ANNUAL REPORT

20

A YEAR OF IMPACT

25





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Letter from the CEO

Reflecting on 2025

I am profoundly grateful for what we have accomplished together to improve education in our city. Our work at the Baton Rouge Alliance for Students is rooted in the belief that an excellent education is every child's birthright, and we are committed to ensuring that regardless of their zip code or household income all children in EBR have access to high-quality public schools.

This year, we deepened relationships with policymakers and families through our CHANGE**MAKERS** and Parent Academy programs, and TORCH: The Academy of Politics, graduated a record number of potential future political candidates and campaign staff. Through strategic advocacy, we have brought meaningful policy change to the capital city, and through collaboration with our community members, families, and civic leaders, we continue to create a ripple effect, driving change for Baton Rouge students.

Our annual report showcases our work to empower families, elevate communities, engage leaders, and amplify student voices, in pursuit of the excellence all students deserve.

As we look ahead, the path forward is clear: continue listening deeply, engaging boldly, and advocating relentlessly for the students and families of Baton Rouge. Thank you for standing with us in this work. Together, we will ensure Baton Rouge schools truly serve every child.

Be well.

Adonica

Our Values



We believe the goal of education is to **unlock each child's**potential.

We believe **equitable access** to a high quality education for every child is the foundation of a strong, vibrant community.

We believe uniting a **diverse**, **student-centered coalition** of empowered families, elevated community, and engaged leaders is critical to providing a high-quality education for every child.

We believe **every child can learn**, and that **high standards** hold adults accountable for meeting their needs

We believe **families deserve agency** in partnering with schools
to ensure student outcomes.

We believe we have a responsibility to elevate **the** needs of the most vulnerable students and families in our community.

We believe our work is best done in service to and partnership with community.

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CIVIL RIGHT

Education as a Civil Right serves as a reminder of our community's responsibility to deliver the promise of the American Dream to every student in our city. Held annually during Black History Month, the convening places the questions of opportunity, access, and equality at the forefront, inviting community members, parents, and area civic and elected leaders to engage with the history and reality of our city's education system.

In 2025, the Alliance welcomed participants to experience *Life: A Journey of an EBR Student,* an activity designed to give participants an unique immersion into the challenges, opportunities, and systemic barriers faced by Baton Rouge's public school students.

After screening the documentary *Teach Us All,* the night culminated in an interactive visioning session, designing a "Dream School" - one created to develop and nurture each student's innate potential - for our community.







CHANGE**MAKERS**



The CHANGE**MAKERS** program welcomed 26 local leaders from its largest ever applicant pool of nearly 150 individuals. This year's cohort continues the program's tradition of being representative of the diversity of our city, and the varied experiences and viewpoints of its residents. The cohort is deeply engaged in understanding Baton Rouge's complex educational history and how it shaped the system children experience today. Ultimately, they will join an alumni network of over 180 program graduates, each of whom finds their own role in delivering each child's birthright of an excellent education.

This year, CHANGE**MAKERS** alumni activity kicked into high-gear through launch of the CHANGE**MAKERS** Alumni Board. The Board, with leadership from its inaugural President Adrian Owen Jones, has delivered high-impact community giving initiatives, provided exclusive access to education policy leaders, and developed a new advocacy and ambassadorship program to assist alumni in applying the knowledge gained as a CHANGE**MAKER**. The CHANGE**MAKERS** network is active, tightknit, and focused on driving education improvement through personal and meaningful advocacy.

















Community Building Grants

This initiative is a recognition of both the need for direct services from students and families in Baton Rouge, and the incredible work done by local non-profits to meet that need. The 2025 Community Building Grantees offer services spanning academic support, student mentoring, experiential opportunities, out-of-school programming, and more. The funded projects demonstrate deep alignment to the Alliance's investment priority areas: equity; student growth and development; leadership development; family and community voice; youth empowerment; and out-of-school time experiences. The Alliance is proud to have invested more than \$600,000 in local non-profits since its founding, and is grateful for the work these non-profits do in our community.

























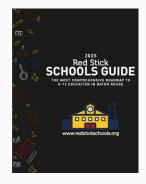
PATON ROUGE YOUTH ((*♥◎□©□•)) INITIATIVE



Student voices are too often left out of conversations about education systems and services. The Alliance's annual Youth Voice Report is not only a commitment to amplifying the perspectives of young people, it also directly informs the Alliance's advocacy priorities. By gathering input from high school students across Baton Rouge, the Alliance consolidates crucial insight about the experiences, challenges, and aspirations of the education system's primary user and delivers that input to education policymakers. Students' candid feedback revealed wide variation in the perceived quality of education experiences across the parish, but also revealed shared desire for high quality learning environments and educators, direct opportunities to prepare for life after high school, and a feeling of responsibility to make their families proud.



The 2025 Red Stick Schools Guide continues to be the only comprehensive set of school profiles in the capital city. Providing both nuts-and-bolts data and programmatic summaries of 132 traditional public, charter public, magnet, private, and parochial schools across Baton Rouge, this physical and digital book contains the information parents need to successfully navigate our city's complex education options to find the right fit for their children.



Policy Gains

This year saw some significant policy items move through the EBR School Board, including a major facilities realignment plan and a significant update to the district's charter school policy. Both items are big wins for the Baton Rouge community, facilitating greater investment in children who need the most educational support, and expanding opportunities to increase the number of high-quality non-profit schools in the city.

Aligning a district's facilities portfolio with its students' needs is fraught with opposition from community members with deep connections to individual schools, and among the hardest work school boards undertake. EBR took on this challenge by leading with its values and creating a shared community vision that prioritized student achievement, safety, robust programming, and neighborhood reinvestment.

Ultimately, the resulting plan closed 9 schools and allowed for an annual investment of \$6 million in the youngest and most-struggling learners in the system, turning a difficult challenge into a major educational victory.

In updating the district's Charter School Policy, the school board asserted itself as a competitive non-profit school regulator. Despite a delayed vote, persistent advocacy from the Alliance ensured the board's unanimous approval of the revised policy.

This new policy modernizes the district's approach and delivers significant results:

- Incentivizing high-performing charter schools with renewal terms up to 10 years.
- Capping district administrative fees at 3%.
- Granting greater autonomy in delivering special education services.
- Aligning language and mechanics with current state law and practice.





With 35 graduates in 2025, TORCH: The Academy of Politics continues to deepen the bench of campaign talent in Baton Rouge. TORCH is designed to equip aspiring candidates and campaign teams with the tools they need to run and win. Over the past four years, Alliance Action has developed a diverse network of nearly 100 motivated and politically-skilled civic leaders. Graduates have been elected to the local school board, metro council, and state legislature. TORCH continues to raise the caliber of elected public servants and their campaign teams to provide the city with the leadership its children deserve.









Effective parent advocacy can change the course of a child's life, which is why Parent Academy aims to equip families with the tools and confidence to successfully speak up for their children. In 2025, the program focused on helping parents better understand how to navigate school options, access academic and special education supports, and engage school leaders to improve academic outcomes. Through a variety of expert-led discussions and teaching sessions, Parent Academy creates a welcoming space for families to learn, ask questions, and develop skills and knowledge. Informed, empowered, and connected parents are the building blocks of student success, setting a higher bar of expectations for school performance and driving demand for high-quality schools.



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In Memoriam: Symil Jackson Ledoux- CHANGE*MAKERS* Cohort I Allyce Trapp Alexander- CHANGE*MAKERS* Cohort IV