



Progress Report Narrative

Vision and Official Launch

The Capital Area Promise is a collaborative initiative between Baton Rouge’s education institutions—LSU, Southern University, and Baton Rouge Community College—to guarantee that all students have the opportunity to enroll in college and/or enter the workforce with skills to succeed. These institutions work closely with the East Baton Rouge Parish School System, surrounding districts, and key state agencies to make the Promise a comprehensive and inclusive effort. While the Promise reflects our community’s broad commitments, its specific goals include:

1. Increasing the number of opportunities and certified staff in early childhood education
2. Expanding college campus and workplace tours for fifth through ninth graders
3. Increasing the number of students participating in summer employment and internships
4. Increasing the percentage of high school students in East Baton Rouge Parish who are prepared for college or technical education through dual enrollment credits and articulation opportunities
5. Increasing the percentage of East Baton Rouge Parish students that place at college level math and English
6. Increasing the percentage of students who earn degrees and/or technical certifications
7. Increasing the percentage of BRCC students who successfully transfer to LSU, Southern University, or another four-year college/university
8. Increasing the percentage of LSU and Southern University students who graduate with a bachelor’s and/or advanced degrees
9. Reducing barriers and increasing awareness around college affordability
10. Expanding preparation programs/initiatives for teachers and school leaders at LSU, Southern University, and BRCC

The Promise was launched on September 6, 2018, at City Hall Plaza. Our education leaders and mayor-president agreed to leverage their institution’s existing efforts and programs to create more college and career pathways for students of the region.

Similarly, the Capital Area Promise website, capitalareapromise.org, was launched and includes portals for students, parents, and partners.

Post-Launch Gathering – Fall 2018

In October, leaders met administration, faculty, and students during the official opening of East Baton Rouge Parish School System’s Career and Technical Education Center (C-TEC). The visit’s capstone was the town hall, where leaders fielded questions from more than 100 students assembled. It was also an opportunity to highlight our collective and individual commitments to the Promise and its goals.

School Visits – Spring 2019

Leaders conducted school visits to (1) formally introduce the Promise and (2) learn more about local schools through tours and structured discussions with administration, faculty, and students. Feedback helps contextualize our existing efforts and how they can be improved. We also gathered ideas and suggestions for new partnerships and collaboration.

March 27, 2019	SU President-Chancellor Ray Belton	Scotlandville Magnet High School
April 4, 2019	LSU President F. King Alexander	Glasgow Middle School
April 9, 2019	BRCC Larissa Littleton Steib (former)	Istrouma High School
April 30, 2019	Mayor-President Sharon Weston Broome	Woodlawn High School
May 1, 2019	EBR Superintendent Warren Drake	Westdale Middle School

District Visits – Spring and Summer 2019

The Promise has been formally introduced to ten (10) school districts of the nine-parish region. We have met with superintendents and/or members of the executive team. The postsecondary institutions have shared parish or district-specific information including:

- Enrollment data
- Existing programs, initiatives, and partnerships
- Dual enrollment
- Teacher preparation opportunities

March 27, 2019	Zachary Community Schools
March 27, 2019	West Feliciana Parish
April 29, 2019	Livingston Parish
April 30, 2019	East Feliciana Parish
April 30, 2019	Central Community Schools System
May 6, 2019	St. Helena Parish
May 9, 2019	Iberville Parish
May 28, 2019	City of Baker School System
June 10, 2019	Ascension Parish

EBRPSS sits on the Capital Area Promise Core Team and the Recovery School District—EBR is represented by the Louisiana Department of Education. Meetings have been requested with Pointe Coupee Parish and West Baton Rouge Parish school districts.

Through these visits, *more than 7,000 Capital Area Promise student posters* were distributed to district offices for fifth through eighth grade students (specific grade levels selected by district).

Additional Outreach – Spring and Summer 2019

We have met with several organizations to broaden support for the Promise and promulgate our efforts. In the months ahead, we will meet with more groups, including local business and industry leaders. Below is a summary of the outreach to date.

Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)	Discussed ways to incorporate charter schools, specifically schools within the Baton Rouge Achievement Zone; agency added to the Promise’s Core Team
Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA)	Discussed ways to collaborate with agency’s Field Outreach Services; LOSFA added to the Promise’s Core Team
Board of Regents	Discussed how the Promise aligns with the Regents’ Master Plan ¹ and Commissioner’s interest in “measuring mindset”
Baton Rouge Area Foundation	Discussed BRAF’s interest in expanding online education through postsecondary institutions
EBR Housing Authority	Discussed opportunity to co-program through agency’s residential services program
Capital Area United Way	Discussed shared priority of education (access)

Postsecondary Institutions: A Unique Opportunity for Collective Impact

Baton Rouge is home to LSU and Southern University, which comes with an important distinction: this is the only city in the continental U.S. with two, public land-grant institutions. Additionally, Baton Rouge Community College is one of the nation’s fastest growing institutions among its peers. This presents a unique opportunity for our region. Together, we can make education the hallmark of our community.

Our collective impact can be captured in several ways. Last year, our postsecondary institutions:

- Conferred approximately **8,700 bachelor’s degrees**, which includes more than **200 graduates who are certified to teach in public schools**.
- Awarded more than **\$82 million** in institutionally controlled scholarships, making college more affordable for thousands of students. When federal and state grants are included, we have processed more than **\$400 million** in financial aid.
- Reached more than **900 high school students through dual enrollment**, which builds college readiness and reduces future tuition costs for families.
- Provided professional development and training for K-12 faculty across the region.
- Created sequential college-tours for middle school students, another first for Baton Rouge. Sixth graders will visit LSU, seventh graders will visit Southern University, and eighth graders will visit BRCC.

NOTE: Data can be viewed in the Progress Report – Summary Table and Appendix.

In the years to come, this impact will only grow. High school graduation rates are rising throughout the capital area, creating a demand for college accessibility and job opportunities.

¹ Louisiana Prospers: Driving Our Talent Imperative (Master Plan, Rep. 2019), Louisiana Board of Regents

Next Steps: Capital Area Promise – Phase II

To date, the Promise has been guided by a team of liaisons from each partner. The Core Team, as it is called, has met once a month since September 2018 to steer the initial plans and framework. The Core Team will continue to meet quarterly, but the work will shift to five (5) Work Groups to monitor the Promise's progress. Each partner has identified representatives for the following Work Groups:

- (1) Credentials and Curriculum
- (2) Early Childhood Education
- (3) Affordability and Access
- (4) Data Reporting and Analytics
- (5) Communications and Public Relations

Phase II also involves goal setting for the 2019–20 academic year. The Core Team has set growth targets for each of the Promise's 10 goals (*See Progress Report – Summary Table*). Further, we will set goals in coordination with education leaders for the region's K-12 districts (as follow-up to the initial visits). This creates shared accountability with Baton Rouge's postsecondary institutions to deliver on goals specific to each district.

Finally, students and parents can now visit the Promise website (capitalareapromise.org) to sign the *Middle School Pledge*. This tool is designed to get families talking about college and career preparation early and often. It will also expose families to resources that have been centralized on the site.

LSU will continue serving as lead facilitator for the Capital Area Promise.