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Contacts: Allison Hausman, [ahausman@erstrategies.org](mailto:ahausman@erstrategies.org)  
617-600-4619

## **New Report on Education Resource Use Targets Critical Areas for Investment**

*Nonprofit Education Resource Strategies details how to make the most of people, time, and money.*

AVOYELLES PARISH, LA, July 26, 2017 – Today Education Resource Strategies released [an in-depth report](#) on how Avoyelles Parish Schools uses resources like people, time, and money. In addition to many positive strategic investments, the report recommends further investments to address challenges such as teacher shortages and struggling students getting enough time to catch up.

ERS also highlights three important opportunities:

- Increase teacher salaries to address the critical teacher shortage.
- Realign schedules and staffing practices, so struggling students could receive more time and attention in core subject areas.
- Roll out guidance and rubrics to help teachers optimize the district’s investment in time for teacher collaboration.

There are some critical investments that Avoyelles Parish has made that help to improve student performance. For example, they have invested to increase the rigor of curriculum and to develop teachers and principals. And they have created flexibility for schools to staff and schedule to address specific school needs. These investments have contributed to recent improvements in ELA results, though performance continues to lag peers while Math performance has not shown improvement.

The teacher shortage that Avoyelles Parish faces is the result of several factors. They receive less than one qualified applicant per open teaching position which causes many positions to remain open or to be filled by “crisis” substitutes. And even when positions are filled by certified teachers, one in 4 new hires enters Avoyelles on emergency credentials. They have a very high teacher turnover rate - 24% – which is almost twice as high as the state average (13%) and also higher than peer districts (15%). These turnover and recruitment challenges exist in part because teacher compensation in Avoyelles is significantly lower than teacher salaries in all surrounding districts. Over half of the teachers who leave Avoyelles transfer to Rapides Parish School Board, where base teacher salaries average ~\$7,000- 8,000 more per year. The teacher shortage and high turnover combine to create a profound, negative impact on overall student performance and on the district’s ability to develop its workforce.

District leaders hope that the data in the report make the clear case for the need to increase funding. “This report is clear evidence that Avoyelles Parish need additional resources, including more qualified teachers, to succeed,” said Blaine Dauzat.

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**About Education Resource Strategies:**

Education Resource Strategies (ERS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to transforming how urban school systems organize resources—people, time, technology, and money—so that every school succeeds for every student. We have worked hand-in-hand with systems nationwide. Visit our website [www.erstrategies.org](http://www.erstrategies.org), and follow us @ERStrategies.