IBERIA PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

PLAN FOR ACADEMICALLY UNACCEPTABLE SCHOOLS

Dale R. Henderson
Superintendent

Carey Laviolette
Assistant Superintendent of Instruction

C. Michael Judice
Assistant Superintendent of Administration

Jennifer Joseph
Supervisor of Specially Funded Programs
IBERIA PARISH
SCHOOL SYSTEM CHOICE PLAN

Committee Members

Dale R. Henderson  Carey Laviolette
Jacklene Jones     Jennifer Joseph
Leslie Stuart     Flavia Eldridge
Joel McFarland   Raymond Noel
Judy Joseph       Virginia Lewis
Patricia (Pousette) Vincent  Chantel Helms
J. Wayne Landry, Iberia Parish School Board Attorney

Revised July, 2013
TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction

II. Assurance Statement on Funding and Transportation

III. Iberia School Choice Plan

IV. Appendix
   A. Plans to Assist Academically Unacceptable Schools
   B. Parent Notification Letter
   C. School Choice Request Form
INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Bulletin 111: The Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System, federal law requires school districts to offer families in schools that have been identified as Academically Unacceptable (School Performance Score below 50), the choice to transfer their children to other public schools in the same district.

The district assures that all qualifying students in Academically Unacceptable Schools (sending schools) will be provided the option to move to a higher performing school (accepting school). School choice will be provided to students in Title I schools, as well as schools that are not in Title I. School choice is mandatory for the school district, but is optional for parents. The district assures that low-income, low-performing students will be given first priority in the selection process.

Parents of students in schools that have been identified as Academically Unacceptable will be notified by letter of the opportunity to transfer their child/ren to a higher achieving school in the district. The letter will explain the criteria that identified the school as an Academically Unacceptable School (AUS), what that school is doing to address the problem of low achievement, how parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that caused the school to be identified as Academically Unacceptable, and which higher achieving schools are available for transfer.

Parents will have a fourteen (14) calendar day deadline to declare their school of choice by making formal application to the Child Welfare and Attendance Office on the School Choice Request Form. The Child Welfare and Attendance Office will notify parents, sending school, and accepting school of the approved transfer within five (5) working days of the close of the application period. Parents will then have five (5) working days to register their child/ren in the approved accepting school.

Transportation will be provided by the school district to the accepting school as long as the AUS continues to be identified as such.

This plan will address specific questions and answers that are relevant to the guidelines required for parents requesting school choice.
ASSURANCE STATEMENT ON FUNDING AND TRANSPORTATION

The Iberia Parish School Board assures that all schools identified as Academically Unacceptable shall have adequate funding from Title I and/or other local, state, or federal monies and that transportation will be provided to families who are granted their request to attend a school listed as an approved school choice option.

______________________________________
Dale R. Henderson
Superintendent
Iberia Parish School Board

_______________________________________
Date
IBERIA PARISH SCHOOL CHOICE PLAN

1. **Why was <School Name> identified as an Academically Unacceptable School”?**
   In accordance with the new state accountability system, any school with a School Performance Score below 50 is identified as Academically Unacceptable. «SCHOOL_NAME» received a School Performance Score for the «PREVIOUS_SCHOOL_YEAR» of «SPS_SCORE».

2. **What is <School Name> doing to address the problem of low achievement, and what are the school system and the State doing to help them address the problem?**
   The administration will evaluate all areas of instruction at «SCHOOL_NAME». The information obtained will be used to prepare a comprehensive School Improvement Plan. This plan requires classroom instruction and teacher training to focus on improving the areas in which students at «SCHOOL_NAME» are having difficulty. Additional assistance for «SCHOOL_NAME» will also include: 1) School will be staffed with highly qualified teachers. 2) The student/teacher ratio will be monitored and lowered to the extent that funding allows. 3) Additional district support will include «DISTRICT_SUPPORT_1» and «DISTRICT_SUPPORT_2».

3. **How can I become involved in addressing the problems that caused <School Name> to be identified as an Academically Unacceptable School?**
   Families are encouraged to arrange a private conference with their child’s teachers to discuss ways to improve academic performance. Families are also invited to participate as members of the school’s committees at «SCHOOL_NAME». Even if a family member does not serve as a member of a school committee, he or she may attend committee meetings to discuss possible changes in any area of instruction to improve «SCHOOL_NAME».

4. **Do I have to transfer my child to another school?**
   No. The choice is optional; therefore, you should base your decision on what you think is best for your child. If you think your child would benefit by remaining at his/her current school, all you have to do is make sure your child is at his/her current school on the first day of class.

5. **To which school/s may my child transfer?**
   The school district will select schools that meet the qualifications for school choice in accordance with the state and federal guidelines. Those schools will be listed in the parent notification letter and on the School Choice Request Form. If you choose to have your child attend one of these, please rank the schools on the School Choice Request Form in order of preference.

6. **What if I want to transfer more than one child?**
   Because of space limitations and the various school combinations in our district, we may not be able to transfer every child to the same accepting school. The district will give your request consideration; however, there are no guarantees.

7. **Is my child guaranteed a place in an accepting school?**
   It is possible that your child may not be granted enrollment in your first school of
choice. Students will be granted enrollment in the accepting school based upon enrollment limits, individual achievement scores, and income levels. Only a limited number of students can be accommodated in the accepting school, so we may not be able to transfer every child whose parent applies. Until we hear from every other parent in your school, we cannot guarantee that if you choose to transfer your child we will be able to make the transfer happen. If no match is made based on your choice/s of school, the child will remain at his/her current school.

8. **How will students be chosen?**
   We want to accommodate as many choice requests as possible, but if several parents request transfers, we may not have space for everyone. Under federal law, we must give first priority to the lowest achieving, lowest income students. Achievement will be based on the student’s scores on the statewide assessment program, and income will be based on the eligibility for free or reduced lunch.

9. **How will my child get to an accepting school?**
   If your transfer is approved, your child will have transportation provided by the school district to the accepting school for as long as «SCHOOL_NAME» is identified as Academically Unacceptable. In the future, however, transportation to the accepting school will be at the discretion of the school system if «SCHOOL_NAME» improves and begins meeting state standards.

10. **If my child’s home-based school improves from its unacceptable status, may my child remain at the accepting school?**
    The district will permit your child to remain in the accepting school until he/she completes the highest grade, but the district will no longer be obligated to provide transportation.

11. **Is it possible for my child to transfer back to his/her home-based school during the school year?**
    No. School choice assignments are made for the entire school year so students will be obligated to remain at the accepting school for the year. However, students may return to their home-based school at the beginning of the following school year.

12. **How do I apply and what is the deadline for applying?**
    If you decide you want to send your child to one of the accepting schools, complete the enclosed *School Choice Request Form* and mail/drop it off at the Child Welfare and Attendance Office at 1500 Jane Street in New Iberia no later than 4 p.m. on «APPLICATION_DEADLINE». The form is also available at «SCHOOL_NAME» and on the Iberia Parish School Board website. If we do not receive the *School Choice Request Form* from you by the above date, your child will remain enrolled at his/her present home-based school. No applications will be accepted after «APPLICATION_DEADLINE».

13. **When will you tell me if my transfer application is approved?**
    The district office will send an official notification to you and the sending and accepting schools no later than <Status Deadline> regarding the status of your transfer application.
14. **What if my transfer application is not approved?**
   Every effort will be made to assign your child to the school that is your first choice. If this is not possible, your child will be assigned to another available choice according to the rank order you indicate on the *School Choice Request Form*. If no match is made, your child will remain at his/her home-based school. It should also be noted that federal law requires that student assignments be based on family income and student test scores giving students with the lowest income and test scores priority in assignments.

15. **When may I visit the accepting school?**
   If you are thinking about transferring your child to one of the Accepting Schools, we encourage you to visit them and call us with any questions.

16. **Questions**
   If you have any more questions about the school choice program or your options, please call us at the Iberia Parish Educational Center (337) 364-7641 (School Choice and Assessment Facilitator) or the Iberia Parish School Board, Department of Office of Child Welfare and Attendance/Transportation Department, 1500 Jane Street in New Iberia (337) 365-2341.
APPENDIX A
PLANS TO ASSIST ACADEMICALLY UNACCEPTABLE SCHOOLS

A. Describe how opportunities will be provided for students to move to a higher performing school. What measures are in place that ensures the priority of transfers for lowest achieving children from low-income families?

The district assures that all qualifying students in AUS schools will be provided the option to move to a higher performing school utilizing the following measures at each AUS school. The district assures that low-income, low-performing students will be given first priority in the selection process.

1. Parents in schools that have been identified as Academically Unacceptable will be notified by letter of the opportunity to transfer their child to a higher achieving school in the district. The letter will explain the criteria that identified this school as an Academically Unacceptable School; what that school is doing to address the problem of low achievement; and how the parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement.

2. Parents of students in Academically Unacceptable schools will be notified of the higher achieving schools available for transfer.

3. Low-income, low-achieving students will be given first priority in the selection process.

4. Parents will have a fourteen (14) calendar day deadline to declare their school of choice by making formal application to the district Office of Child Welfare and Attendance.

5. The district Office of Child Welfare and Attendance will notify parents, sending school(s), and accepting school(s) of the approved transfers within five (5) working days following the close of the application period.

6. The Office of Child Welfare and Attendance and the Department of Transportation will assist parents in securing transportation.

B. Provide an explanation of what preparations the LEA will make to ensure that an amount equivalent to at least 5% of its Title I, Part A allocation will be used for transportation costs to implement School Choice. Include an explanation of how these funds will only supplement transportation the LEA is already providing.

The LEA presently runs a complex transportation system covering 14,000 miles daily. When district-funded transportation schedules meet the transportation need of school choice students, students will be assigned accordingly. The LEA ensures that an amount equivalent to at least 5% of Title I Part A will be used to supplement school choice, if necessary.
C. **Provide a description of the actions the local educational agency will take to assist its low-achieving school(s) identified as Academically Unacceptable.**

District resources will be allocated to Academically Unacceptable Schools to assist in developing a comprehensive school improvement plan. Each teacher’s professional growth plan must align with the focus areas outlined in the School Improvement Plan.

D. **Provide a description of the actions the local educational agency will take to implement Public School Choice.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Announcement from State Department of Education</th>
<th>Receive notification of district schools required to offer choice from the Louisiana State Department of Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within 10 calendar days</td>
<td>Mail letters to parents of students enrolled in Academically Unacceptable Schools notifying them of the option to transfer their child to a higher performing school. Parents will be given designated schools from which to choose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-calendar day application period</td>
<td>Accept applications until 4:00 p.m. Students will be ranked in order of income and academic achievement. Lowest achieving students from low-income families will be given priority in the selection process. Students for whom transfer requests are not received in the Office of Child Welfare and Attendance within 14 calendar days will remain enrolled in his/her current school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within 5 work days of the close of application period</td>
<td>Mail letters to parents, sending school, and accepting school notifying them of which school the student has been approved for transfer. The Office of Child Welfare and Attendance and Transportation Department will assist with scheduling bus transportation for students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-working day registration period</td>
<td>Students must register at their approved receiving school within 5 working days from the close of the application period.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E. Parent Notification of School Choice

“A local educational agency shall promptly provide to a parent or parents (in an understandable and uniform format and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand) of each student enrolled in an elementary school or secondary school identified for school improvement.”

Notices must include the following elements:
X An explanation of what identification means;
X The reason for the identification;
X An explanation of what the school identified as Academically Unacceptable is doing to address the problem of low achievement;
X An explanation of what the LEA or SEA is doing to help the school address the problem of low achievement.
X An explanation of how the parents can become involved in addressing the academic issues that caused the school to be identified as Academically Unacceptable; and
X An explanation of the parents’ option to transfer their child to another public school (with transportation provided by the LEA).

1. Describe the LEA’s procedure for implementing parent notification as required by NCLB. Include a copy of the notification letter to be sent to parents informing them of Choice and the options available to them.

Parent notification will include the elements listed above. A copy of the notification letter to be sent to the parents informing them of School Choice is included. The letter outlines options available to parents. Notification letters will be personalized for each school that is actually identified as an Academically Unacceptable School.

2. Describe the LEA’s procedures for receiving and acting on complaints from parents.

Complaints from parents will be received and acted upon by the appropriate Assistant Superintendent who is the Superintendent’s designee.

F. LEA Choice Plan

1. Describe the LEA’s plan to accommodate transferring students when it does not have the physical capacity within its schools.

The range of options for our school system might include:
• Expanding space in receiving schools, such as acquiring portable classrooms
• Reconfiguring space in receiving schools that are currently not being used for instruction.
APPENDIX B
PARENT NOTIFICATION LETTER

Date

To the family of:
«FIRST_NAME» «LAST_NAME»
«STREET» «ADDRESS_LINE_2»
«CITY», «STATE» «ZIP_CODE»

Dear family:

Federal law requires school districts to offer families in schools which have been identified as Academically Unacceptable the chance to transfer their children to other public schools in the same district. Your child’s school has been identified as an Academically Unacceptable School and you are allowed to choose to enroll him/her in another school. To help you understand how the School Choice Program works, here are some answers to questions you may have.

Why was «SCHOOL_NAME» identified as an Academically Unacceptable School”?
In accordance with the new state accountability system, any school with a School Performance Score below 50 is identified as Academically Unacceptable. «SCHOOL_NAME» received a School Performance Score for the «PREVIOUS_SCHOOL_YEAR» of «SPS_SCORE».

What is «SCHOOL_NAME» doing to address the problem of low achievement, and what are the school system and the State doing to help them address the problem?
The administration will evaluate all areas of instruction at «SCHOOL_NAME». The information obtained will be used to prepare a comprehensive School Improvement Plan. This plan requires classroom instruction and teacher training to focus on improving the areas in which students at «SCHOOL_NAME» are having difficulty. Additional assistance for «SCHOOL_NAME» will also include: 1) School will be staffed with highly qualified teachers. 2) The student/teacher ratio will be monitored and lowered to the extent that funding allows. 3) Additional district support will include «DISTRICT_SUPPORT_1» and «DISTRICT_SUPPORT_2».

How can I become involved in addressing the problems that caused «SCHOOL_NAME» to be identified as an Academically Unacceptable School?
Families are encouraged to arrange a private conference with their child’s teachers to discuss ways to improve academic performance. Families are also invited to participate as members of the school’s committees at «SCHOOL_NAME». Even if a family member does not serve as a member of a school committee, he or she may attend committee meetings to discuss possible changes in any area of instruction to improve «SCHOOL_NAME».

Do I have to transfer my child to another school?
No. The choice is optional; therefore, you should base your decision on what you think is best for your child. If you think your child would benefit by remaining at his/her current school, all you have to do is make sure your child is at «SCHOOL_NAME» on the first day of class.

To which schools may my child transfer?
The school district selected schools that meet the qualifications for school choice in accordance with the state and federal guidelines. Those schools are:

Accepting Elementary Schools
«ACCEPTING_SCHOOL_1», «CITY_1»
«ACCEPTING_SCHOOL_2», «CITY_2»
«ACCEPTING_SCHOOL_3», «CITY_3»
If you choose to have your child attend one of these, please rank the schools on the *School Choice Request Form* in order of preference.

**What if I want to transfer more than one child?**
Because of space limitations and the various school combinations in our district, we may not be able to transfer every child to the same accepting school. The district will give your request consideration; however, there are no guarantees.

**Is my child guaranteed a place in an accepting school?**
It is possible that your child may not be granted enrollment in your first school of choice. Students will be granted enrollment in the accepting school based upon enrollment limits, individual achievement scores, and income levels. Only a limited number of students can be accommodated in the accepting school, so we may not be able to transfer every child whose parent applies. Until we hear from every other parent in your school, we cannot guarantee that if you choose to transfer your child we will be able to make the transfer happen. If no match is made based on your choice/s of school, the child will remain at his/her current school.

**How will students be chosen?**
We want to accommodate as many choices as possible, but if several parents request transfers, we may not have space for everyone. Under federal law, we must give first priority to the lowest-achieving, lowest-income students. Achievement will be based on the student’s scores on the statewide assessment program, and income will be based on eligibility for free or reduced lunch.

**How will my child get to an accepting school?**
If your transfer is approved, your child will have transportation provided by the school district to the accepting school for as long as «SCHOOL_NAME» is identified as Academically Unacceptable. In the future, however, transportation to the accepting school will be at the discretion of the school system if «SCHOOL_NAME» improves and begins meeting state standards.

**If my child’s home-based school improves from its unacceptable status, may my child remain at the accepting school?**
The district will permit your child to remain in the accepting school until he/she completes the highest grade, but the district will no longer be obligated to provide transportation.

**Is it possible for my child to transfer back to his/her home-based school during the school year?**
No. School choice assignments are made for the entire school year so students will be obligated to remain at the accepting school for the year. However, students may return to their home-based school at the beginning of the following school year.

**How do I apply and what is the deadline for applying?**
If you decide you want to send your child to one of the accepting schools, complete the enclosed *School Choice Request Form* and mail/drop it off at the Child Welfare and Attendance Office at 1500 Jane Street in New Iberia no later than 4 p.m. on «APPLICATION_DEADLINE». The form is also available at «SCHOOL_NAME» and on the Iberia Parish School Board website. If we do not receive the *School Choice Request Form* from you by the above date, your child will remain enrolled at his/her present home-based school. No applications will be accepted after «APPLICATION_DEADLINE».

**When will you tell me if my transfer application is approved?**
The district office will send an official notification to you and the sending and accepting schools by «STATUS_DEADLINE» regarding the status of your transfer application. You must then bring your transfer application and register your child at the approved accepting school no later than.
What if my transfer application is not approved?
Every effort will be made to assign your child to the school that is your first choice. If this is not possible, your child will be assigned to another available choice according to the rank order you indicate on the School Choice Request Form. If no match is made, your child will remain at his/her home-based school. It should also be noted that federal law requires that student assignments be based on family income and student test scores giving students with the lowest income and test scores priority in assignments.

When may I visit the accepting school?
If you are thinking about transferring your child to one of the Accepting Schools, we encourage you to visit them and call us with any questions.

Questions?
If you have any more questions about the School Choice Program, you may contact:

Iberia Parish School Board  
School Choice and Assessment Facilitator  
1204 Lemaire St.  
New Iberia, LA 70560  
Contact: Patricia (Pousette) Vincent  
Phone: (337) 364-7641  
Fax: (337) 367-9611  
Email: povincent@iberia.k12.la.us

Iberia Parish School Board  
Child Welfare and Attendance  
1500 Jane Street  
New Iberia, LA 70560  
Contact: Joel McFarland  
Phone: (337) 365-2341  
Fax: (337) 365-6996  
Email: jomcfarland@iberia.k12.la.us

Sincerely,

Dale R. Henderson  
Superintendent  
Iberia Parish School Board
APPENDIX C
Please Print

Student Name______________________________

Address ____________________________

Street City Apt/Lot # Zip Code

Grade: ___________ Sex: Male Female

Date of Birth: __________________ (Circle One)

Home-Based School: __________________

(Circle One)

Regular Education Special Education 504

Other School-age Children in Family:

Full Name: __________________ Grade: ___ School: __________________

Full Name: __________________ Grade: ___ School: __________________

Full Name: __________________ Grade: ___ School: __________________

Full Name: __________________ Grade: ___ School: __________________

Name and address of parent or legal guardian:

________________________________________________________________________

Name: ____________________________ Phone: __________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Name: ____________________________ Phone: __________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Name: ____________________________ Phone: __________________________

Email address/es: ____________________________

Please check (✔) one of the following:

A. ______ I want my child to remain in his/her home-based school

B. ______ I want to apply for my child to attend one of the schools listed below

Accepting Schools: ______ «ACCEPTING_SCHOOL_1» ______ «ACCEPTING_SCHOOL_2» ______ «ACCEPTING_SCHOOL_3»

(Number your choices in order of preference 1, 2, 3)

Parent/Guardian Signature ____________________________ Date: ____________

Every effort will be made to assign your child to the school that is your first choice. In the event that this is not possible, your child will be assigned to another choice as indicated on the School Choice Request Form. It should also be noted that federal law requires that student assignments be based on family income and student test scores. Students with the lowest income and test scores will receive priority in assignments.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Approved SCHOOL CHILD ASSIGNED TO: ____________________________ Must register by «REGISTRATION_DEADLINE»

Denied ____________________________ Supervisor’s Signature ____________________________ Date

Revised July, 2013

NOTE: ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE OFFICE OF CHILD WELFARE AND ATTENDANCE, 1500 JANE STREET, NO LATER THAN 4 P.M. ON: «APPLICATION_DEADLINE»