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Press Release

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**Parents, Students Attracted to Innovative and Specialized Programs
Can Get Information at EBR Mania Oct. 15**

Baton Rouge, LA – It's simple science. Those driven toward excellence are always attracted to top-notch educational programs – like the **Magnet or Gifted and Talented programs at East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS)**. **EBR Mania will be held 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, October 15, at Cortana Mall, 9401 Cortana Dr.**

The annual event is to recruit students and launch the magnet school application period. This time, **applications are for the 2012-2013 school year at all EBRPSS elementary, middle and high schools with Magnet Programs**. It also promotes the School System's **Gifted and Talented school programs (20 schools total in EBRPSS)**.

Last year, about 3,000-plus people attended the Cortana Mall event. Currently, about 6,000 students are enrolled in magnet schools in the public school district. The Gifted & Talented Program has about 2,800 students.

"The purpose of the event is to let parents know about the quality of instruction going on in our Innovative & Specialized Programs," said **Carlos Sam, Director of Innovative & Specialized Programs**. "The instruction is enhanced with specialized programs that aren't typically available in traditional settings."

At the event in October, each school will provide a basic showcase of its program, ranging from academic magnets to programs offering specialized themes, such as medical and pre-engineering programs. **Parents and prospective students also will be able to participate in demonstrations and hands-on activities in science, math and technology.**

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Throughout the event, **entertainment will be provided by several elementary, middle and high magnet and Gifted and Talented schools. Performances will range from musicals and skits to concerts by jazz ensembles.**

Each magnet and gifted and talented school also will host its open house for parents and the community during the week of October 18. The district's period for accepting magnet school applications online for the next school year is through December 13.

Magnet programs are specialized, often accelerated programs which offer students an opportunity to explore an enhanced curriculum such as visual and performing arts, Montessori, Foreign Language Immersion, engineering, medical and academic models with a strong focus on science, technology and math.

All magnet programs are application-based; which means applicants must apply within a specific time-frame and qualify for the program. In some cases, especially at the elementary level, the initial process is only an application. However, all elementary magnets (except Baton Rouge Center for Visual and Performing Arts and the Montessori Programs) require applicants to go through a screening process if they are selected to determine final eligibility.

Applicants who apply for middle and high school programs (with the exception of Centers of Excellence) are required to have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50 for the last two years and have a proficient score in math and English Language Arts on their last standardized assessment.

The Gifted Program is an educational program for students identified as gifted in grades Pre-K–12 and enrolled in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System. Classes provide a high degree of complexity and extend beyond the prescribed curriculum offered in regular classes. Classes are taught by teachers certified in Gifted Education and have a reduced class size in order to individualize each student's educational program.

The Great Scholars Academy, a gifted program, also is an accelerated program that offers a rigorous curriculum for middle and high school students. This innovative program parallels the Gifted curriculum and is taught by Gifted certified teachers.

For more information concerning EBR Mania, please contact the **EBRPSS Office of Innovative and Specialized Programs at (225) 922-5443 or (225) 929-8642 or log on to www.ebrschools.org.**

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