



Istrouma Journal

Celebrating the Past and Building the Future of North Baton Rouge

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Reginald Douglas' Goal: Academic Excellence

Meet New Istrouma Principal

Students Will Be Expected to Be Successful on Either the University or Technology Track

BATON ROUGE — New Istrouma High School principal Reginald Douglas plans a total transformation of Istrouma, not only physically — it is undergoing a \$24 million renovation — but also academically.

Douglas, who began his teaching career at Istrouma in 1999, has had a dream of returning to the school. That dream will come true May 30 when he officially resigns as principal at St. Helena College and Career Academy. When Douglas took over at St. Helena, it was one of the worst performing public schools in Louisiana. Today it is one of the most improved.

Istrouma closed in May 2014 but will reopen Aug. 9 on the 100th anniversary of its founding in 1917.

It will consist of three schools on one campus. The first is a traditional high school for the Istrouma neighborhood roughly bounded by Choctaw Drive on the south, Scenic Highway on the west, and Airline Highway on the north, and east.

The second is a technology institute, which offers

career-oriented training for high-paying jobs in the petro-chemical industry, construction, media, and other fields, many of which are not offered at the high school level in Baton Rouge.

The third is a middle magnet school for the 5th through the 8th grades.

The technology institute and middle magnet schools will be open to students parishwide.

Istrouma will accept students in the 5th through 10th grades for the 2017-2018 school year. It will add an 11th grade the next year, and a 12th grade the following year.

Douglas said, "Istrouma will be a school of academic excellence. Every single student will be expected to be successful on one of two tracks — the University TOPS track or the TOPS Technology track."

"Regardless of which track they are on, all students will begin taking Advanced Placement (AP) and dual enrollment courses starting in the 9th grade. They will earn college credit each year they are at Istrouma. So an Istrouma graduate



Photo by Woody Jenkins

PRINCIPAL REGINALD DOUGLAS has been appointed the new principal of Istrouma High School, which is scheduled to re-open on August 9 after completion of a \$24 million renovation program.

“When they closed Istrouma High, they took something very important from the people of North Baton Rouge and from Istrouma grads of all generations. People have had to fight very hard to get it back, which is why it’s back. Now it will become something great, and no one will ever take it away again!”

— Reginald Douglas, Principal, Istrouma High School

will already have credit for at least four college courses when he graduates but hopefully many more than that.”

Douglas said Istrouma will have partnerships with LSU, Southern University, and Baton Rouge Community College. BRCC has a campus only one block away, which should facilitate an especially close

relationship. He hopes to have a BRCC professor teaching on campus.

“The climate and culture at Istrouma will make it a very happy and successful place,” Douglas said. “Our students will look good, and they will be engaged and learning. There will be a wonderful climate and culture.” **Go to Page 12**

Enroll in Istrouma

Are you or your child interested in enrolling at Istrouma for the 2017-2018 school year? An application will be online soon. Meanwhile, call Mr. Douglas at 397-9634.

City Trying to Close Plank Road Business

House Doctor At 2144 Plank Recycles Hope

Woody Jenkins
Editor

BATON ROUGE — Moses McWilliams thought he was doing something good when he opened House Doctor at 2144 Plank Road, a store where McWilliams sells treasures that others have thrown away.

The 74-year-old North Baton Rouge entrepreneur picks up what others don't want, cleans and repairs them, and often adds a coat of paint. Sometimes people



Photo by Woody Jenkins

HOUSE DOCTOR ON PLANK ROAD — Mose McWilliams, 74, operates this bright and vibrant store at 2144 Plank Road. He repairs and sells things nobody wants. Now the City-Parish is trying to close him down.

in the neighborhood need money and come by to sell things to the House Doctor.

The store has everything from furniture to bedroom suites to nearly-new bunk beds to hand tools, electronic gear, and an endless collection of books, tapes, DVD's, CD's, and much more.

The brightly decorated store is like something you might find on a Caribbean island and has to be one of the most interesting and remarkable spots in North Baton Rouge.

Moses has helped many flood victims. Last week, a lady who had lost everything in the flood came by,

See **HOUSE DOCTOR** on Page 24