

# Education, Training & Leadership



# Education, Training & Leadership

The City recognizes that the quality of its business, institutional, and civic leadership is dependent on solid educational experiences. While education starts out at very early ages in life, and is critically important at both the elementary and secondary levels, education today also means lifelong professional development through post-secondary training and beyond.

Education can be the key to higher earnings, and it is typically linked to the accumulation of wealth, which improves quality of life and expands lifestyle and career opportunities. Households headed by high school graduates accumulate ten times more wealth than households headed by high school dropouts. Increased earnings and wealth are further correlated to greater awareness of, and participation in, civic responsibilities, including environmental and social justice issues.

Beyond high school, continuing education describes the opportunity and process of learning new skills and acquiring knowledge that is more directly applicable to career growth than what is taught during formal schooling years. Many people opt for continued education to further their employability, especially with the rapid changes and advancements in technology that demand a more sophisticated and educated workforce. Community colleges and other secondary institutions are adept at offering continuing education and associates degrees that are aimed at careers in economic or occupational sectors that are growing, along with valuable training in management and leadership.

## EXISTING ASSETS

The City of St. Louis is home to an extensive network of higher education institutions, as well as the most diverse options for elementary and secondary schools in the metropolitan area. Saint Louis University has both its main and medical campuses in the City's Midtown. Washington University, ranked among the top ten universities in the U.S., has its medical center in the City's Central West End, while its main campus straddles the City's western boundary. Metro High School, of the St. Louis Public Schools, is consistently ranked among the top high schools in Missouri, public or private. The diversity of parochial, private, magnet, and charter primary schools in the City is not only robust, but offers families multiple choices for their children. St. Louis Community College has one of its four campuses in the City, and is among the largest two-year systems in the nation. Webster University has a very popular downtown campus in the revitalized Old Post Office, and Harris-Stowe State University continues to grow in the area between downtown and Saint Louis University. Ranken Technical College on the City's north side maintains more than a 90% placement rate for graduates in a full range of technical careers, supporting such businesses as Boeing, Emerson Electric, and the construction industry.

## GOAL

*The City of St. Louis aspires to be the premier place for highly educated and talented individuals to live and work, and an innovator in advanced and forward-thinking training for business, government, civic, and individual leadership.*

## OBJECTIVES

- A** Increase the High School Graduation Rate and the Quality of the K-12 Educational Experience
- B** Provide Continuing Education Opportunities
- C** Link National Economic Growth Sectors to Local Training
- D** Nurture Leadership and Management Capabilities in Business, Government, and Neighborhoods
- E** Increase Environmental Literacy



*“The great aim of education is not knowledge, but action.”  
- Herbert Spencer*

# Objective A: Increase the High School Graduation Rate and the Quality of the K-12 Educational Experience

In the United States, 86% of working adults have obtained a high school diploma, putting those who have not at a real disadvantage. Statistics persistently demonstrate that a high school diploma greatly increases an individual's employment opportunities and earnings potential – and the outlook improves with each higher level of education achieved.

## STRATEGY 1

### Build a strong connection between individual schools and the neighborhoods and families they serve

Students perform best when the entire community demonstrates that it values education. Provide training and support to families to ensure that the educational experience is reinforced at home through programs like Parents-As-Teachers and Home-Works. Use school facilities on a regular basis for adult continuing education classes and general community meetings. Raise visibility of things going well with St. Louis Public Schools. Tell the “story” to set the expectations and brand of SLPS for the entire region.

#### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Short-term

**Potential Partners:** K-12 Schools, Libraries

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships

## STRATEGY 2

### Assure that every child achieves entry-level, first grade reading and math skills upon completion of kindergarten

Falling behind early in life both decreases one's lifetime career opportunities and increases one's likelihood of dropping out of school. Offer pre-kindergarten programs to assure that children have a strong foundation and excitement for formal education. Provide increased experiential learning in lower grades to reinforce the applicability of formal education to real-world conditions.

#### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Long-term

**Potential Partners:** K-12 Schools, Libraries

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships

*“Proponents of the arts revival in schools have successfully argued that the arts stimulate learning in math and science. Based on early research, a similar argument could now be made that nature education stimulates cognitive learning and reduces attention deficits.”*

*- Richard Louv*

## OBJECTIVE A

Increase the High School Graduation Rate and the Quality of the K-12 Educational Experience

### STRATEGY 3

#### Build capacity of teachers and administrative staff within the schools using professional development and cross-training opportunities

Create teams that include principals, office staff, teachers, nutritionists, janitors, etc., to work together for improved learning and demolish silos in operations. Create collaborative opportunities with other regional education districts to foster better environments for student learning and professional development.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** *Short-term*

**Potential Partners:** *K-12 Schools*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships*



### STRATEGY 4

#### Make post-secondary education financially viable for any graduate of City Schools

Finance, subsidize, or provide scholarship dollars for post-secondary formal education upon high school graduation from St. Louis Public Schools. Progressively increased dollar amounts can be provided for increasing numbers of years spent in the public school system.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** *Long-term*

**Potential Partners:** *Philanthropic Organizations, Universities*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships*

## OBJECTIVE A

Increase the High School Graduation Rate and the Quality of the K-12 Educational Experience



### STRATEGY 5

#### Incentivize high quality graduates of education programs to teach in the St. Louis Public School system

St. Louis schools can benefit from employing the best graduates that teacher education programs have to offer. Urban public schools, however, are often shunned or ignored by top teachers. Provide financial and non-financial incentives to such teachers in order to attract more of them into the City schools. Make increased investments in teachers to help them become more effective and achieve higher quality. One example is the Confluence Academy mini-grant program.

#### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Long-term

**Potential Partners:** *Philanthropic and Education Organizations*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships*

### STRATEGY 6

#### Prepare K-12 students for post-secondary life or careers through college counseling and career mapping exercises

Prepare students for career, or college readiness, with mentoring programs that link high school students to successful individuals and organizations in growing economic sectors. Strengthen students' career readiness with paid internship programs in stable and emerging industries.

#### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Short-term

**Potential Partners:** *K-12 Schools, Private and Parochial Schools, Post-Secondary Training, Vocational, Associate's Degree Programs*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships, Education*



## OBJECTIVE A

Increase the High School Graduation Rate and the Quality of the K-12 Educational Experience

### STRATEGY 7

#### Provide healthy food options in St. Louis Public Schools

Insufficient and unhealthy meals can contribute to poor performance and behavior in school. Provide healthy food choices at schools. Offer nutrition and meals for those who cannot otherwise afford them. Design math, science, and environmental curricula to involve students in the growth and consumption of fresh foods at school.

#### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** *Short-term*

**Potential Partners:** *K-12 Schools, Urban/Local Agriculture Advocacy Groups*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships*



*“Our bodies are our gardens –  
our wills are our gardeners.”  
~William Shakespeare*

## Objective B: Provide Continuing Education Opportunities

Career success and adaptability require lifelong learning, both formal and informal. Over the last few years, the number of American adults continuing with their education increased tremendously. People who participate in continuing education are generally working professionals seeking to further advance and promote their intellectual capabilities while still working. Since their time is divided between studies and full-time work, they have to be highly motivated in order to succeed. One of the most significant characteristics that distinguish students who are participating in continuing education is their tendency to relate the lessons that they learn in class to their work experience.

### STRATEGY 1

#### **Increase the amount and quality of child day care facilities to make it easier for parents to participate in continuing education programs**

Integrate adult learning with child care options, offer daycare centers at local community colleges, or other training programs, and allow participants to include the child care cost in their tuition as a tax deductible cost of attending school.

#### **Cross-Benefits:**



**Timeframe:** Long-term

**Potential Partners:** Day Care and Education Advocacy Groups

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships

### STRATEGY 2

#### **Make books, reading opportunities, and literacy initiatives widely available**

Provide books (or their equivalent in electronic form), reading lists and book clubs—especially during the summer months—to keep kids and parents reading. Enlist businesses to support with contributions. Encourage and teach adults to read with their children on a daily basis. Offer books in common spaces such as food pantries, daycare centers, doctors' offices, and after school programs.

#### **Cross-Benefits:**



**Timeframe:** Short-term

**Potential Partners:** K-12 Schools, Libraries, Charitable Organizations

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships, Education

## OBJECTIVE B

Provide Continuing Education Opportunities

### STRATEGY 3

#### Provide transportation to and scholarships for early childhood programs

Families needing child care and transportation in order to pursue careers or continuing education tend also to be families with relatively few financial resources to afford child care and reliable forms of transportation. Scholarships, subsidies, or loans for child care programs and for low/no cost transportation options would ease these pressures that are otherwise thwarting career advancement training.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** *Short-term*

**Potential Partners:** *Day Care Advocacy Groups, Public Transit, K-12 Schools*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships*

### STRATEGY 4

#### Boost workers' abilities to pass standard employment training entry tests

A high school diploma is not always a sure sign that the recipient is sufficiently educated for many training programs. Remedial reading and test training classes can be expensive to the poorly educated. Offering inexpensive or free remedial classes for adults who have realized the crucial importance of reading skills can greatly increase the employability of St. Louisans.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** *Short-term*

**Potential Partners:** *K-12 Schools, Higher Education*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships*



## OBJECTIVE B

Provide Continuing Education Opportunities

### STRATEGY 5

#### Leverage the strength of local labor unions for job creation through pre-apprenticeship programs

It's not just businesses that need workers. Labor unions, too, need highly qualified and trained members who can represent the unions well when on the job, while also contributing to higher productivity for both the individuals and the companies for whom they work. Involving unions with high school students and other adults in pre-apprenticeship programs can broaden career opportunities and union membership.

#### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** *Short-term*

**Potential Partners:** *Unions, K-12 Schools, Vocational Programs*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships*



## Objective C: Link National Economic Growth Sectors to Local Training

While formal educational systems tend to offer a wide range of fundamental skills, vocational programs, community colleges, and even four-year colleges need to stay current on innovations, needs, and changes in economic opportunity in order to adjust curricula and experiential training toward skills that are most necessary in the workforce of the next several years. They must also instill in their students the necessity of continuing education to assure that skills are adaptable to ever-changing occupational needs.

### STRATEGY 1

#### **Link employees to information and the variety of education and training programs to assure that fundamental and specialized skills are taught and kept current**

Update and share information on available continuing education programs aligned with needs for certain kinds of skills and occupations. Provide regular updates to workers on interesting, challenging, and professional growth opportunities to build employee loyalty as well as skills.

#### **Cross-Benefits:**



**Timeframe:** Long-term

**Potential Partners:** Higher Education

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships, Education

### STRATEGY 2

#### **Increase communications to employees about training and grant opportunities**

Encourage employees to take advantage of skill training opportunities both regionally and nationally. Make participation in professional conferences affordable so that workers are exposed to the experiences of others in similar fields and to innovative ideas to bring back to St. Louis.

#### **Cross-Benefits:**



**Timeframe:** Short-term

**Potential Partners:** State and Federal Agencies

**Strategy Type:** Operations

## OBJECTIVE C

Link National Economic Growth Sectors to Local Training

### STRATEGY 3

#### Rebrand vocational education programs as valuable and lucrative options for growing technical or craft-based industries that could lead to entrepreneurship

Not everyone is suited for four-year college educations. Alternative forms of post-secondary education and training need to be cast in more positive terms to remove negative stereotypes about vocational training when, in fact, jobs available in such fields are crucial to the economy and are relatively well-compensated.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Short-term

**Potential Partners:** K-12 Schools, Higher Education

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships, Education

### STRATEGY 4

#### Provide more on-the-job training programs within stable and emerging industries

Pay people to use the skills they are learning. While necessarily requiring tight management oversight, people often learn more quickly when trained on specific jobs, particularly when being compensated for such work. Coordination of on-the-job training opportunities with and through colleges and vocational programs can motivate more workers to do well as they experience instant gratification for learned skills.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Short-term

**Potential Partners:** Businesses and Business Organizations, K-12 Schools, Higher Education

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships, Education

*“The difference between school and life?  
In school, you’re taught a lesson and then given a test.  
In life, you’re given a test that teaches you a lesson.”  
- Tom Bodett*

## Objective D: Nurture Leadership and Manage Capabilities in Business, Government, and Neighborhoods

Both the private sector and government are compelled to provide goods and services using limited resources in order to meet challenges and satisfy ongoing demands. Managers in business and government should have the skills and experience to be able to make sound judgment calls, balance budgetary goals and constraints, and make informed decisions to create quality outcomes. These skills are also necessary at the volunteer level, such as among neighborhood leaders. Good leadership and management begets the most desirable outcomes, whether in the form of profits, superior services, or responsive community leaders. Skills and leadership training supports effective and efficient management outcomes.

### STRATEGY 1

#### Promote professional development continuing education credits

Encourage private and public workers to test for and achieve relevant certifications in their professional fields, if any. Encourage cross-training within organizations (and sometimes between organizations) for up-and-coming leaders so that stronger relationships are sustained between areas of responsibility in corporations or government or civic duties.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** *Short-term*

**Potential Partners:** *Higher Education*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships, Education*

### STRATEGY 2

#### Encourage and celebrate new ideas and programs developed by City employees or departments

Launch a City Green Team. Develop cross-training and collaboration between City departments to reduce silos and improve idea generation. Provide a platform for employees to voice their ideas or concerns without negative repercussions. Create annual recognition programs for outstanding employees, departments, and ideas.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** *Short-term*

**Potential Partners:** *Communications Specialists*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships*

## OBJECTIVE D

Nurture Leadership and Management Capabilities in Business, Government, and Neighborhoods

### STRATEGY 3

#### Collaborate to offer cross-discipline and cross-sector professional development training

Cross train between private, public, and nonprofit sectors. Share ideas, techniques, management styles, and leadership experience. Government employees will get a closer look at business concerns while corporate workers will learn more about government operations.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Long-term

**Potential Partners:** Local Outreach and Advocacy Groups

**Strategy Type:** Operations, Education



### STRATEGY 4

#### Encourage professional development at regular time intervals

Link professional development completion and job performance evaluations to pay raises. Require job standards that are consistent with professional and labor development criteria in all occupational categories.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Long-term

**Potential Partners:** Business Organizations

**Strategy Type:** Operations, Education



## OBJECTIVE D

Nurture Leadership and Management Capabilities in Business, Government, and Neighborhoods



### STRATEGY 5

#### Develop strategic plans for each neighborhood

Neighborhood strategic plans can be prepared in ways that involve substantial neighborhood involvement with the planning process and the planning objectives. With such buy-in at the neighborhood level, leaders will emerge to assure that resources are deployed to achieve the stated goals. Stronger neighborhoods help to retain and attract prosperous residents who, in turn, contribute investments and leadership.

#### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Long-term

**Potential Partners:** Planning and Green Building Advocacy Groups

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships

### STRATEGY 6

#### Offer a neighborhood/community leadership program to train people in the skills needed for neighborhood planning and advocacy

Adaptation of time-honored leadership and management techniques to the neighborhood and volunteer level will improve the ability of neighborhoods to advocate for their own interests, while incorporating the viewpoints of neighbors and the competing and complementary interests of other neighborhoods. Offer youth education, training, and leadership programs relating to technology and entrepreneurial skills.

#### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Long-term

**Potential Partners:** Local Outreach and Advocacy Groups, Planning and Green Building Advocacy Groups, Higher Education

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships

## Objective E: Increase Environmental Literacy

According to the Environmental Literacy Council, environmental literacy requires a fundamental understanding of the systems of the natural world, the relationships and interactions between the living and the non-living environment, and the ability to deal sensibly with problems that involve scientific evidence, uncertainty, and economic, aesthetic, and ethical considerations. Exploring the natural environment allows us to engage vital human capacities – our curiosity, our ability to care for other creatures, our creativity and imagination, and often the solutions to many of our greatest challenges when we are most aware of the many inspirational, interdependent, and optimized natural systems around us.

Knowledge of environmental science can also be viewed as integral to each citizen’s civic duty. One’s natural surroundings, and feelings of connectedness to it, can foster knowledge about human integration with the natural world and the opportunities and challenges that lie within. Policy makers generally agree that at least some knowledge of the subject is important as a civic duty, because an informed voting population makes for better policy.

### STRATEGY 1

#### Educate and empower citizens in methods and benefits of being environmentally sustainable

Offer conferences and forums covering sustainability topics. Continue to develop the St. Louis Regional Higher Education Sustainability Consortium (STL-HESC) to expand environmental and climate change curricula. Develop resources designed for diverse neighborhood residents, such as online resources and programs at local schools and community centers, including children and continuing educational classes, presentations, and activities on sustainability topics.

#### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Short-term

**Potential Partners:** Environmental Advocacy Groups, Green Building Advocacy Groups, Higher Education, Business Organizations

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships, Education

*“The [State Education and Environmental] Roundtable worked with 150 schools in 16 states for 10 years, identifying model environment-based programs and examining how the students fared on standardized tests. The findings are stunning: environment-based education provides student gains in social studies, science, language arts, and math; improves standardized test scores and grade-point averages; and develops skills in problem-solving, critical thinking, and decision-making.” - Richard Louv*

## OBJECTIVE E

Increase Environmental Literacy

### STRATEGY 2

#### Incorporate environmental literacy tenets in curricula in elementary and high schools

Today's students will one day have to participate as citizens in making decisions regarding the environment that will be of lasting importance to themselves, their children, grandchildren, the nation, and, of course, the planet. Offer multi-disciplinary courses that tie in environmental and sustainability messages.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Short-term

**Potential Partners:** Environmental Literacy Organizations, K-12 Schools

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships, Education

### STRATEGY 3

#### Celebrate local sustainable practices by professionals and citizens

Continue to hold an annual Earth Day or "Go Green Month" celebrations. Give public recognition awards at annual events to businesses, nonprofits, and households who have made significant strides toward sustainable facilities and/or teaching others about sustainable practices.

##### Cross-Benefits:



**Timeframe:** Short-term

**Potential Partners:** Neighborhood Associations, CDOs, Developers, Local Businesses

**Strategy Type:** Partnerships



## OBJECTIVE E

Increase Environmental Literacy

### STRATEGY 4

**Facilitate spaces and programs which strive to nourish children’s curiosity, growth, and creativity through unstructured play time outside in nature and other outdoor activities**

Promote a culture in which children enjoy and are encouraged to be outside in nature, and as a result are healthier, have a sense of connection to their place, and become supporters and stewards of local nature.

**Cross-Benefits:**



**Timeframe:** *Short-term*

**Potential Partners:** *Environmental Advocacy Groups, K-12 and Higher Education, Business Organizations*

**Strategy Type:** *Partnerships, Education*

*“It is a wholesome and necessary thing for us to turn again to the earth and in the contemplation of her beauties to know of wonder and humility.”  
- Rachel Carson*

