



Cisco's Global Education group is actively engaged in the work of transforming education systems to meet the needs of 21st century learners, educators, and organizations. This transformation will require a shift in the way teachers teach, leaders lead, and students learn.

# Educator Brief

## District Engages Students and Staff to Transform Pedagogy Systemwide

### Jefferson Parish Public School System

LOCATION: Greater New Orleans area  
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS: 87  
NUMBER OF STUDENTS: ±44,000

GRADES: Pre-K through 12  
SCHOOL STRUCTURE: Suburban  
PERCENT OF STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED LUNCH: 75



### The Objective

The Jefferson Parish Public School System (JPPSS) wanted to improve student performance and satisfaction through a systemwide transformation of teaching and learning strategies. The goal was to engage students and staff, so that teachers could develop challenging and authentic schoolwork that reached every student.

### The Process

As part of its involvement in the Cisco® 21st Century Schools Initiative (21S), JPPSS adopted a new pedagogical framework to help teachers create more engaging lessons. Within the framework, teachers have become designers of schoolwork as well as leaders in engaging students in their work.

To help teachers produce meaningful schoolwork to reach every student, the district:

- Formed district and school teams made up of administrators and teachers to plan and implement the new framework
- Performed a self-assessment to determine the core values and beliefs of the district, its schools, parents, and students
- Identified teaching successes and gaps, assessed lessons and student work, and discussed ways to improve
- Evaluated teachers with a focus on expectations and how to meet them
- Provided teachers with lesson design training
- Involved students in the ongoing process of designing and redesigning schoolwork that met the values and beliefs of the district

- Engaged teachers in an ongoing collaborative process of presenting lessons and receiving constructive feedback
- Gathered and analyzed information about lesson designs, best practices, and lesson design workshops for continual modification of the change process
- Evaluated student performance, attendance, and behavior referrals, as well as student, teacher, and parent satisfaction, to support scalability systemwide

### The Outcome

Two years after JPPSS initiated its new framework, evaluations have shown that student, teacher, and parent satisfaction have increased and test scores and attendance rates have improved. And as students have become more engaged in their work, discipline issues and behavior referrals have decreased.

### Lesson Learned

JPPSS leaders found that strong leadership was essential to the change process. The JPPSS superintendent provided unwavering support, encouraged risk-taking, and made it easy for principals and teachers to remove procedural barriers to change. Commitment on the part of administrators, principals, and teachers, and their willingness to adopt the new philosophy and methods were also critical to implementing the framework across the district. Finally, the district learned that it is important to involve as many teachers as possible in the planning stages to build consensus and create enthusiasm.

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