

Jefferson EDGE 2020 PUBLIC EDUCATION Status Report 3: October 2010

Prepared by JEDCO and GCR & Associates, Inc.

JEDCO
Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission



Public Education

In response to concerns about quality of life in Jefferson Parish and its impact upon the community's economic competitiveness, JEDCO initiated the Jefferson Edge 2020 Quality of Life initiative. This initiative has produced eight "strategic implementation plans" which include a series of action items to address particular quality of life issues. Implementing the action items requires the total cooperation and keen interest of all involved, including JEDCO, the Jefferson Parish government, numerous other entities, and frequently State and Federal agencies. In 2008, JEDCO retained GCR & Associates, Inc. to prepare semiannual reports outlining the status of each of these action items and overall progress toward implementation.

The following table summarizes the progress made toward each of the education (E) action items.

E = Education

Action ID #	Action Item	Progress as of August 2010		
		Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
E1	Increase the number of magnet and academically themed schools in accordance with a detailed magnet school facility and enrollment plan			
E2	Modify the federal consent decree to allow school children on the East Bank and West Bank to attend the magnet school of their choosing	No longer applicable.		
E3	Embark on a major capital campaign to renovate and replace Jefferson's public schools			
E4	Work with the State Legislature and the Louisiana Department of Education to increase the funding for JPPS from the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP)			
E5	Bring the Head Start Program under the purview of Jefferson Parish Public Schools	No longer applicable.		
E6	Expand public funding and support for alternative schools serving children with discipline problems			
E7	Work with the business community, trade unions, community colleges, the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB), and Louisiana Department of Labor to develop improved career-track curricula, with a particular focus on those students at risk of dropping out. Pre-Katrina programs, such as "Young Marine" program should be restored and new courses of study should be added			
E8	Implement the recommendations of the High School Redesign Commission			
E9	Engage the Jefferson Federation of Teachers (JFT) to expand continuing education programs for Jefferson Parish Public School teachers			
E10	Work with the State legislature and Louisiana Department of Education to expand and enhance the data that are collected from standardized tests			
E11	Work with the business community to offer special programs to JPPS teachers to augment recruiting efforts			
E12	Initiate an outreach campaign to increase parental involvement in the school system			
E13	Initiate a public outreach campaign targeted both to real estate agents and the general public			

Public Education

Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Progress as of August 2010		
					Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
E1	Increase the number of magnet and academically themed schools in accordance with a detailed magnet school facility and enrollment plan	Board approval in 2008 – 2009; establish schools in 2009 - 2010	The East Bank magnet school plan has been approved by a federal judge, and the primary action item of this plan—the conversion of Airline Park Elementary into a magnet school—has been completed. Enrollment in the new magnet program has been robust. The East and West Banks are now each home to two elementary magnets, one middle school magnet, and one high school magnet. No other plans have been adopted to expand the reach of magnet schools in Jefferson Parish.	In coordination with the federal judge that approved the most recent magnet expansion, work to formulate a long-range magnet expansion plan for Jefferson Parish. This plan should include the desired number of magnet schools at various grade levels, desired enrollment targets, approximate locations throughout the parish, and a preliminary operations plan.			
E2	Modify the federal consent decree to allow school children on the East Bank and West Bank to attend the magnet school of their choosing	Obtain approval for revised consent decree in 2008	This action item is no longer applicable and has been removed from the list of action items. For a more extensive description of this action item, refer to the status report from the fall of 2009.	No further action at this time.	<i>No longer applicable and removed from public education action items.</i>		
E3	Embark on a major capital campaign to renovate and replace Jefferson's public schools	Adopt plan and secure revenue source in 2008 – 2009; implement capital campaign through 2025	The Administration and School Board have continued discussions on this issue, but detailed talks are on hold until after School Board elections later this year. The \$200 million millage and bond issue is still scheduled to be up for vote on October 22, 2011.	Continue to build consensus in the business community and throughout Jefferson Parish in support of the proposed millage and bond issue. Begin an education campaign to inform community members of the school system's capital needs.			

Public Education

Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Progress as of August 2010		
					Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
E4	Work with the State Legislature and the Louisiana Department of Education to increase the funding for JPPS from the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP)	Audit completed, recommendations made and adopted in 2009 - 2010	The Jefferson Parish School System (JPPS), in coordination with other Parish departments, have completed a comprehensive audit of the MFP funding formula and have been diligently pursuing numerous avenues to increase JPPS' allocation. Unfortunately, none of these efforts have yet been fruitful. That said, alternative solutions continue to be pursued to secure additional funding from the MFP.	Continue to seek an agreement from the state Department of Education to adopt reforms to the MFP program that would equalize the funding formula.			
E5	Bring the Head Start Program under the purview of Jefferson Parish Public Schools	Change in administration of Head Start by 2010 - 2011	No longer applicable at this time. For a more complete description, refer to the fall, 2009 education status report.	No further action at this time.	<i>No longer applicable and removed from public education action items.</i>		

Public Education

Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Progress as of August 2010		
					Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
E6	Expand public funding and support for alternative schools serving children with discipline problems	Adopt plan for expanded alternative education in 2008 – 2009; establish new or expanded schools in 2009 - 2010	<p>Despite some progress in discussions about expanding funding and support for alternative schools, no definitive conclusions have yet been reached. Historically, the Jefferson Parish alternative schools have been funded by contributions made by the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office, The District Attorney's Office, and the Jefferson Parish government. In the past year, these agencies have not been approached with a request to reinstitute the \$100,000/year funding previously committed. Scarcity of resources may be a limitation on their ability to contribute additional funds.</p> <p>While expanding public funding remains a serious challenge, the Jefferson Chamber has proceeded to establish a charter school for students at high risk of becoming a dropout. This school opened for the 2010-2011 school year.</p> <p>The local BESE member and JPPS staff had worked with the state Department of Education to bring a significant portion of the Department's discretionary federal stimulus funding to Jefferson's Alternative Schools. To the surprise of many education experts, Louisiana did not receive an award in either round of funding for federal Race to the Top funds.</p> <p>However, \$147 million in "stimulus" funding made available this summer is currently being pursued by the state Department of Education. If awarded, this money would flow directly to local school districts to pay salaries and benefits for teachers, school administrators and staff. The money could not be used to finance statewide initiatives.</p> <p>Finally, JPPS has instituted a number of programs in recent years for students that have discipline problems and/or that have fallen two or more years behind grade level. The Waggaman, John Martyn, Bunche, and St. Ville schools are all examples of schools that have offer these programs.</p>	<p>Continue to work to identify long-term, recurring revenue sources for alternative schools, including potentially the restoration of funding from the Parish government, DA's office, and JPSO.</p> <p>Work with the local BESE member to advocate for disbursement of equitable share of the \$147 million in federal grant to JPPS, potentially to alternative schools in Jefferson.</p> <p>Monitor progress and test results at the new alternative charter school.</p> <p>Monitor progress of supplemental discipline/ behavioral programs offered at some JPPS schools and determine whether expansion of those programs is appropriate.</p>			

Public Education

Progress as of August 2010								
Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress	
E7	Work with the business community, trade unions, community colleges, the local Workforce Investment Board (WIB), and Louisiana Department of Labor to develop improved career-track curricula, with a particular focus on those students at risk of dropping out. Pre-Katrina programs, such as "Young Marine" program should be restored and new courses of study should be added	Complete evaluation of existing programs in 2008 – 2009; initiate new programs in 2009 - 2010	<p>The school system has undertaken a number of measures to streamline their "Option III" program for students who have dual enrollment in technical training classes. These measures include consolidating instruction space at two high school campuses: Bonnabel and Ehret.</p> <p>Another vocational training program that JPPS participates in is the Louisiana Enhanced Employment Project (LEEP), which provides 16 to 25 year olds with disabilities to gain employment. This is the third year that JPPS has participated in this program, and 50 students are currently employed as a result of the program.</p> <p>Finally, the Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program, is now being implemented at a fourth high school, West Jefferson. It has been in place for several years at Higgins, Ehret, and Bonnabel. JAG provides a framework for improving the educational and employment opportunities of at risk youth.</p>	Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of vocational training programs and determine whether supplemental funding and/or wider applicability system-wide is needed for these programs. If the current programs are deemed to be adequate, establish benchmarks and performance measures to monitor their success.				
E8	Implement the recommendations of the High School Redesign Commission	Complete study by 2008 – 2009; evaluate and implement recommendations in 2009 - 2010	<p>JPPS has implemented many of the measures recommended by the High School Redesign Committee. For a more complete discussion of these initiatives, refer to the March, 2009 and October, 2009 status reports.</p> <p>Additionally, JPPS now has implemented a Graduate Resource Counselor program whereby the counselors provide assistance to 9th graders in particular to monitor their academic progress and to facilitate their advancement to 10th grade. Preliminary indications are that the program has been successful in that over 83% of 9th graders from the 2009/2010 school year were promoted to 10th grade.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor implementation of High School Redesign Commission initiatives and coordinate with BESE to identify areas where assistance in implementation may still be needed.</p> <p>Establish and continue to monitor benchmarks of implementation and the success of Redesign Commission programs.</p>				

Public Education

Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Progress as of August 2010		
					Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
E9	Engage the Jefferson Federation of Teachers (JFT) to expand continuing education programs for Jefferson Parish Public School teachers	Complete analysis by conclusion of 2008 –2009 school year; begin implementation of expanded continuing ed. Programs by end of 2009 – 2010 school year	Continuing education and professional development opportunities for JPPS teachers are administered on a school-by-school basis. There is no system-wide comprehensive program for continuing education. Federal “Race to the Top” funds were one potential source of funding for a broader continuing education program, but Louisiana—and Jefferson Parish by extension—were unsuccessful in the most recent Race to the Top funding round.	In light of on-going continuing education programs at individual schools, determine whether a system-wide continuing education program is needed and whether adequate funding would be available.			
E10	Work with the State legislature and Louisiana Department of Education to expand and enhance the data that are collected from standardized tests	Collect expanded data sets by 2009 – 2010 school year; publish results during same school year	<p>The local BESE member and JPPS staff had been working with the state Department of Education as it participated in an initiative that would set national standards for evaluating schools. This federal initiative aims to enhance the data that are collected from standardized tests. BESE has voted to implement national standards for evaluating schools. However, these national standards have not yet been finalized, and testing administered by BESE has not been revised to reflect the new standards.</p> <p>At the same time, BESE’s Accountability Commission proposed an effort to increase and improve information gleaned from the current grading system for yearly standardized testing (LEAP and iLEAP). Whereas the current grading model essentially offers only a “snap shot” of students’ performance on any standardized test, the new approach, the value added assessment model, would enact a longitudinal tracking of students’ performance from one year to the next thus providing a way to track how students are progressing from one year to another.</p> <p>BESE is currently running a one-year test program of the value added model in approximately 20 LEA’s (school systems). Jefferson Parish is participating in this trial. BESE expects to implement the value added evaluation model statewide in 2011-2012.</p> <p>There is also an interest in collecting and publishing standardized test data from non-public schools. Collection of additional data from non-public schools will likely follow the finalization of new testing standards adopted by BESE</p>	<p>Implement revised federal standards when finalized, and monitor the trial of “value added assessment model” currently underway in Jefferson parish.</p> <p>Following the implementation of new federal standards, push for the inclusion of non-public schools’ test results.</p>			

Public Education

Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Progress as of August 2010		
					Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
E11	Work with the business community to offer special programs to JPPS teachers to augment recruiting efforts	Design programs and secure commitments in 2008 – 2009; initiate programs in 2009	The Jefferson Chamber of Commerce and the Jefferson Parish School System have been successful in obtaining a number of corporate commitments to establish incentives and special bargains to attract and retain quality teachers. These include a discount on the rental of moving trucks, favorable homebuyer financing, and a special relocation packet from Realtors. Since the last education status report (fall, 2009), no major new initiatives have been implemented, but the existing initiatives have been well received in spite of the fact that JPPS is not expanding its workforce.	Continue to monitor the success of business community-sponsored initiatives. Determine the need for additional programs.			
E12	Initiate an outreach campaign to increase parental involvement in the school system	Complete program design in 2008 – 2009 school year; aim to implement in 2009 – 2010 school year	For additional information on the on-going parental outreach efforts at Jefferson Parish Public Schools, refer to the March 2009 and October 2009 progress reports. A wide range of efforts has been undertaken to enhance parental involvement in Jefferson Parish Public Schools. Recent accomplishments include the rollout of the “parent portal” for the parents of JPPS students. This portal allows parents at each of the system’s 89 schools to more closely monitor their children’s academic progress so that they may intervene if grades are sub-par. Additionally, JPPS is in the process of developing action plans in coordination with The Jeremiah Group to obtain greater parent involvement and to improve “customer service” between the schools and the community.	Monitor progress of the action plans being developed in coordination with the Jeremiah Group. Monitor participation in the “parent portal” and seek to expand the use of this system. Create tangible internal benchmarks for achieving a satisfactory level of parent participation at individual schools.			

Public Education

						Progress as of August 2010		
Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress	
E13	Initiate a public outreach campaign targeted both to real estate agents and the general public	Unveil website and issue newsletter in 2008 - 2009	<p>JPPS has aggressively implemented a multi-pronged outreach effort to the general public and to the real estate community in particular. Following from the steps that were identified in the October, 2009 update, JPPS has conducted the following forms of outreach to these audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the winter 2009 issue of Jefferson Life magazine, there was a prominent feature story about technology in JPPS classrooms. • JPPS has released full page ads in the Times Picayune and a promotional video on public access Channel 8. • Jump drives with school information and school locator software were distributed to area realtors. • JPPS regularly communicates with the New Orleans Metropolitan Association of Realtors by supplying news and information that can be used in their newsletters and website. • JPPS now has an e-newsletter that is sent to real estate professionals and other members of the public every two weeks. 	While this action item is by definition an on-going initiative, it has been marked as complete due to the diverse forms of outreach that the school system has undertaken. Continue to monitor progress and to update outreach materials to keep the public and real estate professionals informed.				



3445 N. Causeway Blvd. Suite 300
Metairie, LA 70002
504 833 1881 fax 504 833 7676



GCR & Associates, Inc.

2021 Lakeshore Drive, Ste. 500
New Orleans, LA 70122
504 304 2500 fax 504 304 2525
