



2011 Key Education Issues: Changing Louisiana's Future

In this second report on the five key education issues that will shape the future of Louisiana, we conclude each section with questions that we hope will guide our efforts in raising student achievement, eliminating the achievement gap, and enabling all children of Louisiana to be effective citizens in the global marketplace. These issues comprise the reform agenda – early childhood education, Pre-K to elementary school literacy, teacher quality, improving graduation rates, and preparing students for post-secondary education and careers. **By working together to address the key questions posed here, we can give every child in Louisiana the opportunity to reach his or her fullest potential.**

Early Childhood Education: Critical Needs for Critical Years	Ensuring Literacy: Reducing Student Retention
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there the political will to support the continued expansion of the LA 4 initiative to more students? • Can we agree on a common definition of school readiness to guide the development of early childhood education efforts for all providers? • Is diverse delivery a viable option to expand quality early childhood education efforts in Louisiana? • What Birth-to-Five initiatives deserve investment by Louisiana to create a level playing field for children born into poverty? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does Louisiana have the political will to invest in statewide literacy initiatives? • How can we prevent retentions in the early grades with appropriate interventions? • How can we improve literacy in middle and high schools? • How can Louisiana be most effective in building the professional development and university preparation needed for a successful “Ensuring Literacy for All” initiative?

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Increasing Graduation Rates: Learning to Finish	Teacher Quality: Key to Student Success	Louisiana Students: College and Career Ready
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we do to keep dropout prevention a “top of the agenda” issue? • What can whole communities do to help raise graduation rates? • What systems can be put in place and improved in elementary, middle, and high school to identify “at risk” students and reduce retention rates? • What strategies should be employed to reduce the number of overage students in Louisiana schools? • What systems can be put in place and improved at high schools defined by school researchers as “dropout factories” to increase the graduation rate? • How do we better engage students in middle and high school? • What can we do to support students in the transitions from 8th to 9th grade and from 5th to 6th grade? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How successful will Louisiana be in building district-level support in implementing Act 54 and in embracing other best practice models of evaluating teacher effectiveness? • Will Louisiana be successful in implementing strategies to attract and retain the best teachers? • Will Louisiana implement and sustain strategies to improve quality teaching for all teachers through targeted and job embedded professional development? • Will Louisiana use information from the soon to be released Gates Foundation’s “Measures of Effective Teaching” initiative in designing future school improvements efforts? • Does the quality of the teacher in the classroom matter enough to replace teachers who are not effective with students? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What further changes to the State’s accountability system are needed to ensure Louisiana’s students are prepared for success in life? • What assessments should be used to ensure Louisiana’s graduates are college and career ready? • What data support systems will be needed to meet the State’s goals? • What supports and interventions will best impact the State’s College and Career Readiness goals to ensure that all students regardless of race or class will graduate on time, enroll in post-secondary education or graduate work-force ready, and successfully complete at least one year of post-secondary education?

For a copy of the full report, visit www.ednexthorizon.org.

