LEE MAGAGNET

A SCHOOL LIKE NO OTHER

EAST BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

ASSOCIATION FOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS 2017 LE SOLUTIONS, NEW LEARNING ENVIRONMENT



East Baton Rouge Parish School System

The East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) is embracing a new way of teaching and learning with the new Lee Magnet High School. From 2010 to 2015, many communities like East Baton Rouge were losing students to either private schools for better educational opportunities or the streets, and a radical change was necessary to retain students through graduation. The vision for the new Lee Magnet High School replaced an industrial aged, comprehensive high school with a new delivery model focusing on specialized learning for students.

East Baton Rouge Parish School System is the second largest public school district in Louisiana with approximately 43,000 students. EBRPSS is located in the capitol city of Baton Rouge, which is a major industrial, petrochemical, medical, research, motion picture, and growing technology center of the south. In addition, Baton Rouge is home to Louisiana State University, the state's flagship university; Southern University, one of the oldest, historically black universities in the nation; and Baton Rouge Community College, one of the fastest growing two-year college systems in the nation.

Despite its solid higher education system roots, the K-12 district was facing significant challenges with student enrollment and consequent funding. Competition was hitting the district on all fronts, from school choice options, charter schools, and the implementation of the

Louisiana Scholarship Program - a voucher system that provides funding for low-income families who meet the state defined criteria and opt for education outside the district. The expansion of charter schools had placed increasing financial pressure on EBRPSS. In fact,

the loss of student enrollment to charter schools was costing the district upwards of \$100M each year.

In order to stave off this potential loss of students who could be attracted to a slew of new charter schools opening in Baton Rouge in 2015, EBRPSS was searching for new educational opportunities. Former Superintendent Bernard Taylor knew his district needed drastic changes to offer programs that give its schools a competitive advantage in retaining and attracting students.

> "We're going to have to fight fire with fire," Taylor told the board. "We might need a blow torch, but at the end of the day, we can't sit idly by and hope that people will stay with us."

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> educational opportunities or the streets.





SCOPE OF WORK& BUDGET

220,000 SF CAMPUS

26.01 ACRES

- 4 INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS ON A CAMPUS-LIKE SETTING
- 3 400-STUDENT ACADEMIES & A COMMUNITY COMMONS

1,200 STUDENTS IN GRADES 9-12

\$47,419,546 BUDGET



SCHOOL & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT DEFINING THE VISION

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East Baton Rouge Parish School System

Lee Magnet High School is self-touted as a school like no other. From its approach to learning to its collegiate-styled campus, Lee Magnet High School is poised to be both a showpiece for the district and a launch pad for a new generation of thinkers, dreamers, and student entrepreneurs. The campus is designed to promote real-life experiences, allowing students to apply classroom lessons in a specialized laboratory within their home Academy. Lee Magnet High School is not just a facility, it is designed as an experience to inspire learners of all ages.

The campus encompasses three Academy buildings and a Community Commons building. The pinnacle of student collaboration and real-life learning is found within the Academy WOW! Spaces, where students translate their knowledge by participating in student driven projects and presentations.

Instructional spaces feature touch boards, flexible furniture, writable surfaces, and the most up-to-date technology to give students access to the latest learning tools available.

At Lee Magnet High School, students have the opportunity to choose a space that best suits their current activities. The physical environment itself is different from a traditional high school; it is designed to resemble a community college or a Silicon Valley startup, placing the emphasis on learning through projects and applying scientific data and research. Students spend their day in spaces that resemble higher education and workplace environments to help connect their learning to the next level.

> "Lee High is about changing the process of learning."

-Superintendent, Warren Drake

COLLEGE PREP

local economy and prepare the next generation of workers.

EBRPSS and LSU's Cain Center signed a five-year contract to turn Lee Magnet High School into an "early college" for LSU with dual-enrollment courses. Representatives from the District collaborated with LSU's College of Science, College of Engineering and Center for Digital Media Arts and Entertainment to elevate educational opportunities for students.

The program, which kicked off in 2015 with 350 freshmen, is similar to traditional Advanced Placement courses, allowing high-school students to enter college with up to 30 credit hours. LSU's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs noted the focus of the program was to help college students get past a recurring issue of falling behind because they spend their first year trying to determine which engineering discipline to follow. Lee Magnet High School is designed to counter this by exposing students to engineering and college-level coursework early in their studies so they are prepared from the time they first step on LSU's campus.

Lee High Magnet School – a school that features highly-specialized programs that support the

MISSION

"The East Baton Rouge Parish School System, in partnership with our community, educates all students to their maximum potential in a caring, rigorous, and safe environment."

VISION

"All East Baton Rouge Parish School System students will graduate with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to become active successful members of a dynamic learning community." The district Strategic Plan lists one Bold Goal and six objectives, to which resources and support are aligned.

BOLD GOAL

"The East Baton Rouge Parish School System will be a top ten Louisiana district by 2020, building an innovative and globally-competitive educational choice for all families." "The environment is better for our students You can feel it and see it every day."

-Lee Magnet High School Principal , Nanette McCann



PLANNING & DESIGN

The first priority in the planning and design process was identifying the district's goals for this hallmark institution. Keeping the school's forward thinking, collaboration-based curriculum in mind, the design team early on integrated students, teachers, board members, community members and alumni into the design process through a series of three visioning meetings. These meetings ran from February through May and varied in style. Roundtable discussions, off-site visits and public town hall meetings fully captured the intent of the campus.

With input from the whole community, the following goals were set for the project:

- Create a campus that preserves the existing natural features.
- Create a new-age campus targeted toward relevant career pathways in digital arts, biomedicine, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math)
- Create a variety of flexible and transparent learning environments.
- Focus learning around collaboration and innovation.
- Utilize every space for education.



- Break from the traditional library and give access to media resources throughout the school.
- Provide applied learning labs for students to implement their knowledge and skills.
- Create opportunities for community involvement and interdisciplinary academics.
- Create a next generation learning environment.



The following **GUDDING PRINCIPLES** were defined as a foundation for all decision making during the planning and design phases.

Learner-Centered Environments Engage Every Student

The facilities and grounds allow for engaging project-based learning. The curation of high-quality student work is celebrated. This is a place where interests are sparked, passions ignited and new levels of consciousness realized.

Personalization leads to Creative Collaboration

The organization of buildings and programs support meaningful relationships and the community ensures the intellectual and emotional needs of all students are met. All relationships, student-to-student, student-to-adult and adult-to adult are positive, nurturing and collaborative.

Flexibility and Adaptability are Keys to our Success

The campus offers transformative facilities that can support changing programs, student populations, and instructional methods.

Partnerships Leverage Positive Student Outcomes

Authentic learning occurs through challenging inquiry in the context of the real-world. Cultivating collaborative partnerships with public, private and non-profit organizations—including higher education—helps leverage community assets to support the whole child.

Sustainability and Site Development are Vital

The site and new buildings provide wonderful opportunities for learning, wetlands research and the celebration of natural beauty.

EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

THINKERS, DREAMERS, AND ENTREPRENEURS "It's not like any other traditional high school."

> "It's a new, different, even better way to learn."

> > -Lee Magnet High School Students

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CAMPUS DESIGN

for the new Lee Magnet High School creates more personalized learning communities, referred to as Academies, within the greater high school.

These smaller Academies support relationships among students and staff, foster collaboration, and boost innovation. Each Academy has a highly focused curriculum that aligns with relevant career pathways, including:

Digital Arts Bio Medical STEM

A variety of sizes and configurations of spaces enhance the student experience and provide a flexible learning environment to meet the needs of all students. Students can participate in seminars, projects, or blended learning activities. Operable walls, transparency, and natural daylight fill the Academies.



Visual connections in learning labs and specialized spaces give students a reason to become excited about learning. Floor to ceiling operable glass walls allow quick and effortless connection between collaboration and focused learning environments. n111000101111010 01111011000101 10110 10100100000101 Π 11 $\Pi \Pi \Pi$





DIGITAL ARTS ACADEMY

EE HIGH SCHOOL

The high school campus is organized around the existing green space on the site. Each Academy fronts this green space while the Commons Building creates a terminus for the campus.

The existing site contained several live oak trees that were critical in saving throughout the design.

The campus style design allowed the design team to strategically located the academy buildings to provide proper solar orientation as well as save the precious live oak trees. The design also allowed the team to preserve the natural flow of water through an existing drainage swale that runs through the middle of the campus.

PUBLIC & PRIVATE SPACES

COLLABORATION

Public and private space is clearly defined and provides opportunity for community involvement. The strategic location of the small commons and specialized learning lab allow these spaces to be accessible for community use, presentations, and interaction.

Movement between spaces is critical for the interdisciplinary Academies and supports collaboration. Transparency between spaces as well as operable walls foster a fluid environment to support the flow of students learning in different modalities.









STUDIOS

Studios open up to collaboration space within the central spine of the Academy. Operable glass partitions enable movement between the focused and collaborative spaces.





COLLABORATION + INNOVATION

Students are no longer forced into rigid classroom wings, but are provided a flexible and transparent learning environment to foster collaboration and innovation.

STUDIOS

LEARNING

COACHES

SMALL

GROUPS





"The integration of a 21st Century school gives us the opportunity to teach kids like they've never been taught before. The beauty of these buildings is that every space is a learning space, allowing students to collaborate throughout the campus."

-Superintendent, Warren Drake

SMALL COMMONS

SPECIALIZED LEARNING LAB

COLLABORATION SPACES

Corridors are replaced with open and flexible

collaboration areas to utilize every space for education.





The Social Commons components of each Academy provide venues for dining and informal student gathering. The intent is to help establish a positive and unifying culture, support positive and nurturing relationships, and aid in the social and intellectual development of students and staff.

Adjacent to the Social Commons, the Specialized Learning Lab is strategically located to allow public access for greater connection to the community. The public space has sweeping views of the campus and an integral connection to the Specialized Learning Lab. These labs are outfitted with the assistance from LSU to provide students with learning environments that relate to the next level of either higher education or the workplace.





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Flexible WOW! spaces in each academy reinforce the school's signature "Like No Other" tagline. These 3,000 SF, tech-ready, student-centered studio spaces are the showpiece of each academy. They are designed to accommodate student-driven projects and presentations as well as those spearheaded by professional and higher education partners. These spaces have a direct connection to specialized learning labs – allowing the space to be transformed into various configurations and uses. Two story glass walls fill the space with daylight and illuminate large super-graphics showcasing each academy's curriculum.

LSU and the District had a vision for the WOW! spaces. For instance, in the engineering academy, the vision is to include 3D printers, as well as full-size mills and latches that are identical to the ones students use at LSU to ensure a seamless transition for high school to college. The 3D printers are installed, and ongoing fundraising efforts are underway to purchase the mills and latches. During this time, students are utilizing virtual equipment to explore the inner workings of the mill without the lid on.



PERFORMANCE +EXHIBITIONS

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An exhibition space allows students to give performances for small or large audiences.

This spaces has the flexibility to open up to the exterior. This allows for performances and exhibitions to occur on the exterior amphitheater.





COMMUNITY COMMONS

Facilities used by all students and staff are collected in the Community Commons building. Shared functions include fitness, physical education, and health. The Community Commons building also contains elective classrooms, music rooms and additional art space. A large pre-function gathering space features with terraced seating, booth seating, four-top tables and a lounge area.

To support visitor orientation, a welcome center is prominently located to greet visitors, volunteers and community members. Facilities for food services, building maintenance and deliveries are also included in the Community Commons building.













Technology is abundant and accessible at all times. Through a partnership with LSU, the specialized learning labs are outfitted with the technology and equipment that students will use and engage with in the next level of education. Informal spaces throughout the Academy allow students with their own devices to charge, connect, and collaborate with their technology and peers. Alcoves and think tanks create space for students to video conference with outside professionals and experts.

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Both the WOW! Spaces and standard classrooms anticipate future needs and changing use. They are equipped not only with flexible, moveable furnishings, interactive touch boards, writeable surfaces and ample workspace, but also with additional power and data. Rough-ins above the ceilings contain empty conduits should new projectors or other technology be required in the future. Additionally, key connections were put in place for utilities such as gas, water and electricity should the need arise.



The design incorporates two-inch thick Insulated core metal wall panels with an integrated tinted glass system. The steel structure will allow the campus buildings to be easily reconfigured to meet future educational needs.



A SCHOOL LIKE NO OTHER

RESULTS

In August 2016, Lee Magnet High School admitted its freshman class at the state-of-the-art new campus on Lee Drive.

The college-focused curriculum, educational environment, and social atmosphere emphasizes the development of the skills, attitudes, and aptitudes that students need to succeed in the 21st century. Lee is a multi-functional, early college facility with three distinct academies: Digital Arts; Biomedical; and STEM. Supported by a comprehensive partnership between Louisiana State University and the East Baton Rouge Parish School System, the three academies offer students access to meaningful, real-world, project-based learning opportunities supported by LSU's research and engineering labs. The partnership between EBRPSS and LSU is multi-directional. High school students enter college with up to 30 college credits and a better understanding of their preferred career field, while LSU receives better prepared students that result in increased retention and graduation rates. The rest is a domino effect that produces a stronger Louisiana workforce already skilled in STEM. Educational opportunities also are elevated through partnerships with local, national, and international business, industry, and government entities.

BIOMEDICAL

The District turned a potentially dire situation of losing students to private schools into a catalyst to bring these students back with a new campus, a forward-thinking educational model, and an entrepreneur-like approach to real-life learning.