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**CADDO TRANSFORMATION NEXT ADVISORY COUNCIL OUTLINES IMPROVEMENT GOALS FOR
14 STRUGGLING SCHOOLS**

State-Local Partnership to Address Teacher Recruitment and Retention, Align Resources to Meet Student Needs

SHREVEPORT, La.— Today, the Caddo Transformation Next Advisory Council took the next step in its effort to empower and improve 14 persistently struggling schools in Caddo Parish by reviewing progress at those sites, to date, and establishing short and long-term goals during its first meeting of the 2017-2018 school year.

The Caddo Transformation Next Zone is a [three-year partnership](#) between the Louisiana Department of Education and Caddo Parish Public Schools that seeks to support select schools through ambitious goal setting, community-based accountability, educator recruiting initiatives, intensive supports for teachers, and broad decision-making authority for principals. The [Advisory Council](#), which was formed earlier this year, monitors progress in the Zone and advises both the Caddo Superintendent and the State Superintendent on the goals established for the Zone schools and progress towards those goals in each school.

“We are proud of the work completed in the first three years of Transformation Zone, which preceded the new Transformation Next Zone initiative and resulted in sizable academic gains, increases in student and parent satisfaction, and community involvement,” said Caddo Parish Schools Superintendent Dr. Lamar Goree. “The work is far from over, but we stand armed with the tools needed to address the issues that have long plagued our most struggling schools, and to provide the supports needed to raise student achievement.”

The goals for the 2017-2018 school year include:

- Eliminating long-term substitute and out-of-license area teachers, as well as teacher vacancies, through improved recruiting and retention efforts, proven professional development and incentive pay plans for teachers who work at struggling sites within the Zone;
- Increasing literacy and mathematics skills, ACT scores and high school graduation rates by providing high quality tools and resources, paired with proven professional development; and
- Empowering principals with the authority to hire, evaluate and terminate staff; to identify effective curricula and professional development plans; and to establish an annual school calendar and daily schedule that maximizes time with students enrolled at the school.

“Our mission is clear,” Goree continued. “Every child deserves the highest quality teacher who can provide dynamic and engaging instruction to prepare them for the college and career of their choice. We know we are making great progress in moving toward fulfillment of that vision.”

The state department will support the Caddo Transformation Next Zone as it moves forward, said State Superintendent John White.

“This partnership is a strong example of how the Department will continue its work with school systems to create more autonomous and accountable schools in pursuit of improving results for kids,” White said. “This is particularly important as Louisiana begins to implement its federally approved plan to comply with the Every Student Succeeds Act, which requires each state to present comprehensive school improvement strategies.”

Today’s meeting marked the third gathering of the Zone’s Advisory Council. To date, the Council, which comprises seven diverse local leaders and residents appointed based on their track records of contribution to the Shreveport community, has extensively studied the history of the Transformation Zone and Louisiana’s accountability framework in order to better understand ways to support improved student achievement.

Clay Walker, Director of Juvenile Services at Caddo Juvenile Court, was unanimously appointed by the Council to serve as chairman; Dr. Jerome Cox, Counselor at Milestone Counseling Services, as vice chair; and Laura Alderman, Executive Director of Step Forward, as secretary. Additional members include: Pastor Brandon Lacey, Senior Pastor at New Life Full Gospel House of Worship; Dr. Regina Robinson, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Southern University at Shreveport; Lauren Tarver, Attorney; and Jeffery Thomas, Executive Director of Strategic Action Council.

The Council’s next meeting will be held September 26, 2017, in the Professional Development Auditorium of the Caddo Parish Public Schools Central Office. It will be open to the public.

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