



# **Executive Summary**

Terrebonne High School

Terrebonne Parish School System

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## Executive Summary Introduction

### Executive Summary

Every school has its own story to tell. The context in which teaching and student learning takes place influences the processes and procedures by which the school makes decisions around curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The context also impacts the way school leadership considers how to organize, maintain order, and stay faithful to the school's vision. A description of the level of stakeholder engagement, trends and issues affecting the school, and the kinds of programs and services that the school implements to support student learning also contributes to the overall narrative.

The purpose of the Executive Summary (ES) is to give schools an opportunity to tell their story, to describe their context both strengths and challenges so that the public and members of the school community have a more complete picture of how the school perceives itself and what it is deliberating as it engages in the process of self-reflection for continuous improvement.

This report is structured into 4 sections that give context about what the school faces on a day-to-day basis in providing teaching and learning in its community:

#### Section 1: Introduction

- Describes the community in which the school is located. Identifies the unique features and special challenges of this school community. Provides brief demographic information with regards to both students and staff and the community at large.

#### Section 2: Student Performance

- Gives a brief description of the school's vision about students and their performance.
- Provides a brief summary of student performance in this school. Identifies the school's goals and how the school will know they have achieved them. Describes the variety of the school's student performance assessments. Identifies how the staff engages in meaningful analysis of student work in order to modify instruction.
- Describes the school's student support programs and services. Identifies the ways in which the school ensures community/parent involvement in the life of the school.

#### Section 3: Challenges and Opportunities

- Identifies the major challenges the school has faced in the last 3 years and how it has addressed those challenges.

#### Section 4: Conclusion

- Identifies what the school is most proud of and why.
- Relates other information the school would like to share with the public and the school community.

## Executive Summary

### Section 1: Introduction

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**Provide the school's mission statement. What process was used to create the mission statement?**

**Describe how the school engaged its stakeholders to parents and community members in the development and fulfillment of the mission statement. Describe the community in which your school is located. What are the unique features and special challenges of your school community?**

**Briefly provide demographic information with regards to both students and staff and the community at large.**

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**Narrative:**

Section 1: Introduction

The Introduction contains a description of the community in which the school is located. It also addresses the unique features and special challenges of this school community. It also contains brief demographic information with regards to students, staff, and the community at large.

Terrebonne Parish, the state's second largest parish, was established March 22, 1822 and is home to approximately 109,000 people. As of the 2010-2011 school year, the Terrebonne Parish School System services approximately 18,000 students in 41 schools, serving Pre-K through 12th grade. The schools range in size from 140 students to almost 1200 students. The district is governed by a board of nine elected members.

Terrebonne High School is the oldest high school in Terrebonne Parish, graduating its first student in 1908. The school is classified as an urban school and has an enrollment of approximately 1000 students in grades 10-12, with a limited number of Houma Junior High ninth graders also enrolled in THS classes. The school is the second oldest accredited high school in the state of Louisiana, having been awarded accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) in 1914. THS has been named a high school of Exemplary Academic Achievement for three consecutive years by the Louisiana State Department of Education.

Terrebonne High has occupied four different buildings during its existence, with the present building being completed in 1940. The beautiful art deco architecture, constructed by the Works Project Association, has 16-inch brick walls, steel reinforced concrete floors, and a 1000-seat auditorium that served the community as an arts and entertainment center for years. Since 1940, the current building has undergone many renovations, including the addition of a new gymnasium, a library, tennis courts, and two portable buildings to accommodate the growing student population. The school's most recent renovations include a resurfaced track, updated hurricane-proof windows, computerized sound and light systems for the auditorium, updated auditorium seating, nine computer labs, a conference room, and a staff development room. Teachers' classrooms are being updated to include cutting-edge technology, such as SMART boards, document cameras, scientific calculators, digital cameras, video cameras, Adobe Creative Suite software, ExamView Pro testing software, scantron scanners, student response boards, and student computer workstations.

THS offers many services and programs to meet the needs of our diverse student population. These programs and services include staff development days; a new teacher orientation program; Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for all faculty members; talented and gifted enrichment in the core courses and in vocal and instrumental music, art, and drama; advanced placement American history and English IV; honors classes in core content courses; a Jobs for American Graduates (JAG) program; an English as a Second Language (ESL) computer lab with specialized Rosetta Stone software; the NovaNET web-based computer lab to challenge gifted students and support and remediate struggling students; a GED Skills program to provide a portal for potential dropouts to earn a GED diploma; Louisiana Virtual School online classes offered to students wishing to take classes not offered at THS; dual enrollment college credit courses for college-bound students; vocational-technical courses; lunchtime and after-school tutoring initiatives; reading comprehension classes; "Project Read" to remediate students with weaknesses in comprehension; "We Care" mentoring programs between electives teachers and struggling students; voluntary mentoring for at-risk students; study skills classes; credit recovery for students with attendance issues; an In-School Suspension program to increase attendance for students with excessive behavior referrals; an extensive sheet music archive for vocal music students; and competitive college preparatory sports. In addition, THS complies with regulations for handicapped students, drug-free and smoke-free zones, and zero tolerance for fighting, aided by the

addition of a School Resource Officer (SRO). THS has also implemented a Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program which establishes school-wide expectations for students and provides a reward system, including rewards for making the A-B honor roll each grading period and for students who meet or exceed the PBIS expectations. Included in the PBIS program is the addition of a Teen Leadership class and Challenge Day, a program that involves students, adults, and community leaders coming together to acknowledge personal connections through shared experiences, to celebrate diversity, and to experience a safe, loving environment.

Students who attend Terrebonne High School come from a socioeconomically diverse background and live in the city, suburbs, and rural settings. Parents of these students have diverse educational backgrounds, varying from high school dropout to college post-graduate.

THS operates on a 4X4 block schedule with four 90-minute blocks constituting a full day of classes and fall and spring semesters constituting two full academic years in which students can earn 8 Carnegie Units. 57 faculty members, three paraprofessionals, one principal, two assistant principals, one master teacher, three guidance counselors, and two librarians comprise the professional staff of THS. Student-teacher ratios average 28 to 1. One of the unique aspects of Terrebonne High is that we share students with our neighboring feeder school, Houma Junior High (HJH). Seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students at HJH commute between the two campuses for band and choir, honors mathematics, and adaptive physical education. Ninth graders may also take weights and conditioning classes at THS because they qualify to participate in THS athletic events. HJH students whose grade classification is 9.5 also commute to Terrebonne High to take sophomore classes.

Over the years, the Terrebonne Parish School District began the process of aligning the school improvement plan with the SACS model. The process of implementation was slowed because of Hurricanes Ike and Gustav in the fall of 2008. The eye of Hurricane Gustav passed over Terrebonne Parish, which resulted in localized street flooding and extensive structural and vegetative damage to the area. Residents who evacuated were not permitted to return to the area for a number of days due to the unavailability of adequate supplies.

Although Hurricane Ike made landfall in Galveston, Texas, the low-lying areas of Terrebonne Parish experienced severe localized flooding. Hurricane Gustav caused an unexpected school closure of eight days, and Hurricane Ike caused an unexpected school closure of one day. Consequently, an additional eight minutes, or two additional minutes per class period, were added to our school day to make up lost instructional time. Our teachers, administrators, and support staff had to cope with the devastation to the parish and begin rebuilding while continuing with the educational process. We have prevailed over the turmoil, and our school is back on track. We began our self-study in the spring of 2011.

The Terrebonne High School leadership team traveled to Baton Rouge to attend a professional development conference on maintaining SACS accreditation, hosted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/Council of Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS/CASI). Subsequently, the administrative team was contacted, and a timeline was created for the Quality Assurance Review visit by SACS/CASI. The faculty was then in-serviced about the SACS progress by the leadership team and began completing the self-study. Teachers were assigned to committees that met bi-monthly. Each committee reviewed a SACS standard and wrote the narrative for the standard. The entire faculty then reviewed each narrative and made recommendations for changes. Students and parents were invited to attend meetings. All stakeholders were given the executive summary and standards' narratives to review and give feedback. Subsequently, the master teacher collected the responses to the standards from all stakeholders, compiled, and entered the narrative statements and accompanying information in ASSIST, SACS web-based reporting application. A rough draft of the report was given to all the stakeholders, whose input was welcomed and used to revise and refine the final report.

During the spring semester of 2011, Professional Learning Communities met biweekly during planning periods to make recommendations for the School Improvement Plan (SIP) based on students needs and to align the SIP with SACS standards. To develop the SIP, the following data was used:

- Student academic performances on standardized achievement tests
- Demographic indicators of the community and school, including socioeconomic factors
- School human and material resource summaries, including teacher demographic indicators
- Interviews with principals and teachers
- Student and teacher focus groups
- Questionnaires with stakeholders (principals, teachers, students, and parents)
- Classroom observations
- Line-item test analysis from teacher-made tests
- Test remediation strategies implemented in the classroom
- Review of student cumulative folders
- Response to Intervention (RTI) folders completed for all struggling students in all subjects
- Trends in attendance data and office referral data

Parents and community members were invited to attend the PLC meetings. Separate meetings were also held for parents and

students to provide feedback and make recommendations. The School Improvement Team (SIT) reviewed the recommendations from all stakeholders and began writing the SIP. The master teacher edited, typed, and delivered the SIP to the Terrebonne Parish School District Federal Department April 20, 2011.

In addition to attending meetings, stakeholders took part in surveys to provide feedback to the school. Administration, faculty, parents, and students participated in these surveys, which measured stakeholder perceptions of THS. The surveys were tallied and analyzed by committees during PLC meetings. The data was used in school improvement plans that were written in the spring of 2011.

Terrebonne High School is the flagship school in Terrebonne Parish. Situated in the central part of Houma on Bayou Terrebonne, THS is an integral part of the rich tradition and history of education on the bayou. All stakeholders have been and will continue to be involved in maintaining that rich tradition and history.

The introduction will conclude with a list of acronyms used throughout this report.

ASAP—Accelerated Student Achievement Pathways

CEO—Course Expectations and Outline

COE—Cooperative Office Education

DE—Distributive Education

DEWS—Dropout Early Warning System

DRA—Daily Reading Assignment

EAGLE—Enhanced Assessment Grade Level Expectations

EOC—End of Course

ESL—English as a second language

GEE—Graduate Exit Exam

GLEs—Grade Level Expectations

IEP—Individual Educational Plan

JBHM—Johnson, Bailey, Henderson, & McNeel

LA PASS—Louisiana Pass practice GEE testing site on DOE website

LaSIP—Louisiana Systemic Initiatives Program—courses in subject area strategies for improvement

LCC—Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum

LDOE—Louisiana Department of Education

LINCS—Learning Intensive Networking Communities

LSSSI—Louisiana’s Safe and Support Schools Initiative

LUMCON—Louisiana University Marine Consortium

MBWA—Management by Walk About

PASS—Practice Assessment/Strengthen Skills

PD—Professional Development

PBIS—Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

PFE—Parents for Education

PLC—Professional Learning Community

RTI—Response to Intervention

SADD—Students Against Drunk Driving

SBLC—School Building Level Committee SPS

SDR—Staff development room

SIT—School improvement team

SIP—School Improvement Plan

SPS—School performance score

SRO—School resource officer

TARC—Terrebonne Association of Retarded Citizens

TIPS—Teachers Involving Parents in School

TOPS—tuition opportunity programs

WC—Winner’s Circle

WFSG—whole faculty study groups

## Section 2: Student Performance

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**Give a brief description of your school’s vision about students and their performance. Provide a brief summary of student performance in your school. What are your goals and how will you know you have achieved them?**

**Describe the variety of your school’s student performance assessments. How does your staff engage in meaningful analysis of student work in order to modify instruction?**

**Describe the school’s student support programs and services. In what ways does your school ensure community/parent involvement in the life of the school?**

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### **Narrative:**

Section 2: Student Performance

Included in this section is a brief description of the school's vision about students and their performance. Also included is a brief summary of student performance and the school's student support programs and services.

At Terrebonne High School, we believe that every day the proper instruction should be delivered to every child to maximize the likelihood that he or she will be motivated to achieve academically. The Terrebonne High School faculty believes that public schools have the responsibility of encouraging students to recognize, develop and utilize their abilities, gifts, and talents to reach their educational goals. For college- or university-bound students, high school must be preparatory. Academic standards must be kept high, and students must necessarily meet these standards in order to perform tasks required to successfully complete the requirements of higher education. Since the formal education of many students will terminate with high school, such students must be equipped with knowledge, skills, attitudes, and ideals that will enable them to accept the responsibilities of personal living and to participate effectively as citizens and workers.

Delivered via differentiated instruction, the curriculum provides a variety of subject matter consistent with student and community needs. The school's educational opportunities provide a high regard for democracy, foster an intellectual appreciation of democratic institutions, and place emphasis on self-discipline. In essence, the curriculum is designed to prepare all students to lead useful, productive, and happy lives.

High-stakes testing, a practice in which the outcome on a standardized test is used as a determining factor in decisions concerning students, has evidenced our continuing growth and progress. Over the past few years, the results of our Graduate Exit Examinations show steady, sustained growth in multiple areas. Our proficiency rate in social studies for the academic years ended 2008, 2009, and 2010 was 61.2, 58.6, and 64.0, respectively. Our proficiency rate in science for the same years was 58.2, 63.4, and 63.6, respectively. Our proficiency rate in ELA for the academic years ended 2008, 2009, and 2010 was 58.2, 54.7, and 66.5, respectively; and our proficiency rate in math was 62.1, 66.9, and 67.9, respectively. Our goal is for every student to be proficient in the four core areas. For the years ended 2008, 2009, and 2010, our School Performance Scores were 81.9, 87.3, and 93.1, respectively. For the academic year ended 2010, our school's growth label was "Recognized Academic Growth", as our SPS grew by 5.8 points.

At Terrebonne High School, many strategies have been incorporated to bring about consistent growth. One such strategy is to engage our instructional staff in data-driven decision-making. Accordingly, we disaggregated performance statistics and established departmental plans to analyze and utilize the disaggregated data to streamline our instructional focus. Using data to pinpoint our student weaknesses and coordinate intervention efforts, we stress teacher collaboration during time spent in regularly scheduled, job-embedded professional learning communities. As a result, PLCs are also devoted to developing and sharing strategies regarding student engagement, literacy across the curriculum, and differentiated instruction. We also stress the importance of utilizing Louisiana's EAGLE (Educational Assessment of Grade-Level Expectations) as a tool for progress monitoring and to enhance student performance on high-stakes tests.

## Section 3: Challenges and Opportunities

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**What are the major challenges your school has faced in the last 3 years and how have you addressed those challenges?**

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**Narrative:**

Section 3: Challenges and Opportunities

This section includes the major challenges the school has faced in the last 3 years and how it has addressed those challenges.

The major challenge that we have faced in the last three years has been our focus on continuing the momentum of the SPS growth achieved during that period of time. Our school performance scores from school years ended 2008, 2009, and 2010 were 81.9, 87.3 and 93.1, respectively. For the 09-10 school year, our school achieved the "Recognized Academic Growth" label. To continue our growth trajectory required some structural change, especially the alignment of collaborative teacher groups. Accordingly, professional learning communities, or PLCs, were embedded within the school day. This change required a significant change in the master schedule. All core subject teachers were given the same planning period. In our 4X4 schedule, all science teachers share a common first period; all math teachers share a common second period; all social studies teachers share a common third period; and all English teachers share a common fourth period. These four groups form four PLCs that meet each week for one hour during their planning period. Non-core teachers also meet for an hour, however, they meet immediately after school on a semi-monthly basis. To empower the groups and to minimize the lag time between decisions and implementation of those decisions, an administrator facilitates each PLC. Group norms include maintaining a task-oriented agenda, professionalism, punctuality, and commitment.

Within these PLCs, teachers analyze student work with laser-like focus. Many instructional strategies have emerged from PLC meetings. In tandem with our educational consultant, JBHM, the leadership team, faculty, and staff focus on features and strategies such as displaying current student work (exemplars), effective formative assessment techniques, student engagement, effective classroom management, posting student-friendly objectives on a daily basis, minimizing classroom disruption, universal screening, and creating interventions to maximize student achievement. The leadership team, consisting of the principal, 2 assistant principals, and the master teacher, have committed to visit the classroom of every teacher at least once a week during MBWAs. During these visits, instructional strategies that are scheduled for implementation are monitored and tweaked.

Also, PLCs are the primary means of disseminating and analyzing data, exploring best practices from model schools and researched-based academic articles, and incorporating district mandates. By institutionalizing professional learning communities into the school culture, and by building capacity in teacher-leaders, we are able to continue making great strides toward meeting our SPS growth targets from year to year.

## Section 4: Conclusion

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### What is your school most proud of and why?

### Is there any other information you would like to share with the public and the school community?

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#### **Narrative:**

Section 4: Conclusion

The Conclusion addresses the aspects of the school of which we are most proud. Also included is any other information school stakeholders deemed important to share with the public and the school community.

The administration, faculty, and staff at Terrebonne High School are proud of our people, systems, and accomplishments. First, in this partial list, we are very proud of the success of our students. Our students have earned accolades in various competitions and have been admitted to many universities, community colleges, and technical schools. Most recently, graduates from the class of 2011 received over \$1 million in scholarships.

Second, Terrebonne High School is very proud of its faculty. The faculty enthusiastically faces the challenge of educating students to thrive in a global community. The faculty works extremely hard and is very conscientious in meeting the needs of the students. The majority of faculty members work after school hours to provide tutoring, advising, and mentoring services. They also participate in fundraisers, lead extracurricular activities, coach athletics, and provide leadership and camaraderie for a host of other activities. Faculty members are team players and are extremely supportive of each other. They are also flexible and committed, as evidenced by their willingness to embrace new programs, their hard work in classrooms, during professional learning communities, and during the self-assessment process. Their dedication as leaders and guides is vital in building all THS programs. By demonstrating commitment to provide after school assistance to struggling students, to athletic teams, and other extracurricular and co-curricular activities, the faculty plays a crucial role in building strong programs and creating meaningful opportunities for student growth. Furthermore, by embracing professional development and graduate education, the faculty embodies the spirit of the school motto, "THS, where learning lasts a lifetime."

Third, THS is very proud of the steady and sustained growth of its School Performance Score. For the years ended 2008, 2009, and 2010, our School Performance Scores were 81.9, 87.3, and 93.1, respectively. For the academic year ended 2010, our school's growth label was "Recognized Academic Growth". The increase in the SPS is a result of the collaborative effort of the administration, faculty, and staff as they work diligently to increase the quality of our approach to deliver quality educational product in a consistent and efficient manner.

Fourth, THS is proud of its approach to the self-assessment process and the willingness of faculty, staff, parents, students and community members to commit to this process in a conscientious fashion and on an on-going basis. The enthusiastic spirit of collaboration and team work resulted in a healthy approach to self-reflection and renewed effort to strengthen the school in all areas.

Terrebonne High School is also proud to be located in such a supportive community. The administration, faculty, and staff are particularly grateful to the community for its consistent and spirited support of our educational efforts. The commitment we pledge to the community is this: we pledge to maintain a safe, rigorous educational setting wherein the administration, faculty, and staff will continue to provide students with the academic and social skills necessary to prepare them to compete effectively against a diverse, global community and to thrive in an increasingly technological world. To honor that commitment, we are dedicated to continual self-assessment, to enthusiastic implementation of research-based strategies to improve our educational and administrative efforts, and to faithfully implement mandated policies and procedures of our governing bodies.