

5 Guiding Principles of Excellence, Access and Success for All Children

In support two major themes:

- **Sustained and authentic community engagement and**
- **Provision of high quality education for all**

The Coalition has identified several essential elements that must be addressed to ensure this process honors the five guiding principles of:

1. Sovereignty of local control
2. Close equity gaps
3. System efficacy and accountability
4. Data transparency and integrity
5. Safe and secure learning environments

Our Coalition calls for these essential elements in the Plan for Unification:

PRINCIPLE 1: Sovereignty of local control

1. Develop a clear framework for civic participation including:
 - Developing a citywide Youth Advisory Council with a meaningful and integrated decision-making role to ensure system decisions are student-centered.
 - Support and Incentivize civic education from K-12 to prepare students for 21st century citizenship
2. Establish a permanent citywide Parent Advisory Council with a meaningful and integrated decision-making role to ensure system decisions are family-centric.
3. Host quarterly community town halls briefing the local community on all local, state and federal policies, plans and laws, as well as the results/implications of any major litigation (i.e. special education consent decree).

PRINCIPLE 2: Close Equity Gaps

4. Develop a comprehensive system wide plan for special needs students including English as a Second Language supports, behavioral, mental and physical health care. The plan should include protocols applicable to language needs and all areas of health care and include a provision for the district to be a provider of services as well as a rating agency for services in these specific areas. This model would also require cross-training of all translation, social service, behavioral and mental health professionals within every school and ensure identifying services.
5. Establish a citywide student handbook that also addresses discipline policy that makes universal policy on what constitutes a spendable/expellable offense to ensure equity across all students and minimize the use of law enforcement in schools.

PRINCIPLE 3: System efficacy and accountability

6. Develop a framework for ensuring consistency in grading/course credits which allows for ease of transferability (choice) across schools within the system.
7. Revise the current Enroll Nola to ensure a student and family-friendly tool and process. This revision should be done in concert with direct input from families on what works and what does not work in the existing process. Enroll Nola should be choice centered allowing parents who wish to utilize the schools in their neighborhood and parents with children already in schools to be given higher preference. Parents must be allowed to keep families together and/or maintain community support structures that will provide the best opportunities for their children. Enrollment exclusionary practices toward special needs students must be dismantled.
8. Develop a framework within the school district to provide oversight and direct intervention and support to schools that are “at-risk.” This should include access to an array of services where schools are in need of improvement. **We call for eliminating the academically disruptive practice of closing schools as the primary strategy of improving schools.**

PRINCIPLE 4: Data transparency and integrity and Fiscal Responsibility

9. Build a system to ensure full and transparent reporting of all schools budgets, annual financials and audits at the local level. These items should be reviewed by the OPSB on an annual basis as a component of the Board’s fiscal oversight and published locally (i.e. A local website).
10. Ensure easy, local access to school report card data, charter board policy decisions, charter school fiscal reporting and disaggregated student achievement and discipline data to support more informed parental choice.
11. Ensure a system of cost- efficient use of taxpayer dollars through centralized procurement, shared services, maintenance and capital improvements, etc. This should include building a robust DBE process which aligns DBE policies of other local public entities.

PRINCIPLE 5: Safe and Secure Learning Environment

12. Build a pilot human capital pipeline program which can serve as a potential model in revamping the citywide approach to human capital. Such a program would employ innovative approaches to teacher induction (mentoring), building a corps of master teachers to increase teacher diversity, teacher retention, and issues of cultural competency. This program should aim to also bring educator demographics in alignment with distribution of race/ethnicity and gender in the City of New Orleans.
13. Build an integrated and system wide approach to early childhood that is developmentally appropriate, culturally competent, and holistic.