



## STATE OF LOUISIANA EDUCATION RESULTS TEAM

### Outcome Based Budgeting Request for Results

#### *YOUTH EDUCATION*

#### Outcome Goal Statement

**I want increased academic achievement for all students, fewer children dropping out of school, and an educated workforce.**

In order to grow Louisiana's economy and maximize opportunities for its citizens, every student must have a strong education. Knowing that our youth will compete in a global economy and recognizing our state's workforce and economic development needs and priorities, we must be relentless in our effort to increase student achievement and to prepare all students to reach their full potential. This will require a focused effort to:

- Ensure all students are literate and mathematically competent;
- Eliminate the achievement gaps between the races and classes;
- Substantially reduce the number of students dropping out of school; and
- Equip students with the knowledge and skills that will build a foundation for self-sufficiency.

With a rigorous and relevant education for our children, Louisiana will have an educated workforce and citizenry that will yield individual and social benefits for years to come.

#### Indicators

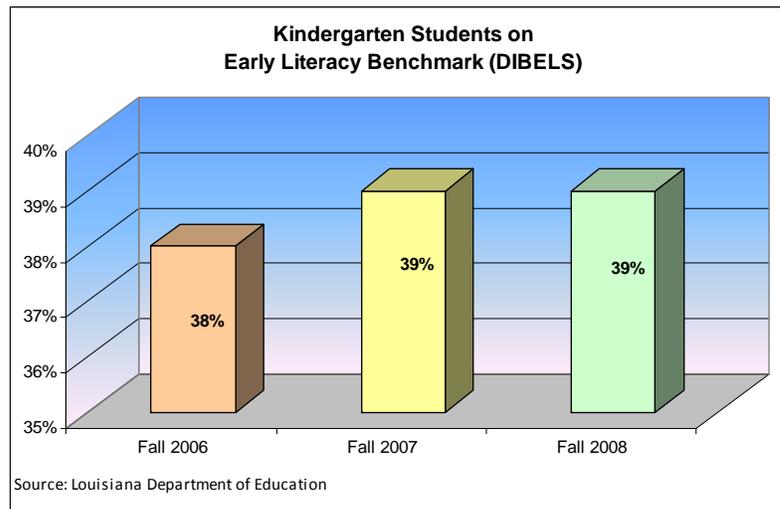
**Indicators:** The indicators below reflect three critical measures associated with delivering the above-described outcome. They specifically relate to three elements tied to academic proficiency, high school graduation, and college and career readiness.

#### **Indicator 1: Academic proficiency**

This indicator is the extent to which Louisiana public school students demonstrate academic proficiency, especially in literacy and numeracy. It can be assessed by examining students' scores on the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment and the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP).

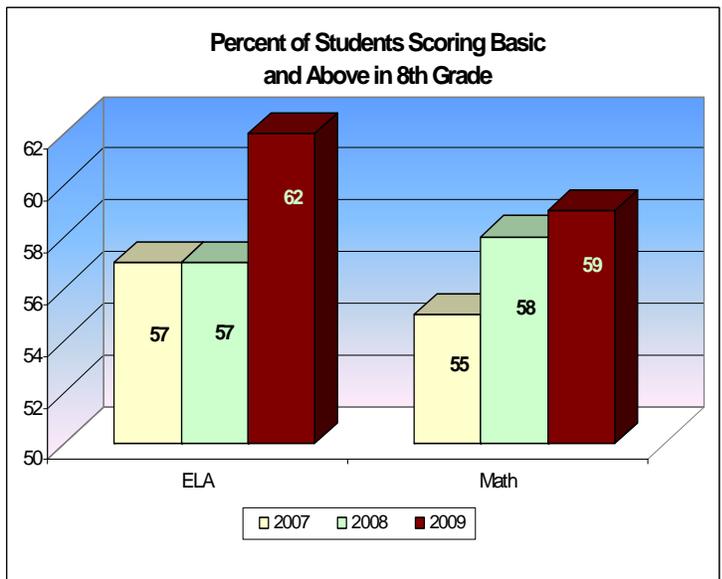
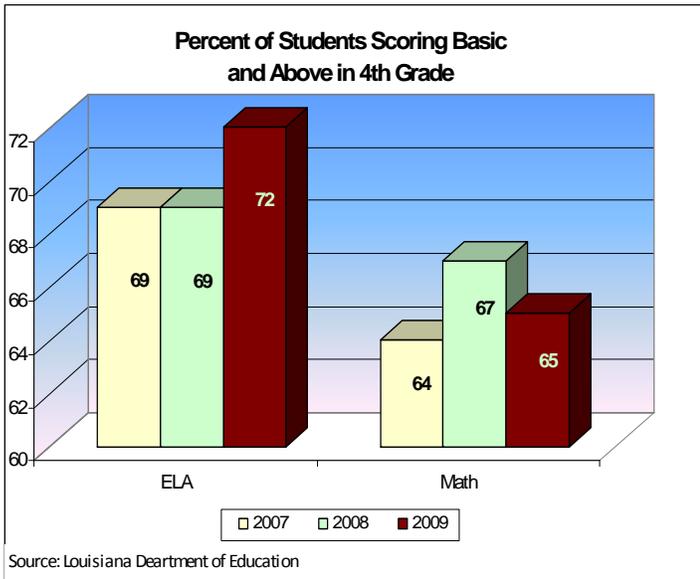
DIBELS are a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy development used in grades kindergarten through three. They are designed to be used to regularly monitor the development of pre-reading and early reading skills and have been found to be predictive of later reading proficiency. The chart below depicts the percentage of kindergarten students who met early literacy benchmarks when assessed using DIBELS.

Students in Louisiana public schools take LEAP in the fourth and eighth grades. LEAP is part of Louisiana's criterion-referenced testing (CRT) program and is a high-stakes test, meaning that students must pass in order to be promoted to the next grade level, with some exceptions. The test measures how well a student has mastered the state content standards and whether students have adequate knowledge and skills to progress to the next grade. By law, LEAP must be directly aligned with the state content standards and must be as rigorous as those of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Students receive one of the following five achievement ratings:



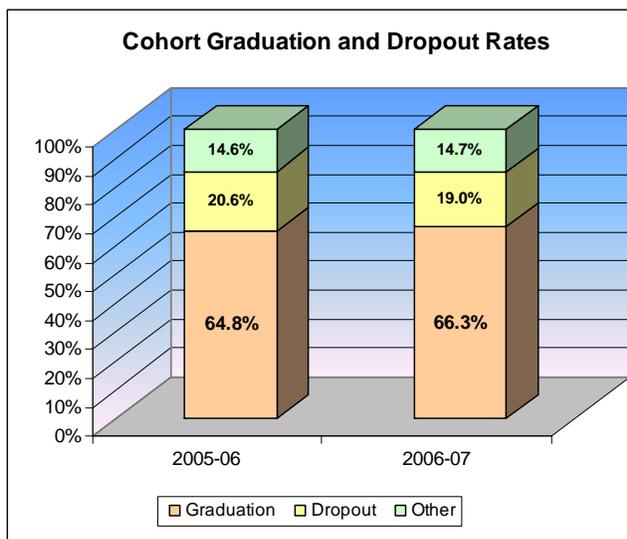
- Advanced: A student at this level has demonstrated superior performance beyond the level of mastery.
- Mastery: A student at this level has demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter and is well prepared for the next level of schooling.
- Basic: A student at this level has demonstrated only the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling.
- Approaching Basic: A student at this level has only partially demonstrated the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling.
- Unsatisfactory: A student at this level has not demonstrated the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling.

The data shown below are the percent of students scoring basic and above in fourth and eighth grades in English and mathematics for academic years 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09.



### Indicator 2: Student dropouts and high school graduation

This indicator is the number and percentage of Louisiana public school students who are graduating from high school on time, and the number dropping out of school each year. Louisiana calculates and reports graduation rates



Source: Louisiana Department of Education

using a cohort graduation rate, which divides the number of on-time graduates in a given year by the number of first-time entering ninth graders who were in that cohort four years earlier. Graduates are those receiving a high school diploma. This calculation is the graduation rate formula that governors of all 50 states agreed to use in 2005 when they joined the Graduation Counts Compact.

The measure below illustrates Louisiana’s cohort graduation and dropout rates for the academic years 2006-07 and 2007-08 and highlights the urgent need for proven interventions at the middle and high school level to keep our young people in school. The “other” category represents students who might have pursued an education credential other than a standard diploma or took longer

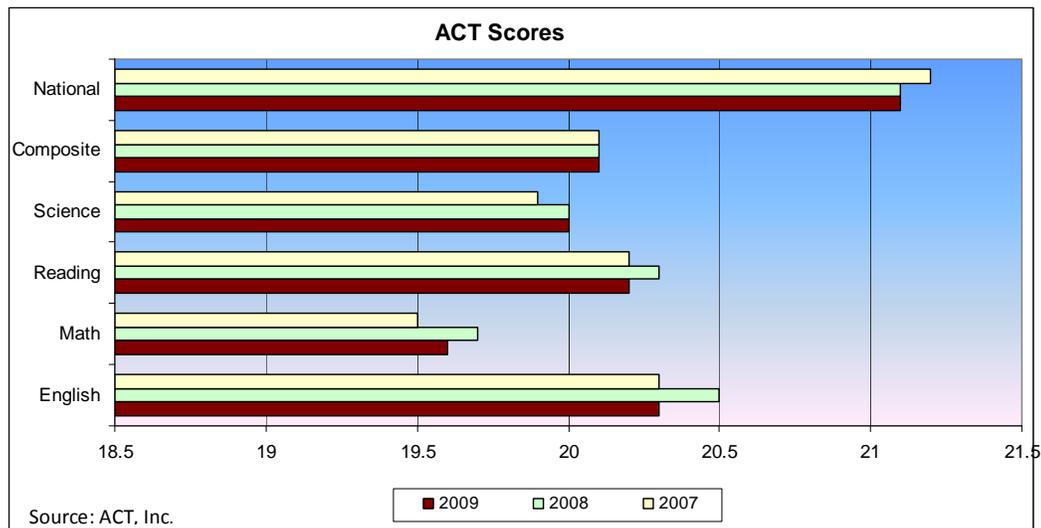
to graduate.

### Indicator 3: College and career readiness and life skills

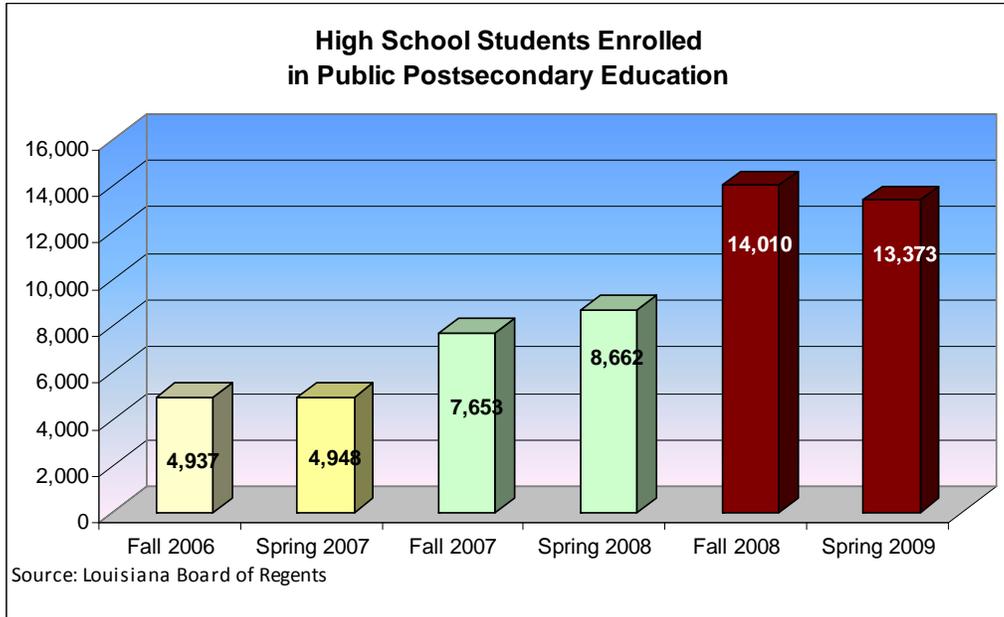
This indicator is students' readiness for careers and postsecondary education, whether they choose to enter the workforce, enroll in a technical or community college, or attend a four-year university upon high school graduation. This administration has made college and career readiness a central goal for education, as future generations of students will compete in a global marketplace where their knowledge and skills must match those required in the new economy.

Several indicator measures may be used to determine students' readiness for careers and postsecondary education, including end-of-course exams, the ACT exam, the number of students earning postsecondary education credit during high school, and the number of students earning industry-based certifications while in high school.

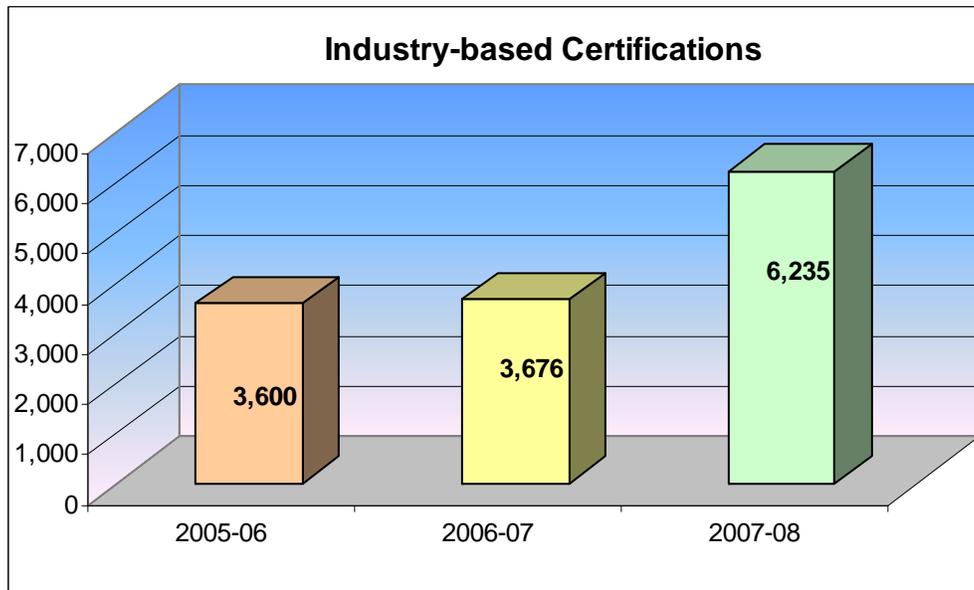
The ACT assessment tool is administered to high school students in all fifty states and is utilized by most Louisiana colleges and universities to determine eligibility for admissions and scholarships, as well as placement in college courses. ACT data also illustrate how well students are prepared for education beyond high school and careers. Below are ACT scores for Louisiana students for the past three years.



Research has shown that students who earn college credit while enrolled in high school are more likely to remain in school and pursue a postsecondary education. Furthermore, taking college courses while enrolled in high school affords students an opportunity to obtain technical training, remediation to qualify for college admission, and a jump start on earning college credits that will lead to a postsecondary education degree or credential. The chart below shows the number of high school students enrolled in public postsecondary education in Louisiana for the past three years.



Another indicator of career readiness is the number of industry-based certifications that students receive while in high school. These credentials are issued by an occupational or industry group to signal completion of training, coursework, apprenticeship, or other preparation for a particular type of job. Some are developed and offered by professional associations or industry groups, where industry representatives convene and adopt industry-wide standards and measures. In other cases, individual companies offer proprietary training and certification in the use of certain products or equipment.



## Introduction of Key Factors

### **The Child**

As we consider what factors contribute to the education of Louisiana's youth, we must first consider the children themselves and what they bring to school everyday. These are things that schools may or may not be able to change, including children's biological or genetic makeup, individual learning needs, mental and physical health, and the extent to which their basic needs are being met at home. The individuals with whom children are associated (their peers) and the values or morals instilled in them at home also contribute to their education. Research has shown that a child's brain architecture begins to form very early in life and provides a strong or weak foundation for all future learning. The interaction of genes and experience shapes brain development; therefore, children's ability to learn is highly dependent upon their having positive relationships, rich learning opportunities, and safe environments.

### **Family**

Students' families greatly affect their learning and development, even beginning before birth. Positive interactions with adults, particularly parents and other caregivers, help to create a sturdy foundation for school achievement. Children learn best when their home environment is free from severe stress, when parents are engaged, and when family activities support growth and development. Conversely, children experiencing neglect, abuse, and violence at home are likely to develop learning and physical limitations that they may never fully overcome. Families are also responsible for the overall safety and health of children, which have been shown to affect students' learning in school, as well as school attendance and behavior.

### **School**

Given the state's primary responsibility to educate school-aged youth, we consider schools to be the principal key factor. Schools are critical places where learning occurs, and every aspect of them affects our ability to meet the outcome goal of educating Louisiana's youth.

#### Personnel

Research shows that the most important predictor of student achievement is the quality of teachers. Having an effective teacher in the classroom is paramount to all other aspects of the school. Strong school leaders are also important, as they are responsible for hiring good teachers, monitoring their performance, and making personnel and other decisions that will have a positive effect on student learning. Well-trained specialized educators and caring and attentive support staff foster an attitude that all children can learn and an environment in which failure is simply not an option.

#### Curriculum

A school's curriculum is also a key determinant of academic proficiency, preparing students to meet grade level expectations so that they can progress to the next grade and avoid retention and remediation. The extent to which coursework is both rigorous and relevant, especially in middle and high school, influences students' level of engagement

and determines their readiness for postsecondary education and the workforce that awaits them. Curricula can be strengthened through the use of current, high-quality textbooks and materials, technology, and the infusion of work-based experiences.

### Learning Environment

Students need school environments that are conducive to learning. In addition to the having well-maintained school facilities and well-equipped classrooms, students must feel secure at school and have minimal disruptions as they learn. They should have access to nutritious meals, health care services, and counseling to support their overall well-being and ability to learn. Perhaps most important, different students need different kinds of learning environments. Students learn in different ways: some respond well to traditional lectures and reading textbooks, others do better with experiential education, and some learn best by focusing on an area of passion (art, dance, theatre, computers, technology, vocational areas). Some students arrive at school with motivation, intending to go to college. Others who come from communities where people don't go to college, lack that motivation. Their learning environments must focus first on building motivation before they can effectively educate these students.

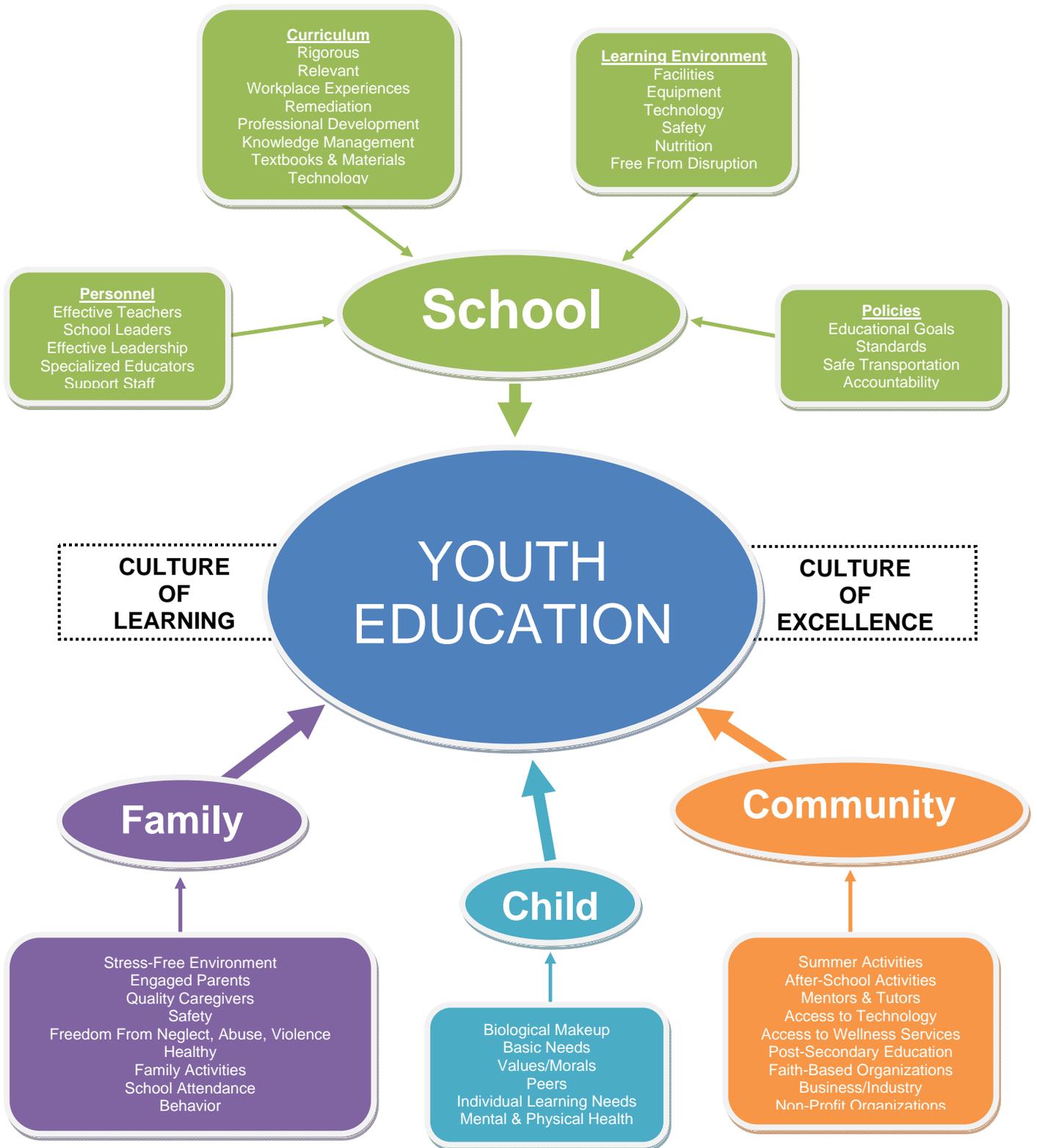
### Policies

Rules and regulations established at the school, district, and state level also impact student achievement. Although they may not always seem to have a direct impact on students, policies affect the quality of school personnel, the availability of funding for proven interventions and essential services, and school culture, which can either support or hinder learning. Good policies can ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness, making all school personnel accountable for positive outcomes.

## **Community**

Schools cannot thrive without community partners who assume partial responsibility for student success. Private businesses, non-profit organizations, postsecondary education institutions, and the faith-based community play an important role in supporting schools, supplementing instruction through after-school and summer programs, and providing financial and human resources. They often provide mentors, tutors, work-based experiences, technology, and wellness services that support students' learning and well-being outside of the classroom.

**Cause-and-Effect Map**



## Purchasing Strategies

The Education Results Team seeks offers that:

- Measurably increase the availability of effective teachers
- Ensure that children are literate by the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade
- Increase children's readiness to learn upon entry to kindergarten
- Utilize effective educational programs that reduce the need for remediation
- Reduce truancy and out-of-school suspensions
- Substantially increase the number of students graduating from high school
- Incorporate relevant and rigorous curricula that prepare students for careers and postsecondary education
- Provide high-quality career and technical education aligned with regional workforce needs
- Improve the leadership capacity of educators at all levels to affect change within our schools
- Rapidly turn around low performing schools and ensure continued accountability for sustainable growth
- Build a culture of high expectations and lifelong learning
- Increase parental and community involvement
- Empower school leaders to make decisions that will increase student achievement

## Criteria

Offers will be judged according to the following criteria:

- Contributes to the stated goal for education
- Based on best practices and evidence from research
- Monitors performance and replicates positive outcomes
- Engages partners and leverages resources
- Demonstrates a high level of innovation
- Maximizes efficiency and return on investment

## Supporting Evidence

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