

## **Lafayette North Plan Coordinating Team Education Plan**

### **GOAL:**

The LNPCT Education Subcommittee recognizes the importance of educational facilities in the community as a focal point for education, neighborhoods and other community services. Economic development in the district relies on quality schools and this Plan addresses both workforce and quality of life issues. Finally, emphasis should be placed on quality educational opportunities in the Lafayette North Plan Coordinating Plan District in terms of programming and accessibility to services as they are the most at risk.

### **I. School Programming**

#### **A) Objective**

Create a community-based academic institution as a charter school within the Lafayette Parish School System for the purpose of linking Louisiana's culture to the global economy with focus on language acquisition, cultural assets and international affairs.

#### **Strategies**

1. An institute would offer career paths of tourism and hospitality, international affairs and business, and economic development, all designed to keep our creative class in the community.
2. An institute would offer curricula that is time sensitive and fits the needs of the students to the business and technology of the day.
3. An institute's mission would provide opportunities to mitigate poverty, lower the dropout rate, and help close the black-white achievement gap. Such a school would ensure that all students' needs and interests are met by creating an individualized education program for each student, allowing for students' self-determination in selecting their specialization and creating projects that will enhance their community. Such a school would bring together a coalition of stakeholders interested in investing in an alternative way of life for their community.
4. An institute would offer language instruction in French, Spanish, Chinese, Farsi, and Arabic where the heritage languages (French and Spanish) offer immediate access to Lafayette's traditional international partners; also, the other "critical need languages" have become increasingly important on a global scale.
5. An institute would provide a destination school for those students already in immersion feeder programs.

#### **B) Objective**

Improve and expand school readiness opportunities for preschool children by improving the quality and availability of early childhood care, education and child development services.

#### **Strategies**

1. Work with UL's Center for Child Development to expand early childhood education programs in the Lafayette North Plan Coordinating Team district to assure that the maximum number of our youth obtain services to better perform academically throughout their lives.

2. Assist neighborhood nurseries, daycare and preschool facilities in the implementation of early childhood education strategies and practices that prepare children with appropriate language abilities and other development skills.
3. Promote the cognitive, emotional, intellectual and physical growth and development of infants and young children by:
  - i. Enhancing access to comprehensive prenatal, parenting and family support services;
  - ii. integrating child health services into preschool programs, especially those serving low-income children; and
  - iii. maintain exceptional Head Start programs.
4. Collaborate to promote adequate, convenient and high-quality child-care options for working families, especially those moving from welfare to work.
5. Adopt reimbursement policies that support and reflect high standards in child care.

### **C) Objective**

Provision of and proximity to health care for children and their families is necessary to reduce absenteeism and work loss for parents.

#### **Strategies**

1. Continue to implement and solidify a coordinated health program and begin to expand idea to other schools where absenteeism and inadequate access to healthcare is an issue.
2. Additional strategies are needed here – maybe address a lack of transit options for low income parents. As health providers are mapped other strategies will be generated.
3. Implement a comprehensive coordinated health care plan for schools utilizing the McComb Mississippi Healthy Schools Project (addendum) as a checklist for potential strategies.

### **D) Objective**

Reduce crime rates with the provision of early childhood education, extracurricular activities, increasing graduation rates and increasing high school graduation attainment of out of school adults.

#### **Strategies**

1. Provide better transition into grade 9 particularly for struggling students.
2. Allow for extended day opportunities so those students with academic difficulties can learn better study habits, have time to catch up in required core subjects and conduct tutorials that will facilitate passing mandated state and federal tests.
3. Provide additional guidance services and social workers who can address issues such as academic performance, job assessments, social/emotional issues, incarceration and the need for education in today's competitive job market.
4. Institute Louisiana High School ReDESIGN initiatives in all district facilities. Promote and expand programs for incarcerated youths like the Lafayette Parish Juvenile Day Reporting Center.

## **II. School Infrastructure**

### **A) Objective**

Ensure that the Lafayette Parish has an adequate supply of educational facilities to meet the needs of the residents.

#### **Strategies**

1. Establish and maintain level of service standards for public school facilities by type of facility, ie. elementary, middle and high school.
2. Mobile classrooms shall not be included in the evaluation of level of service.
3. The level of service for public school facilities shall be established as a maximum enrollment of 120 percent of the system's maximum permanent building capacity, measured on a system-wide basis for each type of facility. Within four years, LCG shall change the level of service standard from 120 to 110 percent of the system's maximum permanent building capacity.
4. To maximize the use of educational facilities for a range of community services.
5. LCG Planning Division shall recommend denial of all zoning amendments that would result in an increase in projected student generation that would exceed the level of service. In application, consideration shall be given to any commitments made by the developer for mitigation.
6. Develop and maintain current data for the evaluation of the adequacy of school facilities in rezoning requests.
7. The Lafayette Parish School System shall provide the following data to LCG Planning Division for use in the evaluation of the adequacy of school facilities:
  - i. Total building capacity of all schools by type, ie. elementary, middle and high school, in the Lafayette Parish School System.
  - ii. The 20th day actual daily enrollment for all schools in the Lafayette Parish School System.
  - iii. An updated copy of Lafayette Parish School System's Capital Improvements Plan.
  - iv. Additional information describing the capacity that will be added as a result of any projects for which funding is committed.
  - v. Revised attendance zone boundaries and projections of the attendance impact on all schools of revised attendance zone boundaries.
8. The LCG Planning Division shall maintain records illustrating the impact of all zoning changes over a three-year period, considering that capacity to have been committed as a result of prior development decisions.

### **B) Objective**

To support and maintain the existing educational properties and facilities in order to provide a learning environment that is safe and conducive to teaching and learning.

#### **Strategies**

1. Lafayette Parish School System shall implement a regular program to maintain and improve its school facilities in order to provide students and staff with the best environment for learning.

2. Maintenance of existing facilities and properties is a priority over the construction of new schools.
3. Minimize the reliance on mobile classrooms.

### **III. Planning Process**

#### **A) Objective**

Ensure that school facilities are incorporated into the long range comprehensive planning process so school facilities may serve as focal points for communities and neighborhoods.

#### **Strategies**

1. The Lafayette Parish School System and private schools shall reference the land use pattern adopted in the LCG Comprehensive Plan and Neighborhood Plans as the distribution of growth projections developed in their planning process to enhance coordination between plans.
2. The Lafayette Parish School System should inventory their Section 12 lands in light of projected needs and develop in their plans to manage this inventory.
3. Locate schools where they may assist in providing community and neighborhood focal points.
4. Lafayette Parish School System, LCG and the other five local municipalities shall coordinate plans taking into account capital school projects.
5. Planned locations for schools, public and private, should seek to co-locate schools with other facility types, such as parks and libraries that may function as complementary uses.
6. Schools shall not be located on sites with severe environmental constraints to development or significant historic resources such that the design of the site would compromise the resources.
7. Consider community character and architecture in the design and appearance of schools.
8. LCG's comprehensive plan will recommend site locations for a community-based academic institution that take into account adequate infrastructure and planning principles.
9. In order to most efficiently use school sites and link schools with neighborhoods, the Lafayette Parish School System shall begin the planning for each new school and major school additions with a public school planning workshop, involving the appropriate municipal officials, staff and interested citizens.
10. In order to maximize student performance, designs for new schools and major school renovations shall, for example, incorporate daylighting techniques. Daylighting saves money on energy bills, connects people to the outdoors and exhibits environmental stewardship. Exterior shading, carefully placed windows, low-transmittance glass, window blinds and paint and fabric colors are examples of daylighting techniques.

### **IV. Sharing Facilities**

#### **A) Objective**

Encourage the Lafayette Parish School System to share grounds and amenities for community use, such as recreation and joint landscaping projects to create more open space.

### **Strategies**

1. Cooperate with the Lafayette Parish School System to ensure an adequate number and distribution of school sites throughout the City to accommodate demonstrated needs.
2. Work with the area schools to ensure that, in locating school sites, regard is given to compatible adjacent uses such as residential, parks, open space and community facilities.
3. Encourage the Lafayette Parish School System in ongoing participation with LCG and the other municipalities in the provision of recreational facilities which are also available to the public.
4. Expand the Joint Use Agreement to include community and school sharing and funding of school grounds for public park use.
5. Co-locate small playgrounds with safe wandering space and specially sized climbing equipment for toddlers at school playgrounds.
6. Encourage the Lafayette Parish School System to cooperate with the City to determine the most appropriate use of school sites or buildings which are no longer required by the System for school purposes.

## **V. School Accessibility**

### **A) Objective**

Improve pedestrian, bicycle access and public transit to schools and libraries.

### **Strategies**

1. Increase pedestrian networks around schools utilizing funding from the “Safe Routes to School” Program.
2. Implement physical improvements, eg. traffic calming devices, near educational facilities to ensure safe access.
3. Coordinate the Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (MPO) Bicycle Master Plan with the school facilities plan.
4. Develop transit routes, schedules and amenities to provide reliable transportation to schools.
5. Make reduced fare transit programs available to all college students.
6. LCG will take an active role in targeting areas of the north deficient of transit in order to access schools and health care facilities.

## **VI. Economic Development/Job Training**

### **A) Objective**

Improve and expand workforce development and job readiness through education and job training.

### **Strategies**

1. Provide students with greater service learning opportunities as in some High School Redesign initiatives. This should be an integral part of the Academies currently in place at many middle and high schools.
2. Assist students through involvement and participation in local tourism markets, culinary arts, foreign exchange programs and the visual and performing arts.

3. Utilize local small businesses in mentor-protégé partnerships that are meaningful and productive which foster economic development.
4. Promote a community-based academic institution to provide continuing education training and workforce development, particularly in the sector of cultural tourism, thus responding to the needs of this huge market.

## **B) Objective**

Promote education as an integral component to increase economic development and small business development and in the enhancement of the arts and culture in this community.

### **Strategies**

1. Create opportunities for continuing education programs to locate in Lafayette Parish.
2. Broaden access to job training centers and increase awareness of professional development opportunities.
3. Promote a community-based academic institution to generate growth in the cultural entertainment with a focus on the indigenous Cajun and Creole forms of cultural expression. Such an institute would be an integral part of the arts community.
4. Create a community-based academic institution that will provide a space for cultural entrepreneurship; producing products and services with social and cultural meaning:
  - i. Cajun/Creole Culinary Arts
  - ii. Mardi Gras enterprises
  - iii. Music/Dance (Gospel, Zydeco, etc.)
  - iv. French Louisiana Cultural Tourism Clearinghouse for products and services
  - v. Language training for humanitarian organizations such as: USAID, Organization of American States (OAS), UNESCO, NGOs, local agencies, etc.
  - vi. Immersion language and/or diversity training and seminars for company employees (oil & gas services, etc.).
5. Partnerships are founded on the concept of “fair trade” where the objective is to help producers in an underserved community receive their fair share of revenue in the sale of their products and services. Lafayette North is the undisputable center for Lafayette’s Cajun-Creole creative class; businesses will seek to locate near the institute which will be the hub of activity in that field. A community based academic institute could make international connections that would provide fast track access to the global market.
6. Create a community-based academic institution as a mainstream establishment that will:
  - i. Attract young cultural entrepreneurs.
  - ii. Produce a workforce dedicated to the creation and growth of cultural businesses.
  - iii. Identify and build upon new niche tourism markets.

## **VII. Funding Options**

### **A) Objective**

Maximize use of all financial, human and physical resources available at the federal, state and local levels.

### **Strategies**

1. Investigate generating funds from the Community Foundation of Acadiana and their donation program.
2. Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a tool that could be used to enhance educational opportunities in designated geographic areas.
3. Other tax options dedicated to specific items not used to replace or supplant services.

## **VIII. Coordination**

### **A) Objective**

Eliminate duplication of services between government, agencies and schools.

#### **Strategies**

1. Coordinate and assist the Lafayette Parish School System by examining population growth, median age, socio-economic distribution to determine a long range plan for expansion.
2. Support efforts to jointly market Lafayette Parish neighborhoods and its schools.
3. Share municipal data and mapping databases with the Lafayette Parish School System for use in future planning efforts.
4. Utilize common data sources in the development of the Lafayette Parish School System's "Capital Improvements Plan" and LCG's Comprehensive Plan.
5. LCG planning should act as a reference to private schools regarding their school location decisions.

### **B) Objective**

Increase collaboration and coordination among municipal jurisdictions, agencies and schools.

#### **Strategies**

1. Encourage parent, volunteer, business and community involvement in education and schools.
2. Ensure effective communication between the LCG and the Lafayette Parish School System by strengthening joint planning and advisory groups.
3. Identify and consider any opportunities to assist or coordinate with local schools whenever LCG makes capital improvements in a neighborhood.
4. Encourage public and private schools to work with LCG and neighborhood groups with regard to the architectural features and off-site impacts of future schools constructed in Lafayette Parish.
5. Maintain productive and cooperative relationships with providers of technical and higher education.
6. Implement a strategy to facilitate communication between day care operators and other child care providers, both public and private, to enhance academic performance for all students.
7. A community-based academic institution is an instrument that can galvanize the community to engage in the Cultural Economy through entrepreneurial collaborations with the institute.
8. Increase collaboration and cooperation with community stakeholders.