

# Louisiana Believes

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**Every Student Succeeds Act and Louisiana**

# Agenda

- Louisiana's 2025 Priorities and Challenges
- ESSA Implementation
- Contact

# Guiding Beliefs

Louisiana's students—all of them, no matter race, disability, or creed—are as smart and capable as any in America. They have gifts and talents no lesser than those given to any children on this earth.

Our state has worked hard to raise expectations for students, and as a result, students are performing at higher levels than ever before.

While we have made great strides in increasing life opportunities for our students, there remain serious challenges in our state's schools. Often these challenges are experienced to the greatest extent from children of historically disadvantaged backgrounds.

As educators, we have a powerful role to play in helping all students overcome the challenges they will experience on the way to leading healthy and productive lives as adults.

# Louisiana's Priorities

- **Unify** child care, Head Start, and prekindergarten to prepare every student for kindergarten.
- **Align** standards, curriculum, assessment, and professional development that are as challenging for students and educators as any in America.
- **Prepare** every educator under a mentor educator through a professional residency.
- **Create** opportunity for every graduate through Jump Start, Advanced Placement, and other early college pathways to a funded education after high school.
- **Focus** relentlessly on students in persistently struggling schools by transforming those schools and creating new options.

# Progress to Date

Louisiana students have achieved record gains in recent years.

- Louisiana **fourth-grade students achieved the highest growth among all states** on the 2015 NAEP reading test and the second highest growth in math.
- The Louisiana class of 2015 showed **greater improvement on the ACT** than did any senior class in states using the ACT as their state test.
- Louisiana's 2015 **high school graduation rate was an all-time high** of 77.5 percent.
- Louisiana's class of 2015 **Advanced Placement® results showed greater annual improvement** than any state other than Massachusetts.

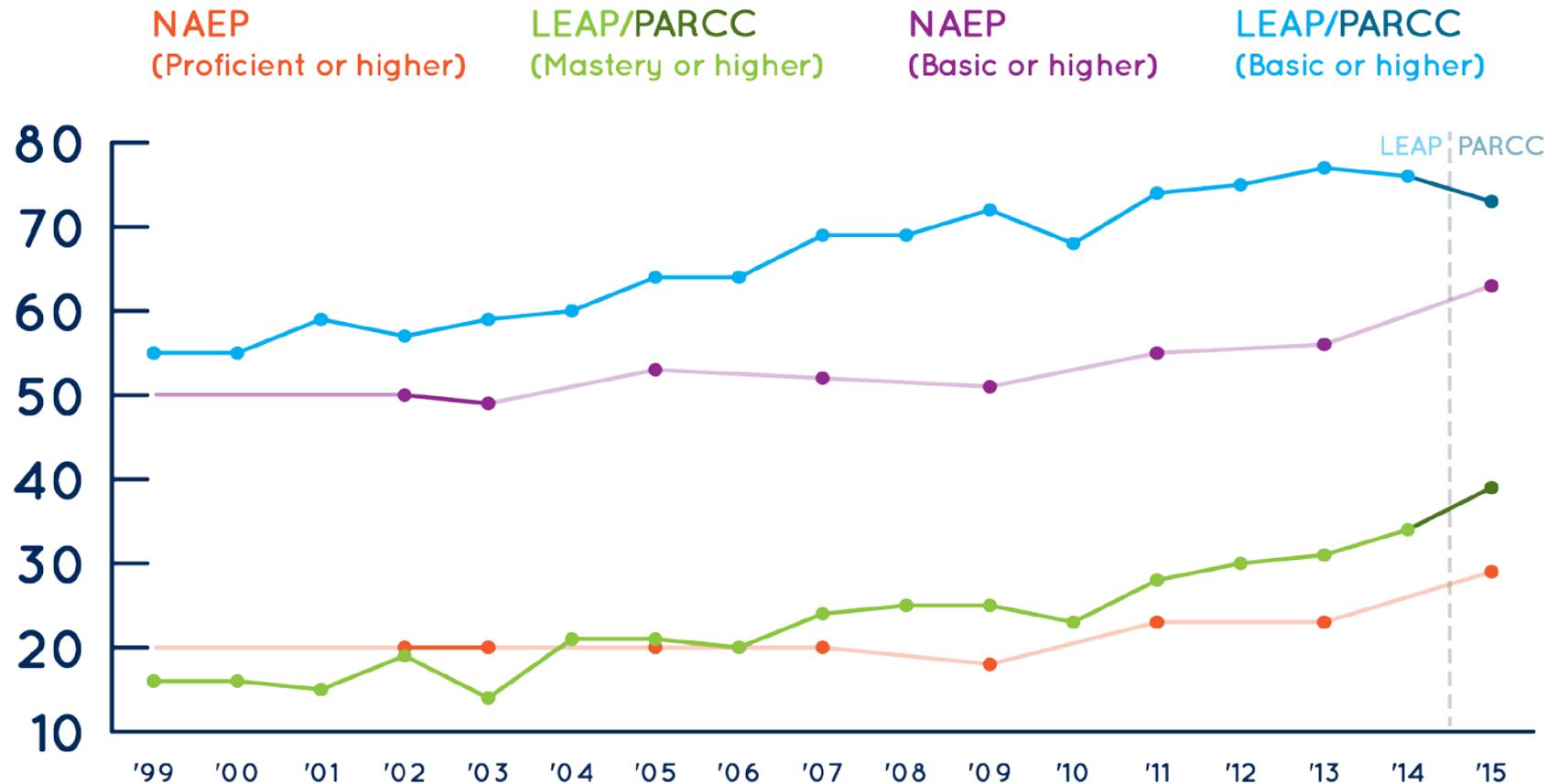
# Challenges Persist

In spite of great progress, data indicate that challenges to achieving prosperous adult lives persist for many Louisiana students.

- Many students graduating from high school are **required to repeat high school coursework when they arrive in college** because they have yet to master fundamental skills.
- As we raise expectations to better prepare students for life after high school, we need to ensure that student achievement for all students is increasing, and that **we close pernicious achievement gaps**.
- Disadvantaged students experience not only these gaps, but also **lower levels of access to enriching experiences** that may spark lifelong interests.
- Disadvantaged students are also more likely to attend **schools that struggle year after year**.
- Underlying all of this is a need to **strengthen the educator profession**, making ours competitive with high-growth industries.

# Challenge: Mastery of Fundamental Skills

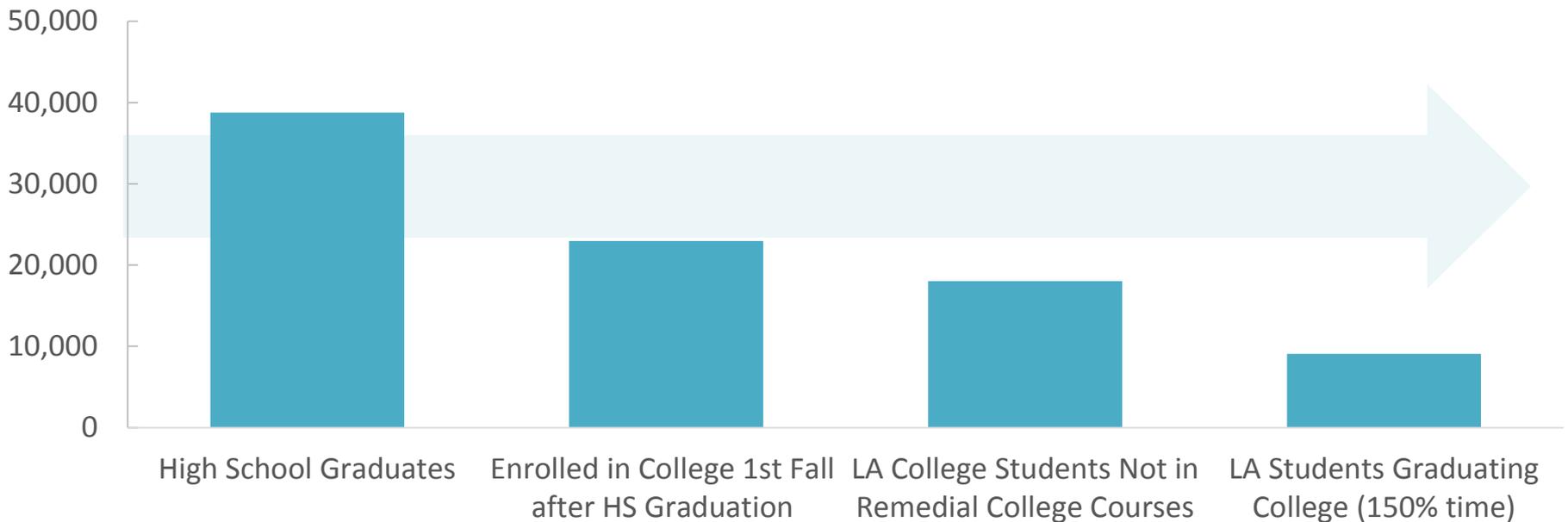
The percentage of students scoring NAEP “Proficient” or LEAP “Mastery” roughly corresponds with the percentage of adults completing college. Below are fourth-grade reading scores.



# Challenge: Mastery of Fundamental Skills

Most jobs in Louisiana require some education after high school, often at a four-year college or at a two-year technical and community college. However, in 2014, only roughly 30 percent of the Louisiana workforce had a four-year and two-year degree.

Fewer than 40 percent of students who enroll in a Louisiana college or university even graduate in a period of “time and a half” (3 years for an associate’s degree and 6 years for a bachelor’s degree).



# Challenge: Mastery of Fundamental Skills

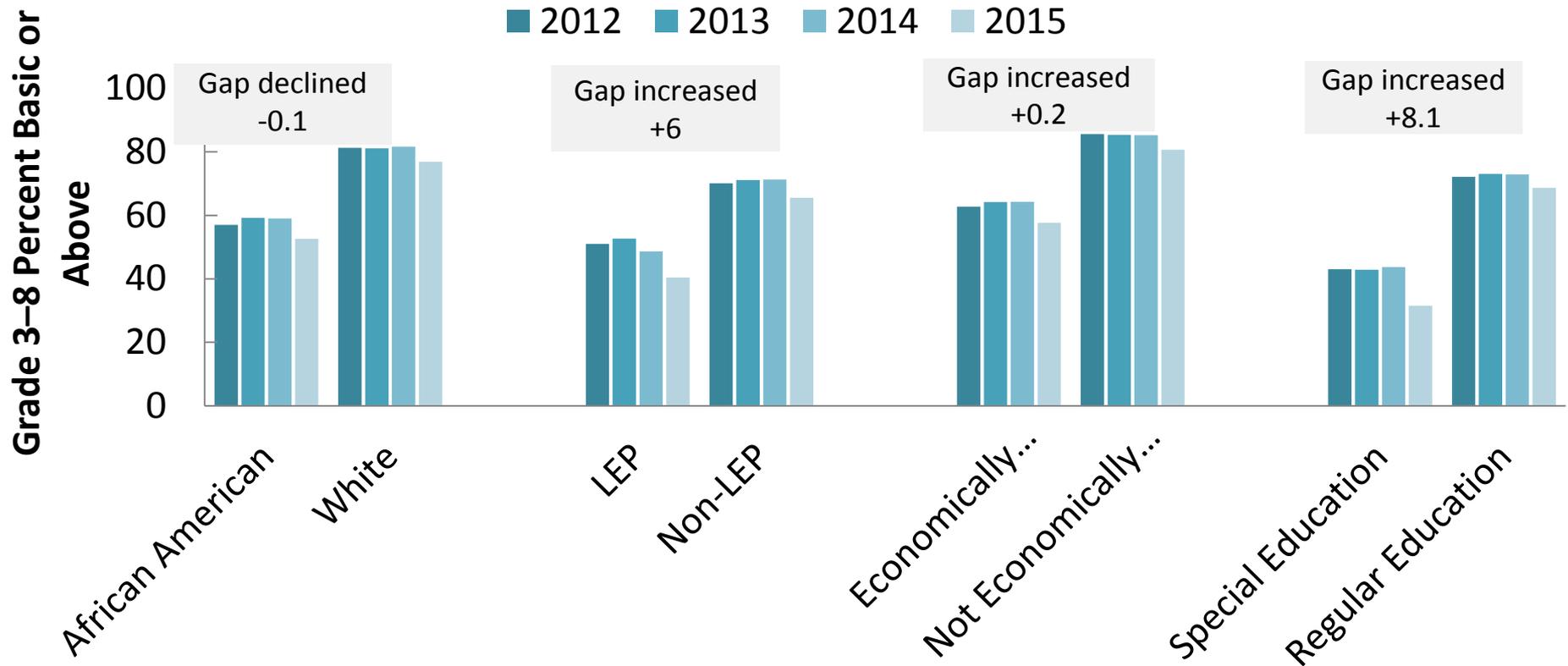
ESSA requires that states establish academic standards indicative of success after high school. ESSA also requires that Louisiana measure student proficiency on these standards through certain tests and graduation rates and that schools be given one summative rating as a result. However, the content of these standards, the definition of proficiency, and subjects measured by tests will largely be determined by states.

## **What we've heard so far**

- BESE has had a longstanding plan to phase-in the proficiency expectation of “Mastery” performance on state tests. There is not at this time a similar increase in the proficiency expectation for ACT or graduation rates, though this could be considered.
- Some parents have shared that student-level or school-level reports should better communicate how outcomes in early grades correlate with achievement in high school and beyond.
- Some administrators and teachers in schools with no tested grades expressed desire to change the policy that assigns a rating to those schools based on ratings of other schools.
- Some administrators have expressed a desire for less frequent state assessment in social studies and science, while other advocates have expressed that assessing these subjects ensure that this content is taught.

# Challenge: As Expectations Rise, Gaps Can Widen

Historically disadvantaged students disproportionately struggled when measured on expectations, even in demonstrations of a basic level of proficiency. The graphs below show the percentage of students scoring Basic or above on grade 3–8 ELA and math assessments from 2012 to 2015.



# Challenge: As Expectations Rise, Gaps Can Widen

As expectations rise, achievement gaps can sometimes widen with specific groups of students. It is up to Louisiana to determine which identification, remediation and instructional tools and supports are needed to ensure that achievement gaps between struggling students and their peers reduce over time. ESSA also allows states to determine how they will reward annual progress for students and schools.

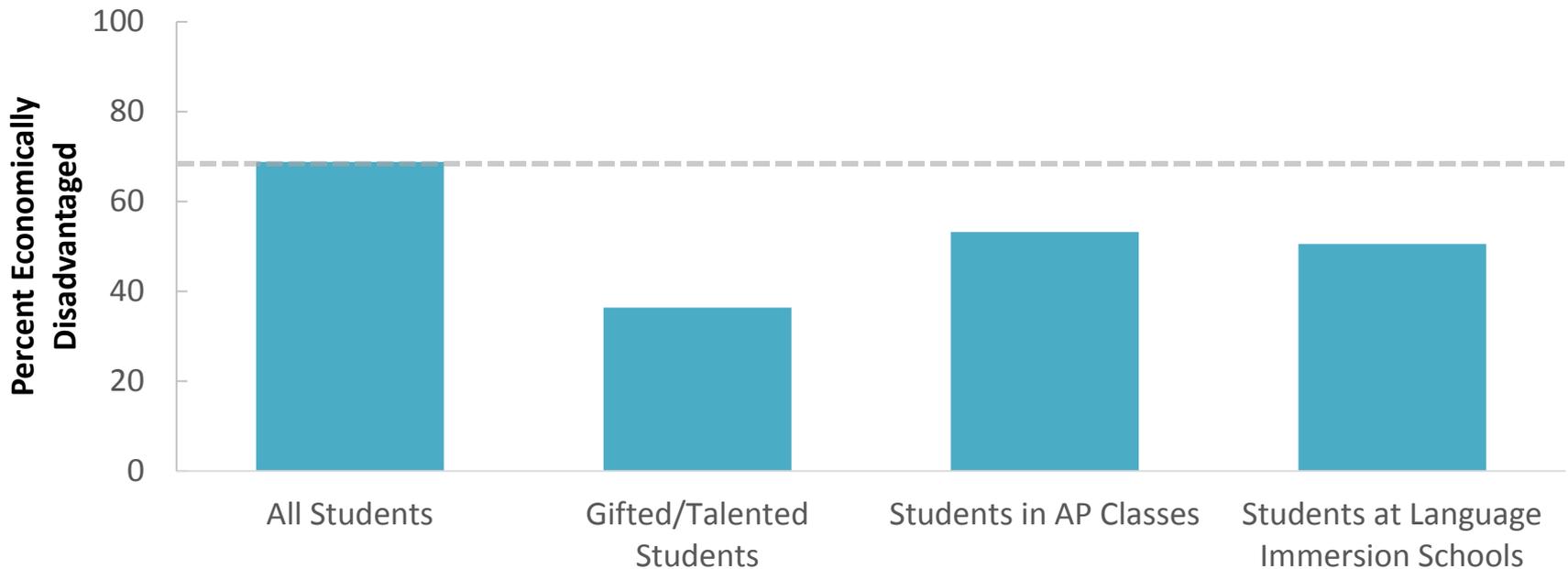
## What we've heard so far

- Advocates have shared that a good school is not just one where every student scores “Advanced”; it is also one where all students make regular progress.
- Administrators have shared that progress points in the state’s accountability system have focused schools on achievement for persistently struggling students, but that the progress points system needs to be a central part of the system rather than a separate part.
- Teachers have shared that rising expectations make it difficult to learn new expectations while meeting the needs of all students, including those who enter their classrooms behind.
- Teachers have shared that the instruments used to measure progress over the course of the year for the purposes of student learning targets need to align with what is expected of students at the end of the year and in the years hence.
- Principals have expressed concerns that alternative schools are not evaluated based on measures that show the true progress of students who come to those schools with struggles.

# Challenge: Access to Enriching Experiences

In order for students to be successful in school and in life, it is important that their individual needs and interests be met. Louisiana students need affordable access to advanced coursework, the arts, foreign language options, and other experiences that can be life-changing for children.

However, gaps still exist in the opportunities provided to students to enroll in enrichment courses or ones that address their unique interests or needs.



# Challenge: Access to Enriching Experiences

ESSA allows states to expand their definitions of what makes for a quality school. The law also creates avenues through which states and districts can spend funding specifically on access to coursework that otherwise might not be provided.

## **What we've heard so far**

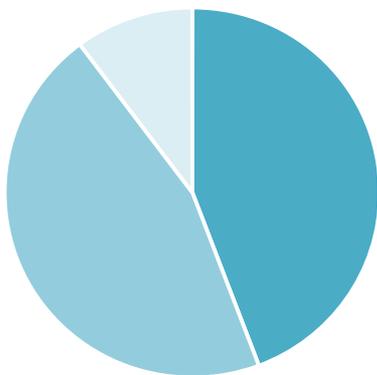
- Administrators have asserted that there is value in some credentials to which the accountability system does not at present afford great value. These include associate degrees and the HiSet credential, in particular when paired with Jump Start credentials.
- Advocates have stated that schools should be publicly recognized and rewarded for achievement and progress in non-quantifiable areas, such as the arts or foreign language, even if not included in SPS formula.
- Legislators have spoken to the Department about the importance of expanding dual language (also called “immersion”) schools, including but not limited to Francophone settings.
- Administrators have reminded the state to promote fairness across wealthier and poorer districts in any measure. Districts and schools should not be able to have a letter grade advantage because their students’ families can afford access to certain experiences.

# Challenge: Struggling Schools Serve Large Groups of Disadvantaged Students

Despite significant student achievement gains statewide in recent years, some schools continue to struggle to provide a quality education to all students.

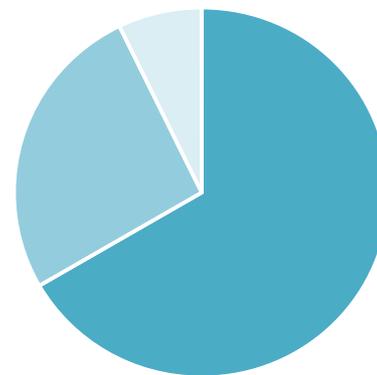
Statewide, 100 schools that are not alternative schools have graduated fewer than two-thirds of students on time or have 12 percent or fewer students scoring Mastery or above every year for the past three years. These schools are significantly more likely to serve African American students than are other schools.

All Louisiana Public School Students



■ African American ■ White ■ Other

Students in 100 Persistently Low-Performing Schools



■ African American ■ White ■ Other

# Challenge: Struggling Schools Serve Large Groups of Disadvantaged Students

ESSA requires that states establish a list of schools based on the rating system that are in need of “comprehensive support.” This list can comprise no fewer than five percent of all schools in the state. The state also must create a list of “targeted support” schools that struggle with specific subgroups. Both groups of schools receive funding commitments and implement plans for change, guided by state requirements for those plans.

## **What we’ve heard so far**

- BESE has intervened in schools primarily in East Baton Rouge Parish and Orleans Parish. Most comprehensive plans for transforming low-achieving schools have been maintained locally. Some have had dramatic effects; some have not.
- This year, administrators across many smaller and rural districts have applied for NCLB school improvement funds in the hopes of implementing the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) or another comprehensive model.
- Districts and schools may need additional support to develop plans for persistently struggling schools.

# Challenge: Strengthening the Educator Profession

Surveys and workforce analyses indicate that many Louisiana schools are struggling to compete with other industries and states in identifying high-potential candidates for teaching, effectively preparing those candidates, and retaining them in the profession.

- According to a 2014 survey, **50 percent** of teachers with one to five years of experience said that they were not fully prepared for the realities of a classroom in their first year of teaching.
- **Sixty-seven percent** of Louisiana school system leaders reported that preparation programs do not produce enough teachers to meet staffing needs in certain certification areas and schools.
- In 2015-2016, **12 percent of secondary math and science classes** and **19 percent of special education classes** in Louisiana public schools were taught by out-of-field teachers.
- From 2012 to 2015, **16 percent** of teachers with six to ten years of experience—those who have a strong instructional base upon which to build—left the profession in Louisiana.
- **Forty-five percent** of departing teachers from 2012 to 2015 received effective or higher ratings according to objective measures of student achievement (transitional student growth data).

# Challenge: Strengthening the Educator Profession

ESSA encourages states to create and fund a true system of support and professional growth for educators. This starts with school-based preparation in residencies for teachers and leaders. It continues providing teachers tools needed to set goals and customize teaching to students with challenges, and ensuring equitable access to great teachers across all schools and districts. The law also encourages opportunities for teachers to advance in their careers, as mentors or as aspiring, and ultimately successful, school leaders.

## **What we've heard so far**

- Educators believe that teachers should have more time to practice their craft under an expert teacher as part of their preparation experience.
- Teachers and leaders want access to strong, job-embedded professional development that is based on results with students and on the curriculum and tools used in their district. The Department applied for the federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant to support this need.
- In order to strengthen and elevate the education profession, Louisiana must establish leadership roles and pipelines that yield strong school and district leadership, and that attract and retain talented educators into a profession with meaningful growth and advancement opportunities.

# Agenda

- Louisiana's Current Plan and Challenges
- ESSA Implementation
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# ESSA: Civil Rights in Education

In the United States, the vast majority of education policies are determined at the state and local levels. Federal law establishes minimum requirements in all states, primarily addressing the civil rights of historically disadvantaged student populations.

- **1965:** The federal role in public education expanded dramatically as part of the push to assure civil rights of disadvantaged Americans. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), authorized in 1965, created specific, targeted programs for the poor through Title I. The Act has been reauthorized five times since.
- **2002:** No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was a recent reauthorization of ESEA, requiring that schools measure student achievement in uniform ways that intervene in instances of failure to close achievement gaps between disadvantaged students and their peers.
- **2015:** The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) maintains the NCLB requirement that states, districts, and schools maintain uniform measurement, reporting of results, and rating of schools. However, states and districts have greater discretion to design elements of the improvement systems than existed under NCLB.

# ESSA: What is Required and What is Not

**ESSA requires that every state submit a plan to the federal government in roughly the next year. The plan should build on what is working to help students overcome challenges and to provide teachers clarity and consistency and include the following:**

- Adoption of statewide standards in math and English aligned with entrance requirements of public higher education and relevant career and technical education standards
- Assessment of all students in the same grades and subjects as required under NCLB
- Reporting on specific metrics, including student outcomes and subgroup results, at the school and school system level to address student equity gaps
- A rating system for all schools, identification of schools in need of comprehensive and targeted support and improvement, and a plan for improvement in those schools
- Authorization of federal education funding and competitive grant opportunities

**While state laws or rules require certain actions of school systems, federal laws do **not** require the following:**

- The use of specific standards, curriculums, or assessment
- Specific interventions, evaluation, and support structures for educators, schools, and school systems
- Specific, national annual progress goals used to evaluate schools, school systems, and states

# ESSA Funding Opportunities

ESSA expands and creates new funding opportunities for school systems and state education agencies through federal grants.

## **Expanded Funding**

- School improvement activities will be funded through the Title I School Improvement “set aside.” Applications will no longer be limited to four mandated turnaround models.
- Title II may now be spent on preparation, recruitment, and development of teachers, principals and other school leaders, as well as stipends for resident and mentor teachers.
- Title II state set-aside may fund teacher and leader preparation academies and residency programs.

## **New Funding**

- Direct Student Services funds may provide funding for academic and CTE coursework parents choose for their children, such as AP and IB instruction and exams, or high-quality academic tutoring.
- Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants will flow formula funding directly to LEAs to support three initiatives: (1) access to a well-rounded education, (2) safe and healthy students, and (3) effective use of technology.

# Comparison of ESSA vs. Louisiana Law

Assessments	Federal Requirement	Louisiana Requirement
<b>Grades and subjects tested</b>	<p><b>Reading/language arts and mathematics:</b> In each of grades 3 through 8 and at least once in grades 9 through 12</p> <p><b>Science:</b> Not less than one time during grades 3 through 5, grades 6 through 9; and grades 10 through 12</p> <p><b>Other subjects:</b> Administered at the discretion of the state</p>	<p>State law (R.S. 17:24.4) and BESE regulations (Bulletins 111 &amp; 118): Require standards-based assessments in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies to be administered, at a minimum, in grades 3 through 11</p>
<b>Participation</b>	<p>95 percent participation by all students and by subgroup; states must include and enforce in accountability system</p>	<p>All students must participate in state assessments (Bulletins 111 &amp; 118)</p>

# Comparison of ESSA vs. Louisiana Law

Accountability Indicators	Federal Requirement	Louisiana Requirement
<b>Weighting</b>	Substantial weight given to academic indicators, measured through state assessment	<p>State law (R.S. 17:10.1): Accountability system must be based on student achievement</p> <p>Substantial weight given to student proficiency on state assessments (LEAP, EOC, ACT, and advanced courses) (BESE Bulletin 111)</p>
<b>Academic proficiency</b>	Academic proficiency in reading/language arts and mathematics, based on state assessments, as well as at state discretion, student academic growth	Academic proficiency in reading/language arts, math, science, and social studies based on state assessments (LEAP, EOC, ACT) (R.S. 17:10.1 and Bulletin 111 and 118)

# Comparison of ESSA vs. Louisiana Law

Accountability Indicators	Federal Requirement	Louisiana Requirement
<b>Student progress</b>	For elementary and secondary schools, student growth or another valid and reliable indicator that allows for meaningful differentiation in student performance	Progress points (Bulletin 118)
<b>High school cohort graduation rate</b>	For high schools, the graduation rate, based on the four-year adjusted cohort rate and, at state option, an extended-year adjusted cohort rate	Cohort graduation rate and strength of diploma index (Bulletin 111)
<b>English language proficiency for English learners</b>	For English learners, progress in achieving English language proficiency, based on the State’s ELP assessment, within a state-determined timeline	Measurement, reporting, and improvement plans required under NCLB, but not part of school and district letter grades.
<b>School quality or student success</b>	At least one indicator of “school quality or student success” that allows for meaningful differentiation of school performance and is valid, reliable, comparable, and statewide (except that such an indicator may vary by grade span)	Dropout credit accumulation index (middle schools), AP/IB/DE participation in strength of diploma index (high schools), and industry-based certifications

# Comparison of ESSA vs. Louisiana Law

Accountability Indicators	Federal Requirement	Louisiana Requirement
<b>Achievement standards/levels</b>	At least three (3) levels of performance for each indicator	<p>State law (R.S. 17:24.4): Rigorous student achievement standards set with reference to test scores of the same grade levels nationally; the rigor of each standards-based assessment, at a minimum, shall be comparable to national achievement tests, including but not limited to the National Assessment of Education Progress</p> <p>BESE regulations (Bulletin 118)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAP: Unsatisfactory, Approaching Basic, Basic, Mastery, and Advanced</li> <li>• EOC: Needs Improvement, Fair, Good, Excellent</li> </ul>
<b>Summative ratings</b>	Single summative accountability rating (proposed rule)	State law (R.S. 17:10.1): Requires, in addition to any other performance-related labels or designations, assignment of school and district letter grades, with “F” representing academically unacceptable

# Comparison of ESSA vs. Louisiana Law

Accountability Indicators	Federal Requirement	Louisiana Requirement
<p><b>Low-performing schools and subgroups</b></p>	<p>Identification of at least 5 percent of Title I schools as in need of “comprehensive support and improvement,” along with high school with a graduation rate below 67 percent, and additional schools that have chronically low-performing subgroups and have not improved with targeted support</p> <p>Identification of schools with low-performing subgroups as in need of “targeted support and improvement”</p>	<p>State law (R.S. 17:10.5): Provides for the transfer of failing schools (defined as academically unacceptable for four consecutive years) to the jurisdiction of the Recovery School District</p> <p>State law (R.S. 17:10.1): Requires that the school and district accountability system “provide assurance to the citizens that the quality of education in each public school is monitored and maintained at levels essential for <i>each student</i> to receive a minimum foundation of education”</p>

# ESSA: Louisiana Considerations

## **Aligning Expectations to Higher Education and Workforce**

- How should the state's performance expectations for students and schools best be aligned with expectations for skills in college and in the workplace?

## **Serving Struggling Students**

- How should the state best focus schools on struggling students? What tools and skills do educators need in order to serve those students?

## **Transforming Struggling Schools**

- What does evidence tell us about schools that persistently struggle and how best to transform them for students they serve?

## **Ensuring Access to Enriching Experiences for All Students**

- What incentives, supports, and other systems must be in place to ensure families and students can choose from programs suited to the needs, interests, and ambitions of each student?

## **Celebrating and Strengthening the Profession**

- Providing teacher candidates with a year-long residency in a public school classroom while pursuing their teaching degree.
- Establishing teacher and leader pipelines that provide educators with professional development opportunities as their careers progress.

# ESSA Timeline

Timeline	Phase of Work
Summer 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initial statewide discussions of ESSA and related opportunities</li></ul>
Fall 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Department of Education develops Louisiana’s ESSA plan in consultation with legally appointed advisory organizations, school and district leaders, advocates, and community leaders.</li><li>• As there are proposals for public consideration, the Department will post them for comment.</li><li>• Continued public meetings and meetings with organizations.</li></ul>
Winter 2016–Spring 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continued development and final submission of the Louisiana plan, with public meetings on any changes in rules or regulations.</li><li>• Final draft of Louisiana’s plan.</li></ul>
2017-2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implementation of ESSA adjustments to Louisiana policy</li></ul>

# ESSA 2025 Engagement: Fall and Winter

Throughout the fall and winter, the Department will work closely with our state's advisory group to refine our state's ESSA plans, based on feedback from stakeholders, including the following:

- Louisiana Accountability Commission
- Superintendents Advisory Council
- Charter School Leaders
- Early Childhood Advisory Council
- Special Education Advisory Panel
- Louisiana Teacher Leader and Supervisor Collaborations (Sept./Nov.)
- Board of Regents/Higher Education

Additionally, the Department encourages all education, community, and civic groups to host meetings this fall to discuss Louisiana's ESSA plan with their members or constituents and submit feedback to the Department on drafts of the plan.

If your organization is interested in hosting a community meeting on Louisiana's ESSA plan, please contact [essalouisiana@la.gov](mailto:essalouisiana@la.gov).

# Agenda

- Louisiana's 2025 Plan and Challenges
- ESSA Implementation
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# Questions

If you have questions about today's discussion, please visit our email [essalouisiana@la.gov](mailto:essalouisiana@la.gov).

Or visit our website at [www.louisianabelieves.com/essa](http://www.louisianabelieves.com/essa) for up-to-date information on upcoming meetings and plan development.