, JR
1st BESE District
Ms. Louella Givens
2nd BESE District
Mr. Keith Guice
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5th BESE District
Ms. Linda Johnson
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WHAT'S UP?

We want to hear about the great things going on at **YOUR** school! The High School Redesign office is requesting publication-ready articles from schools involved in redesign efforts.

REQUESTED TOPICS:

- 8th Grade Transition Activities
- Dropout Early Warning Systems
- EMPLoY (or pre-GED) programs experiencing success
- Increasing the Graduation Rate
- Journeys to Career Pilot
- Mentoring
- Reducing Dropouts
- Senior Project/Project-based learning
- Sustainability of efforts during the time of "budget cuts"