

Memorandum of Understanding

Between

Natchitoches Parish School Board (NPSB) and Northwestern State University (NSU)

Northwestern State University and Natchitoches Parish School Board (together “the parties”) seek to enter a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize a continuing joint operating relationship inherent in the organization and activities of the NSU Laboratory Schools (Elementary and Middle) at Northwestern State University.

The parties acknowledge that each receives benefits from the joint operation of the two laboratory schools, grades K-8. These public schools provide education for children residing in Natchitoches parish as well as a laboratory for the undergraduate teacher education programs offered at NSU. This environment is conducive to testing of new ideas, instructional strategies, and processes in a responsible manner. The NSU Elementary Lab School and NSU Middle Lab School are Natchitoches parish public schools supplemented by tuition paid by families. Tuition is allocated for salaries and benefits for designated faculty/staff, programming for students (including scholarships or incentives), and allocated costs associated with the property (i.e., insurance, utilities). Remaining tuition is used at the discretion of Northwestern State University benefiting students, employees, and/or buildings hosting the schools.

NSU and NPSB enter into this intergovernmental agreement to set forth specific rights, duties, and obligations of both parties. The following commitments will be honored between NSU and NPSB during the length of this agreement. Accordingly, the parties agree to the following provisions and responsibilities.

Northwestern State University shall, according to its budgetary limitations:

1. Provide appropriate facilities and maintenance of said facilities (excluding cafeteria operations and internet)
2. Provide property insurance, custodial services, utilities, telephone, and grounds maintenance at all facilities.
3. Provide payroll and related benefits for one principal position, 2 teachers, student workers/work study, and one unclassified aide.
 - a. As a pilot, in 2021-2022, there will be one Director for both NSU Laboratory Schools with a teacher serving as an assistant to the Director. NSU will provide payroll and related benefits for the assistant to the Director, 1 teacher at the Elementary Lab, students workers/work study, and one unclassified aide. NPSB would assume responsibility for payroll and benefits of the Director of the NSU Laboratory School. In addition, NPSB will use one teaching position (gifted teacher) to assume a partial teaching load for the assistant to the Director at the Middle Lab. This arrangement would be reviewed at the end of the 2021-2022 school year.
4. Provide a salary supplement to the faculty and staff of the school using established criteria set by NSU.
5. Recruit, interview, and select faculty, staff, and administrative personnel for laboratory schools in collaboration with NPSB.

DRAFT April 17, 2019; March 5, 2021; April 22, 2021; May 10, 2021; August 2021

6. Charge an appropriate tuition in compliance with any University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors and Board of Regents policies.
7. Provide employee/dependent fee waiver to attend NSU for full time employees as allowed by University of Louisiana Board of Supervisors and Board of Regents policies. This policy excludes itinerant teachers as well as employees deployed by the NPSB Central Office (i.e., instructional coaches).
8. The Dean of the Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development will serve as the primary liaison to the NPSB maintaining on-going communication between district and university personnel and collaborating on educational matters impacting NSU Laboratory students and faculty. The President of NSU or the Vice President of Academic Affairs may reassign these responsibilities at any time.
9. Collaborate with NPSB in the annual evaluation of lab school principals regarding their joint work between the NSU Laboratory Schools and NSU.
10. Provide support for Educators Rising program offered at NSU Middle Laboratory School and other parish schools.
11. Using tuition dollars, provide a need-based scholarship program to increase access to all Natchitoches Parish residents. Scholarships are offered to all current and new students. The pool of funds allocated for scholarships is determined by NSU personnel annually.
12. NSU will maintain a target level enrollment of 300 students (NSU Elementary Lab) and 180 students (NSU Middle Lab). This creates an average class size of 25 in grades K-5 and 30 in grades 6-8. NSU determines how this enrollment is allocated to best meet the needs of students.

Natchitoches Parish School Board shall, according to its budgetary limitations:

1. Provide \$50 per student (verified by the February 1 student count) as a budget to allocate for expenses at both Lab Schools to provide supplementary materials, supplies, textbooks, technology or funding (BRE technology replacement discussion) for educational or instructional purposes in the same manner as it is provided to schools operated by NPSB within federal and state statutes.
2. Provide School Budget funding for both Lab Schools in line with all other parish schools excluding custodial fund calculations.
3. Include NSU Laboratory Schools in applicable federal programs, such as Title II, IDEA, etc.; in extracurricular and athletic programs offered by the Natchitoches Parish School Board; in honors and awards programs as applicable; and in band and other applicable current or future projects sponsored by the Natchitoches Parish School Board.
4. Provide funding for faculty, administrative and other staff for both schools as agreed upon for faculty/student ratio and programming based on state statutes.
5. Ensure that all faculty, administrative, and staff positions are under contract and compensated according to the State Minimum Salary School, NPSB local supplement schedule, and NPSB tax incentives using the standard formula for faculty/student ratio as implemented at all NPSB schools.
6. Provide sales tax incentives, payable in two installments, for positions funded by NSU tuition. For 2020-2021, NPSB will provide sales tax incentives for 1 principal, 1 Elementary Lab teacher, and 1 Middle Lab teacher. For the pilot in 2021-2022, NPSB will provide sales tax incentives for

the assistant to the Director and one Elementary Lab teacher. NPSB and NSU must update the MOU annually for this measure.

7. Provide NSU Lab School faculty and staff the opportunity to participate in all professional development opportunities provided by NPSB for its employees.
8. Collaborate with bus contractors to provide transportation within Natchitoches Parish as needed for students of NSU Lab Schools, including to and from appropriate athletic and band activities at cost per event through Student Activity Funds or School Budget Funds.
9. Staff and operate a school lunch program which shall include the authority to employ and dismiss school lunch employees pursuant to NPSB policies and procedures.
10. Maintain technology maintenance and support in the same manner as it is provided to schools operated by NPSB.
11. Provide substitute teacher reimbursements for faculty and staff as per NPSB policy.
12. Provide JPAMS data collection software in the same manner as provided to all schools operated by NPSB.
13. Provide support, training and materials for all state required testing.

Student Enrollment and Discipline

Any K-8 Natchitoches parish student may apply for enrollment at the NSU Laboratory Schools; although, the majority of students are admitted in kindergarten. The goal of the NSU Laboratory Schools is to have a diverse student population, reflective of NSU and Natchitoches parish. The school is equally interested in race, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status. NSU strives to admit at least 35% minority students and an equal distribution of boys and girls.

Priority status is awarded to applicants meeting one of the following criteria (in this order):

1. A child with at least one parent employed full time at Northwestern State University (NSU), a NSU Laboratory School, or the Louisiana School for the Math, Science, and Arts (LSMSA); or
2. A child with a sibling (or siblings) who is (are) currently attending a NSU Laboratory School.

Students not admitted are placed on waiting lists, organized by priority status, grade, race, and gender. New applicants are added to the bottom of the list in the appropriate category. Students on the waiting list must be updated annually with a current school report card and updated contact information.

Student discipline issues are administered through NPSB utilizing a Student Code of Conduct. Appeals regarding administrative decisions or actions must be made in accordance with the NPSB Policy.

Employment Concerns

The employment of all NSU Laboratory school faculty, administrators, and staff shall be according to Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) Bulletin 746. Hiring of NSU Lab School employees and administrators will be determined by the Lab School Employment team. The Employment team is comprised of 5 members: Superintendent NPSB, Director of NPSB Human Relations, Dean of Gallaspy College of Education and Human Development, Director of the School of Education, and the Lab School principal (employees only). A designee can be appointed for any position within the Employment team. Employment is contingent on faculty and administrators' ability to both work in their K-12 assignment and work with teacher preparation candidates at Northwestern.

DRAFT April 17, 2019; March 5, 2021; April 22, 2021; May 10, 2021; August 2021

The system for personnel evaluation will comply with Act 54 and Bulletin 130 issued by BESE. The job descriptions, observation and evaluation instruments, and evaluation procedures will be the same as those adopted by NPSB for all faculty and staff. Additional job responsibilities are added by NSU for work with teacher preparation candidates. Administrators will be required to attend the required training to certify and use the state approved teacher evaluation tools. Principal evaluations will be conducted by NPSB as required by Louisiana Department of Education; however, additional feedback will be provided annually to the principals regarding their joint work between Northwestern and Natchitoches Parish School Board. The Employment Team is also tasked with reassignment or termination of employees that do not work within the unique environment of the laboratory school. Final decision regarding reassignment or termination of employees is the responsibility of NPSB.

Northwestern and NPSB agree to cooperate in the operation of the school in full compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local constitutions, laws, ordinances, and regulations, including, but not limited to health and fire codes, civil rights laws, BESE regulations and appropriate Bulletins.

Northwestern agrees to give NPSB personnel access to the physical plant and the classrooms for purposes of conducting monitoring visits required by state and federal law and agree to cooperate with NPSB fiscal and program audits which may be required. All NPSB personnel and subcontractors shall sign in and report to the appropriate NSU personnel/office for clearance to provide any service.

Each party shall defend any third-party claim against the other party arising from any damage to persons or property to the extent proximately caused by the negligence of the indemnifying party or its agents or employees, and indemnify and hold harmless the other party and its respective officers, directors and employees from and against damages, liabilities and reasonable costs and expenses, including reasonable legal fees incurred in connection therewith.

This intergovernmental agreement shall be reviewed annually and updated. Both parties agree that this agreement can be amended only with consent of both parties, and then only in writing.

Dissolution: This Memorandum of Understanding will remain in effect by mutual agreement until June 30, 2022. Both parties agree in good faith to begin negotiating the new Memorandum of Understanding 90 days prior to the termination of the exiting Memorandum of Understanding.

Dr. Grant Eloi, Superintendent
Natchitoches Parish School Board

Dr. Marcus Jones, Interim President
Northwestern State University

Date

Date