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## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **Two High Schools Greatly Improve Graduation Rates** *McKinley High School Wins State Award for Its Growth*

**Baton Rouge, La. –** Two high schools in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System have made great strides in increasing graduation rates. McKinley High School recently won a Louisiana Department of Education Award for making the High Priority School Honor Roll by ranking in the top 10 schools statewide for double-digit growth. To earn the Office of College and Career Readiness award, the school increased its cohort graduation rate by 14.4 percent for 2010-2011 over the previous year.

Although not considered a High Priority School by the state, Northeast High School had a similar accomplishment last year. Its graduation rate grew by 14.5 percent over the previous year.

**David Phillips, the district's assistant superintendent over High Schools,** said a group from the Louisiana Department of Education worked with McKinley High School one on one with administrators to develop strategies that could be used to impact graduation cohort rates. Areas of high need were identified, and the school was then able to focus attention where needed to impact the number of students remaining in the cohort.

"Across the district, our high schools are doing things to impact graduation rates. Flexibility in scheduling has made a great impact on rates," Phillips said. "When a student needs to recover a credit, we have the tools and scheduling flexibility to make that happen. Students recover credit quicker, and the recovery needs can be more focused on the area in which the students experienced the deficiencies. Rather than repeating a course, a student can recover a particular concept or unit of a course."

In addition, Phillips said high school teachers are trying to do more to assist students as they move forward in their course work. "Administrators understand the importance of students recovering sooner than later and of identifying only those things necessary to move students ahead," he said. "The schools have credit recovery, freshmen academies, career diplomas, literacy interventions and so much more. We are trying hard to focus on the entire student and needs that may arise. Identification and intervention is the secret. We must know who we need to address, how we need to address them and assign the proper interventions to help." **For more information, contact Phillips at (225) 922-5607 or [dphillips@ebrschools.org](mailto:dphillips@ebrschools.org).**

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