



**Statement of Recommendations for the
Successful Transition of
McDonogh 35 High School into the
Cadillac Street campus**

**A Proposal Presented by the
McDonogh 35 Alumni Association**

May 2015

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Statement of Purpose

This document is being submitted by the Board of Directors of the McDonogh 35 Alumni Association, on behalf of its membership body, in order to engage in the implementation of measures that lead to the successful transition of McDonogh 35 High School into its new location at Cadillac Street. With this submission, we hereby propose specific actions that support the re-visioning, re-culturing, reorganization, and re-moralization of our alma mater and restore a proud history and world-renowned legacy.

Historic Relevance

In 1917, a group of spirited citizens petitioned the Orleans Parish School Board to convert a white elementary school to a secondary educational facility for black children. The petition was granted and in the fall of 1917, McDonogh 35 High School was established as the first secondary educational facility for black children in New Orleans, Louisiana. Since 1917, our existence has been characterized by academic excellence, resilience, and triumph, and it must remain an integral thread in the educational, civic, and cultural fabric within the city of New Orleans.

Current Standings

As of the 2013-2014 academic session, McDonogh 35 High School is undergoing a series of torrential circumstances that deter the school's anticipated successes at both the administrative and academic aspects. Generally, these challenges are characterized as the following:

- Low SPS scoring/ student performance challenges
- Enrollment of over-aged students and the stagnancy of resources this has created
- Shortage of educators needed to reverse and deter poor student performance
- Faulty structuring of and lack of necessity for the 7th and 8th grade school component

It is the intent of the McDonogh 35 Alumni Association to commit our skills and resources to realization of our long-standing legacy in accordance with our organization's mission. We are appreciative of the opportunity to engage in the transitioning processes that will be set forth for the overall improvement of the school for sake of the student body.

School Support

Due to the emergence of numerous challenges that now threaten the future of McDonogh 35 High School as an institution of excellence, the installation of a strong support system actively working to protect and advance the school is paramount for ensuring not only a successful transition, but also for ensuring solidarity in the years ahead.

Roles Within the School

1. INSTALLATION/RE-ENGAGEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS TEAM, comprised of school district representation, school administration, teachers, parents, and student leadership, assembled for the purpose of establishing and maintaining school-site communications as well as external collaborations that increase resources and enhance school programs.

School Needs	Required Actions	Required Resources	Timeline for Action
Improvement of inter-department communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principal assembles/ resumes a leadership team representing all major departments within the school.• Team establishes in writing its overall mission, purpose, and goal-oriented agenda for forthcoming school sessions.• The team should meet on a monthly basis, at minimum, to ensure timely and productive execution of the overall agenda.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standard meeting location for each meeting• Budgetary allotment for meeting supplies, i.e. paper, printing, occasional refreshments• Communication channels made available (email, newsletter, etc.) to this team to relay information internally as well as externally to groups and organizations that assist the school	June 2015 through July 2015
Definitive administrative agenda to protect the school's image and longevity within the school district			
Increase faculty and staff involvement in education policies and how they affect the school			

2. RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOL PTO WITH AN ADVOCACY TEAM COMPONENT, represented by parents for each grade level, to strengthen school morale, ensure provisions for adequate resources at all institutional levels, and further enhance students' education experience.

School Needs	Required Actions	Required Resources	Timeline for Action
Unified parent voice to advocate on behalf of students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent Liaison recruits and organizes parents interested in consistent involvement in overall school operations to become PTO members PTO establishes goals and hosts events that assist the school in acquiring resources and making a firm parent presence within the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgetary allotment for PTO and Leadership Team operations Full-time PL with excellent management and communications skills Establish standard location for meetings 	NOW through June 2015
Parent leadership to advocate on behalf of the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PL establishes leadership team of parents to participate in school administration meetings, relevant community meetings, school board meetings, and Alum Assn meetings. Oversight and all operations therein should be approved by the principal and/ or selected administrators Leadership team establishes in writing its mission, purpose, and unified agenda for advocacy during the forthcoming academic year Leadership Team meets monthly, at minimum, to properly execute agenda 		June 2015 through September 2015

External Support

1. FORMALIZED SUPPORT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OPSB AND THE MCDONOGH 35 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION that will strengthen the organization's ability to advocate for resources that contribute to the overall well-being of the school; and FORMATION OF A COMMUNITY SUPPORT CONSORTIUM charged with duties similar to that of the in-school Community Relations Team, with the inclusion of maintaining and reinforcing productive relationships within local, state, and national governance entities in order to promote agendas that are favorable to the longevity and honorability of the school.

School Needs	Solution	Required Resources	Timeline for Action
Formal external advocacy support to assure longevity and sustainability to alleviate risk of state takeover	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• McDonogh 35 Alumni Association establishes MOU with OPSB to solidify resource and advocacy relationships with the school	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alum Assn incurs costs for establishing and maintaining MOU• Principal and administrative team establish preferred guidelines for Alum Assn involvement	NOW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Support Consortium formed by professionals with vested interests in McDonogh 35 High School's advancement and sustainability, including but not limited to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OPSB District representation• State District representation• Federal District representation• Faith-based partnerships/ representations• Community group(s) solicited to reinforce the general well-being of the school• Existing business partners and loyal vendors with vetted credentials• Business owners of the school's surrounding area that will be affected by the influx of student and staff activities• Consortium participants meet once a month, at minimum, to establish its purpose, the scope of its involvement, and set forth agendas that support the school's advocacy needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish standard meeting place(s) for consortium participants away from campus in compliance with district policies	NOW

Enrollment Process

OneApp Requirements

As set forth in the policies of the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and by the Orleans Parish School Board, McDonogh 35 High School shall continue its inclusion in the OneApp admissions process, with significant alterations to the criteria by which prospective students are selected.

Sample of Pathways

The pathways outlined in this section are modes by which selection criteria should be assessed, with steady implementation proceeding from the 2016-2017 academic session onward. The following timeline represents those programs currently administered on the school campus, as well as new programs that would restructure the school's ability to address and correct existing problems:

2016-2017 (academic session)	2017-2018	2018-2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gifted and Talented• STEM Academy• Year-Round School• Community Accommodations• College Prep• JumpStart• Dual Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementation of Athletics component• Installation of Fine Arts component• ROTC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Installation of Career and Technical Training component• Installation of Civic Governance component

Grade Configuration

Middle School Component Phase-out

The school's leadership, along with all voluntary and solicited advocates, shall petition the OPSB to begin phase-out of the 7th and 8th grades in an effort to eliminate unsustainable programming. The 7th grade shall be eliminated from the enrollment process as of the 2016-17 academic year, and the 8th grade shall be eliminated as of the 2017-18 academic year.

Special Accommodations

Special placement accommodations shall be made for those students:

- Currently enrolled students undergoing academic performance transition, phasing into high school admission requirements
- Currently enrolled Special needs students taking interest in programmatic pathways
- Newly enrolled special needs students admitted into any existing programmatic pathways

Academic and Administrative Review

The practices outlined are intended to establish and reinforce academic policies standards that shall transform overall academic performance levels for all grades within in the school. They are also intended to operate as an inclusion to existing higher standing policies previously implemented by OPSB, BESE, and current school administration.

Academic Performance Tracking

School Needs	Required Actions	Required Resources	Timeline for Action
Consistent and extensive analysis of student performance needs and changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principal establishes administrative “walk-throughs” to assess interim instructional weaknesses and collect feedback from instructional team• Quarterly academic reviews are conducted in anticipation of annual performance reporting and annual academic audits• Provisions made for additional support staff, Curriculum Coordinators, and Professional Development for all instructors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assessment materials (in compliance with district governance)• Scheduling and preparation for all applicable teacher assessments• Establishment of regularly scheduled professional development for ALL school staff over and above district minimums	May 2015 through June 2016

Administrative Operations

School Needs	Required Actions	Required Resources	Timeline for Action
More administrative power given to the principal to make on-site changes that will increase overall school performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPSB grants school principal managerial discretion to maintain school operations, logistics needs, and overall school performance • “Over-staffing” of security, instructional assistants, hall monitors, on-site maintenance of the school facility and equipment, and events-related volunteers throughout the first academic year (2015-2016) to properly address transitioning needs and unforeseen matters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy for approval of revised duties by the principal, the Alum Assn, and other community partners • Addition of this matter onto the appropriate OPSB Committee agenda(s) for consideration, discussion, and vote • Allotment of additional resources for security staffing 	May 2015 through August 2015
Ensure Proper monitoring of school security systems			

Facilities Management

School Needs	Required Actions	Required Resources	Timeline for Action
School site undergoing facilities maintenance contract changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a three-point plan, the “3-S Plan,” to address and properly serve the school’s safety, security, and sanitation challenges • Vetting of maintenance, pest control, and security contractors for higher service standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisional funding for additional services to cover all aspects of maintenance and facilities management • Provision for additional school staff to partake in contractor vetting 	May 2015 through May 2017
Elimination of unsightly maintenance-related conditions			
Sustainable maintenance plan at new location			

Conclusion

This document was compiled in an effort to move supporters of the future of McDonogh 35 High School to ACTION. The contents herein must be utilized to serve the best interests of EVERY STUDENT on the campus, regardless of their social background, residency challenges, disabilities, and/or academic history. Moreover, there must be DIRECT and BOLD measures taken by all parties involved to ensure that this school DOES NOT CLOSE ITS DOORS and school leadership does not lose sight of its mission. The time is NOW to move beyond theory and exhaustive debates, and thus move forward in ensuring a better future for the Roneagles of today and tomorrow.