

# Louisiana Believes

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## Educational Equity in Louisiana

December 1, 2017

# Background and Purpose

During the 2017 Regular Session, the Louisiana Legislature passed [Act 224](#) (which became R.S. 17:22(11)), requiring the state superintendent of education to annually prepare and submit a report that assists policymakers and the public in assessing the extent to which Louisiana students have access to a quality public education. The law requires the report, at a minimum, to contain school-level information relative to:

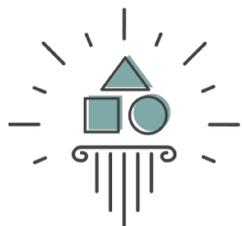
- **Enrollment in various types of schools:** type of school and percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged, have an Individualized Education Program plan or Individualized Accommodation/"504" plan, are racial or ethnic minorities, and are English learners
- **Academic achievement and educational attainment:** state test scores, completion of courses required for TOPS, and the attainment of college credit and industry-based certifications
- **Access to the arts and world languages:** percentage of students receiving instruction in the arts and in other languages, including students enrolled in world language immersion programs
- **Out-of-school discipline:** percentage of students suspended or expelled
- **Access to educators:** percentage of "Highly Effective" teachers and teacher absences

The same subgroups of students reported for enrollment purposes shall be reported for each additional indicator, in order to assist readers in determining the extent to which all students are being served.

# Louisiana Believes

The Louisiana Department of Education continues to partner with and support educators across the state in order to raise expectations for students and schools and provide an equitable education for all.

Louisiana's students are just as capable as any in the country and deserve the opportunity to succeed at the highest level. Thus, Louisiana educators have been working tirelessly over the past several years to raise expectations and educational outcomes for students in five major focus areas:



Unification of the State's  
Early Childhood System



Alignment of  
Academic Standards,  
Curriculum, Assessments,  
and Professional Development



Quality Preparation for  
Educators and Leaders  
in Every School



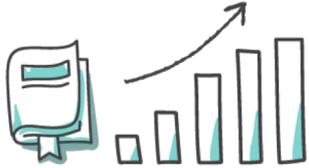
Pathway to  
College or a Career  
for Every Graduate



Relentless Focus on  
Struggling Schools  
and Students

# Louisiana's Success

As a result of this work, students across Louisiana are performing at levels never seen before, including student subgroups that have traditionally been underserved.



Louisiana **4th grade students** achieved the **highest growth** on the 2015 NAEP reading test.



The number of students scoring **Mastery+** on LEAP has **increased 13%** since 2013.



Since 2014, Louisiana's ACT composite score has **grown the most of any southern state**, and **ranks 10th** amongst all states testing 100% of their students.



More students graduated in **2016** than **ever before**.



Since 2012, the number of students earning **AP credit** each year has **increased by 137%**.

# Louisiana's Vision

Louisiana will continue to raise the bar for students so that by 2025, an A-rated school is one where the average student has:



fully mastered content,



is ready for the next level of study, and



is given access to the same opportunities as their peers across the country.

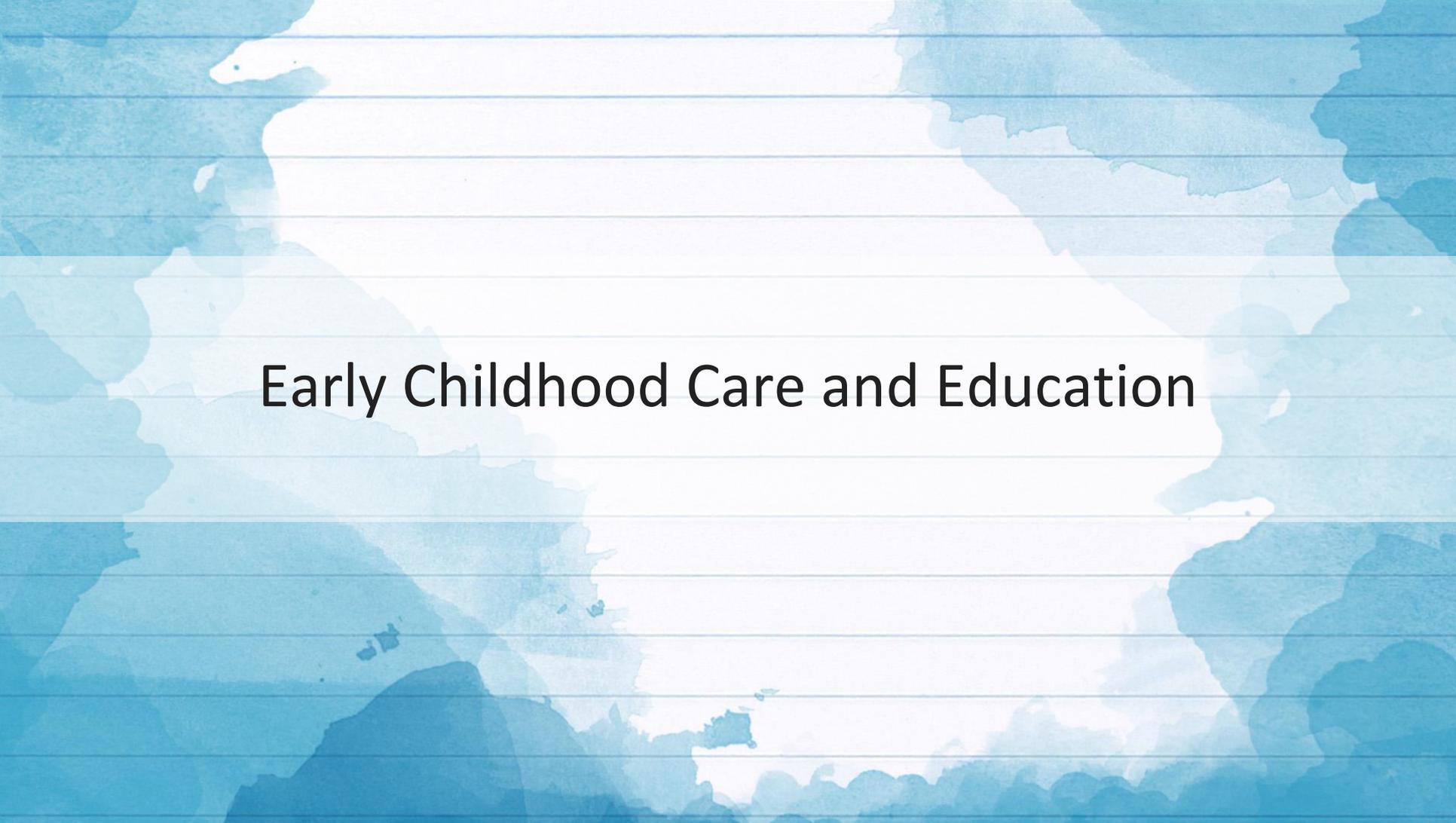
Reaching this bar will require that school systems create and implement strong plans to address areas of concern, including directing additional resources and support to those schools who struggle the most. Schools will also be rewarded for growing students throughout the school year.

# Reviewing the Data

What follows is a state-level summary of the most up-to-date data required in the law and demonstrative of equity and excellence in public education, from early childhood care and education through high school graduation, across Louisiana.

School system and school-level best practices are highlighted in order to serve as examples for their peers and to demonstrate for policymakers and the public what is possible when equity and excellence are prioritized.

All available data for each school system and its schools are available in the full 2017 Louisiana Equity Report: <https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/equity/2017-statewide-equity-report.xlsx?sfvrsn=3>.

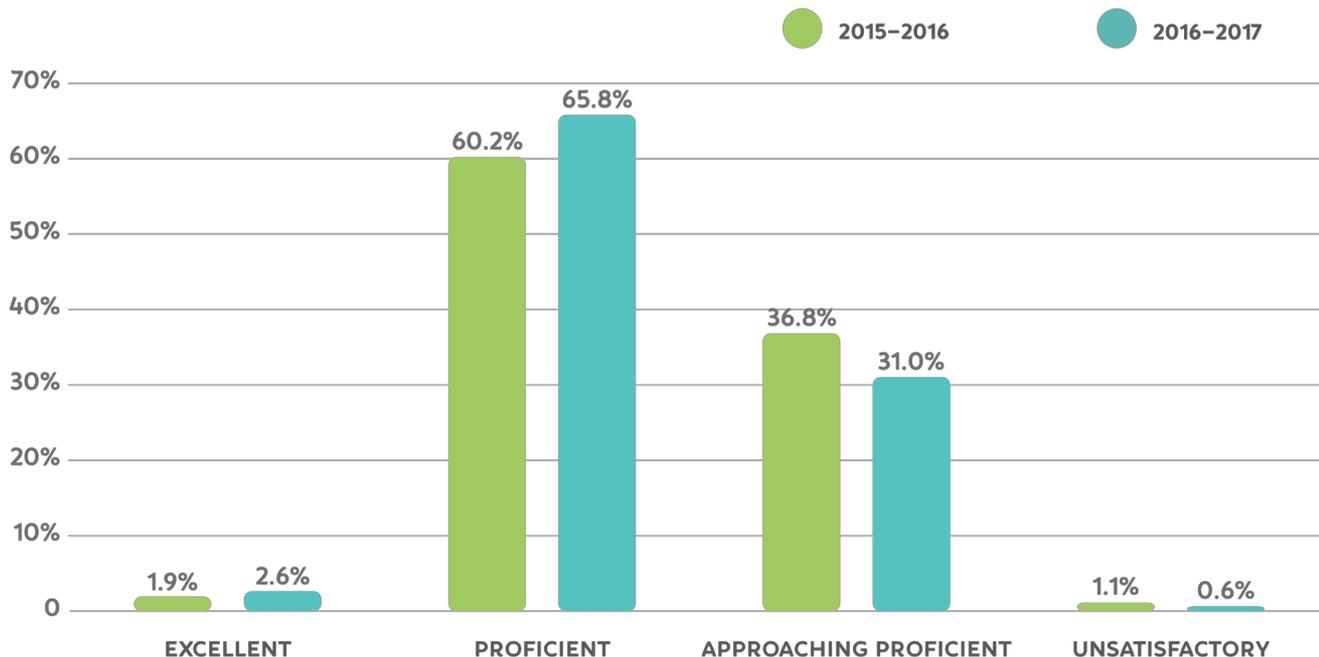


# Early Childhood Care and Education

# Early Childhood Care and Education

*Nearly 70% of programs serving at-risk children, birth to five, scored Proficient or Excellent on the 2016-2017 Performance Profiles.*

*Of the economically disadvantaged children enrolled in early childhood programs, nearly 90% of four-year-olds have access to proficient programs, while only about half of infants do.*



# Increasing Equity in Early Childhood

The Department is working closely with centers to make the following improvements.

- **Curriculum:** Child care centers have access to the [Child Care Curriculum Initiative](#), a \$3 million investment in supporting child care centers in accessing [Tier I \(top rated\)](#) toddler and pre-K curricula. Centers receive training on how to use and implement curriculum through designated regional providers.
- **Professional Development and Coaching:** Through [Resource and Referral Agencies](#) and the Mental Health Consultation program, centers are able to access targeted coaching that is responsive to their scores on *CLASS*, the assessment used for the performance profiles.
- **Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate:** Child care teachers continue to complete professional training and receive their [certification](#), often through BESE-approved [Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate Programs](#).

# Networks Reducing Enrollment Gaps

Sixteen communities across the state are reducing their at-risk enrollment gaps through the Preschool Development Grant, a federal grant awarded to Louisiana in 2014 to expand access for at-risk four-year-olds to pre-K. This \$32 million, four-year grant encourages networks to offer seats in diverse settings to increase parent choice.

Caddo

Iberville

Ouachita (City of Monroe)

Union

Calcasieu

Jefferson

Plaquemines

Concordia

Lafayette

Rapides

East Baton Rouge

Lincoln

St. John

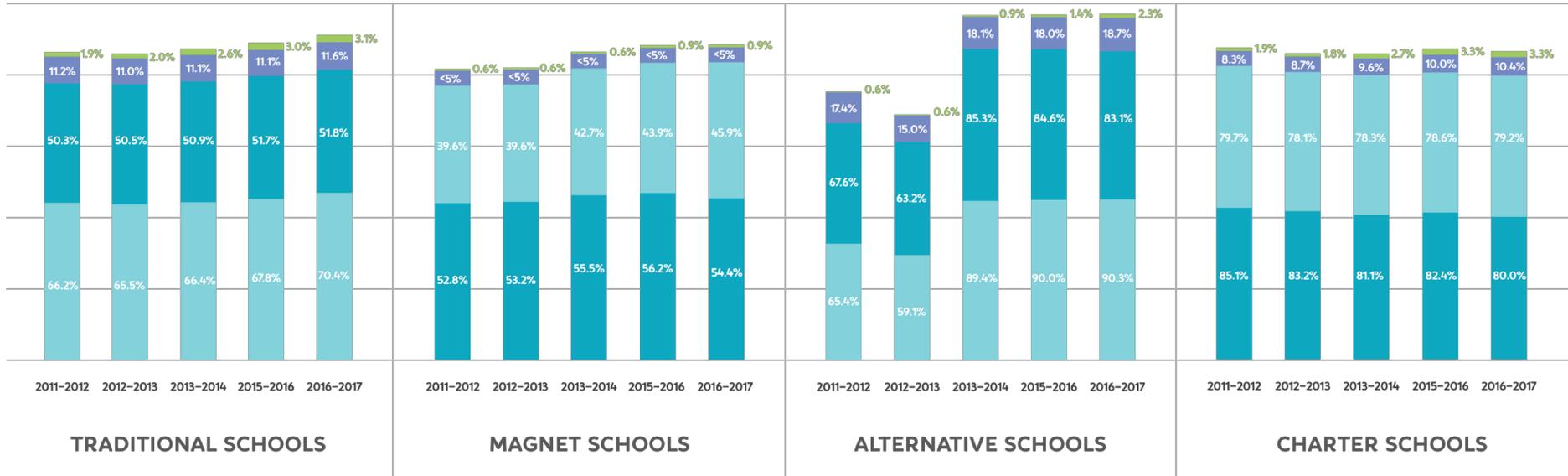
Grant

Orleans

Tangipahoa

# Academic Achievement in K-12

# Student Enrollment by School Type



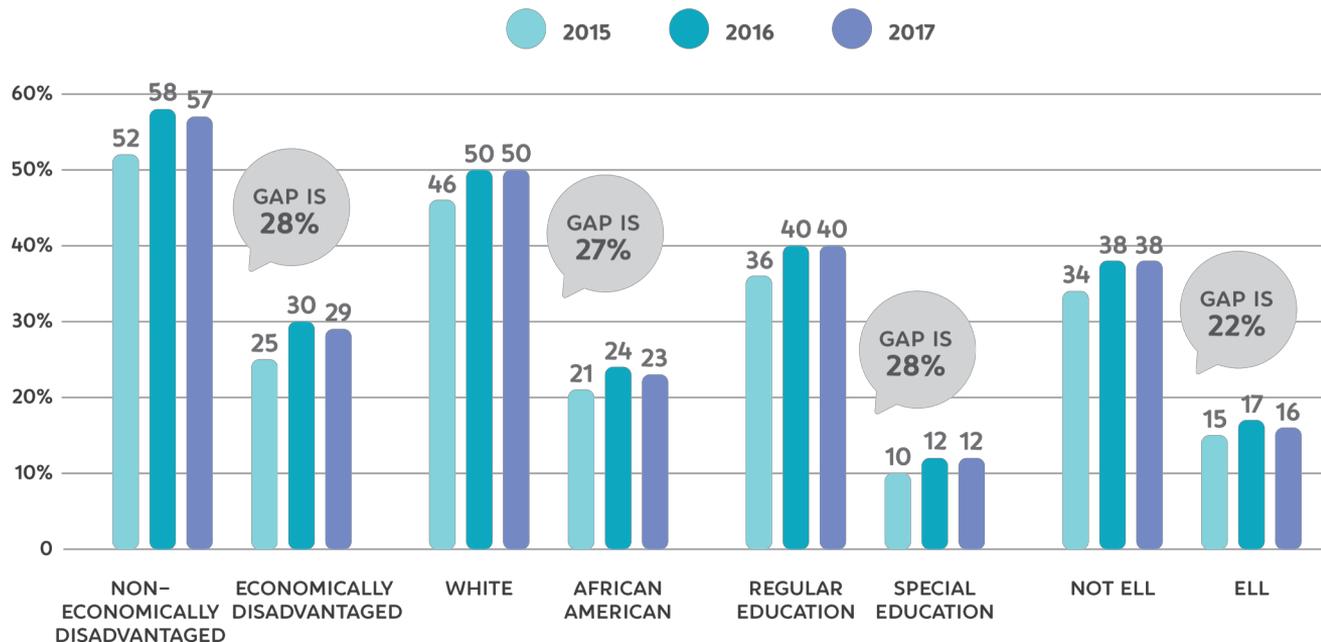
# LEAP Grades 3-8

Since 2015, all student populations have demonstrated greater rates of proficiency in English language arts and math.

As the overall state improved by four percent since 2015, economically disadvantaged students improved by 5 points; African American students by 3 points; and Special Education and English learner students each by 2 points.

Still, these gaps remain too large.

Students Scoring “Mastery” or above on LEAP ELA & Math, (Grades 3-8 Combined)

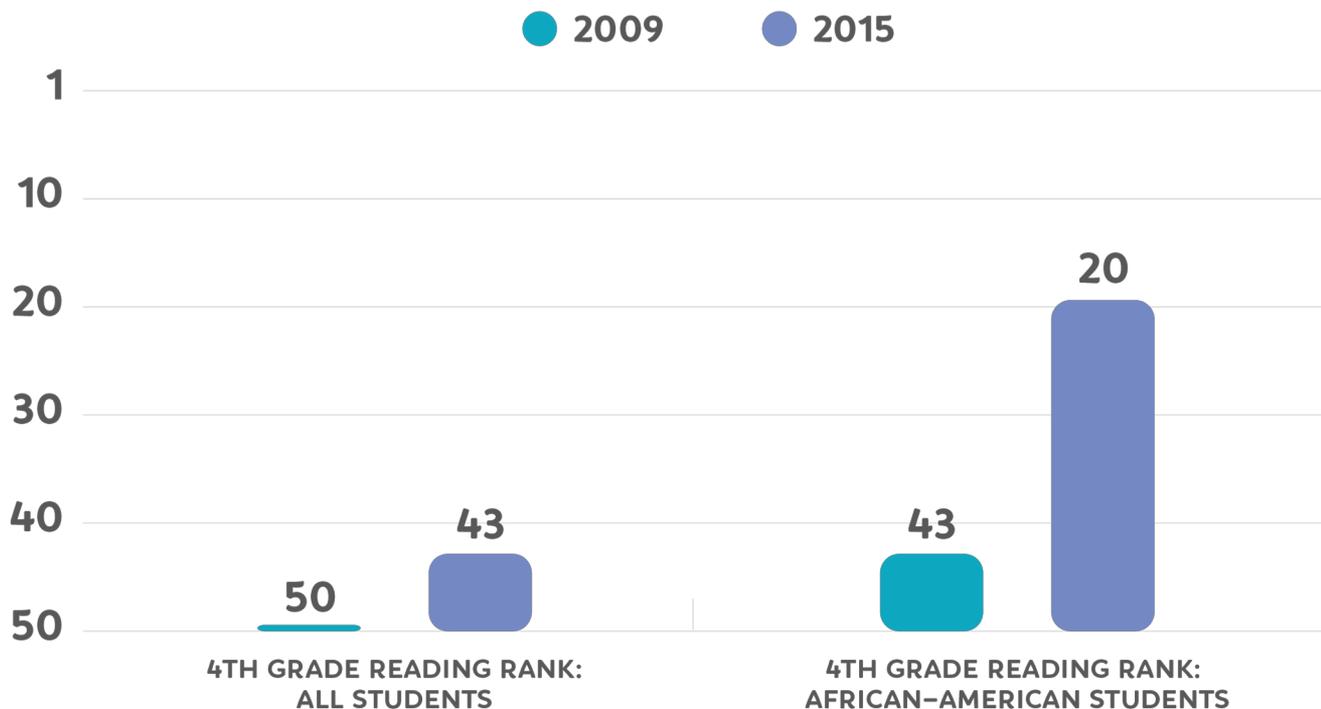


# NAEP

*In 2015, Louisiana's 4th grade students demonstrated the largest growth of any in the country in Reading.*

*The state's 4th grade African-American students also saw significant improvement in Reading ranking 20th amongst all states.*

LOUISIANA STUDENT PERFORMANCE GROWTH ON NAEP

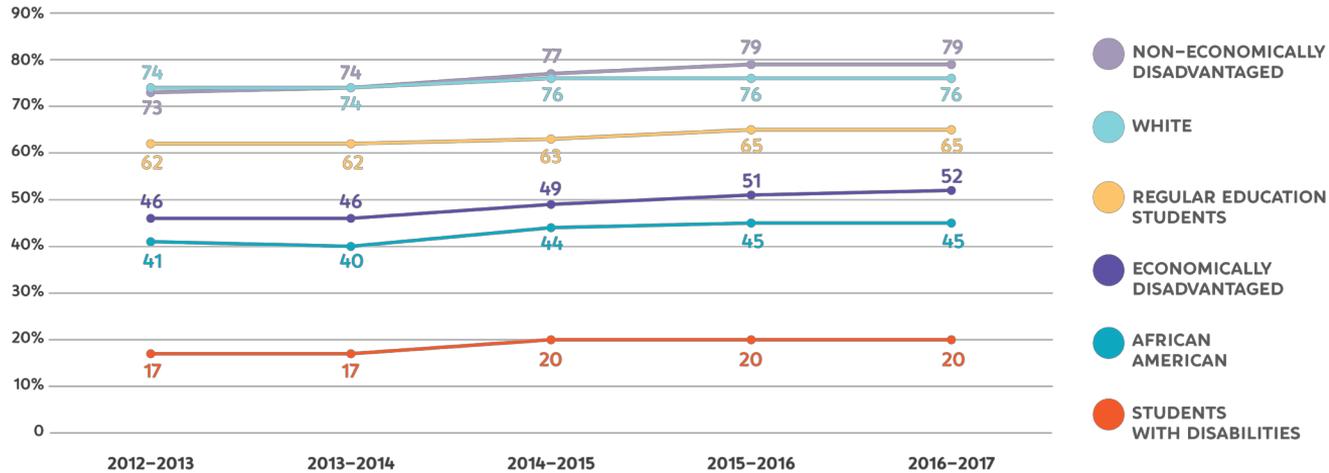


# ACT

*Since Louisiana began providing all students with the opportunity to take the ACT in 2013, more historically disadvantaged students have achieved college going ACT scores than ever before.*

*However, the gap between the performance of these students and their peers is still too large.*

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SCORING 18 OR ABOVE ON THE ACT



# Reducing the K-8 Achievement Gap

Student Group	Top LEAP Growth Schools	
Economically Disadvantaged	Columbia Elementary (Caldwell) Palmetto Elementary (St. Landry) Bourg Elementary (Terrebonne)	E. E. Lyon Elementary (St. Tammany) Woodlake Elementary (St. Tammany)
Students with Disabilities	Enon Elementary (Washington) Sun City Elementary (Bossier) Pinecrest Elementary/Middle (Ouachita)	North Corbin Elementary (Livingston) Northwestern State University Elementary Lab School (Natchitoches)
Students of Color	Coteau Elementary (Iberia) Lake Elementary (Ascension) Bellaire Elementary (Bossier)	Stanley High School (DeSoto) Walter Schneckenburger Elementary (Jefferson)
English Learners	Lake Charles Charter Academy (Charter) Emily C. Watkins Elementary (St. John the Baptist) Seventh Ward Elementary (Vermilion)	South Walker Elementary (Livingston) Washington Montessori (Jefferson)

# Reducing the High School Achievement Gap

Student Group	Top ACT Growth School Systems
Economically Disadvantaged	Livingston Parish East Baton Rouge Parish (EBR & RSDBR schools) Caddo Parish Jefferson Parish St. Tammany Parish
Students of Color	Orleans Parish (Orleans Parish & RSD NO schools) East Baton Rouge All (EBR & RSDBR schools) Caddo Parish Lafayette Parish Jefferson Parish

*Students with disabilities and English Language Learners top growth schools are not reported because not enough schools had at least 10 students take the ACT and score 18 or higher.*

# Supporting High Academic Achievement for All Students

**Louisiana's academic strategy addresses equity gaps by focusing on three key levers:**

## **Quality and coherent academics**

Rigorous standards, aligned assessments, curriculum and professional development. This includes guidance for special education students, English language learners and tools for academic support for struggling students.

## **Leadership**

Compass system to support educators, leadership training for principals.

## **Implementation**

Direct training for over 6,000 teachers, principals, and individualized support for districts through networks.

# Supporting High Academic Achievement for All Students

The Department provides supports for integrated academics for school systems including:

- Rigorous state standards
- Aligned state and local interim assessments (LEAP 2025 and LEAP 360)
- Curriculum reviews and free curricula to support local choice
- Professional development opportunities and support for school systems



# Leadership and Implementation

The Department provides direct implementation support for all school systems:

- Training for over 6,000 teachers (2+ from each school)
- Principal training
- District support through local network teams
- Monthly communications
- Summer summit for school systems and teachers
- Quarterly collaboration events

AUDIENCE	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNICATION STREAMS	KEY RESOURCES
<b>District &amp; Charter Leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly Supervisor Collaboration Events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Newsletters</li> <li>• Monthly Calls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District + School Support Toolbox</li> <li>• 2016-2017 Professional Development Vendor Guide</li> </ul>
<b>School Leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal Collaborations</li> <li>• Compass/TAP Trainings</li> <li>• Jump Start Convention</li> <li>• Principal Fellowship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ed Connect Newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidebooks</li> <li>• 2016-2017 Professional Development Vendor Guide</li> <li>• Principal Support page</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher Leaders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Leader Collaboration/Summit</li> <li>• Counselor Collaborations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly Teacher Leader Newsletter</li> <li>• Ed Connect Newsletter</li> <li>• Monthly Counselor Newsletter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher Support Toolbox</li> </ul>

# Course Access

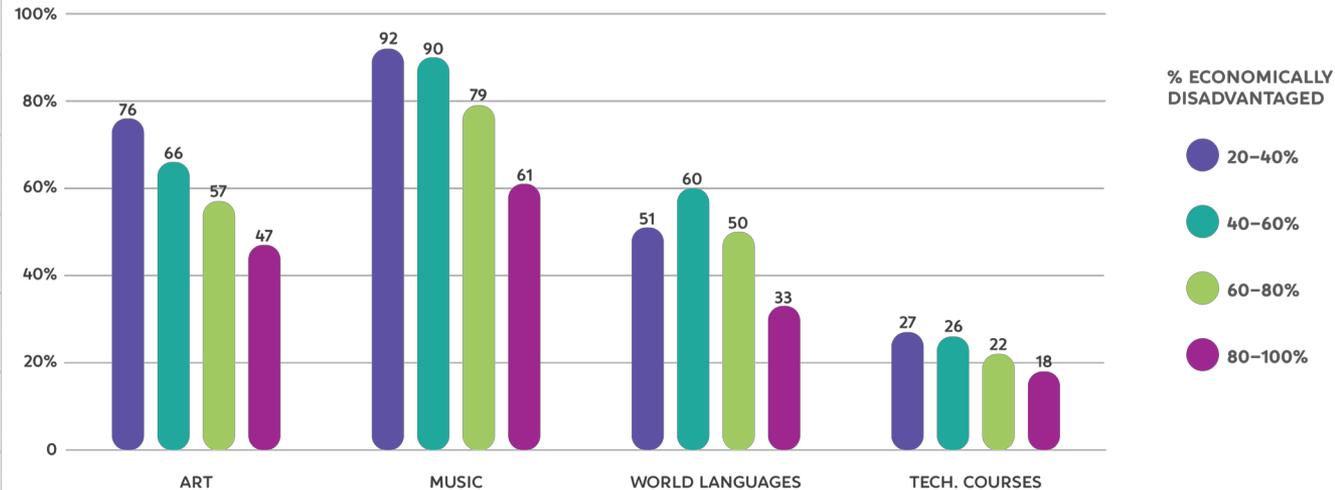
*Students attending high-poverty schools are less likely than their peers to have access to art, music, world language, and technology courses.*

*For example, just 47 percent of schools, where 80-100 percent of students are economically disadvantaged, offer arts courses.*

*Unlike in many other states, most Louisiana school systems do not offer foreign language instruction to students in grades K-8.*

# Access to Enriching Instruction

PERCENT OF SCHOOLS WITH AT LEAST ONE COURSE IN EACH AREA BY SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS (2016)

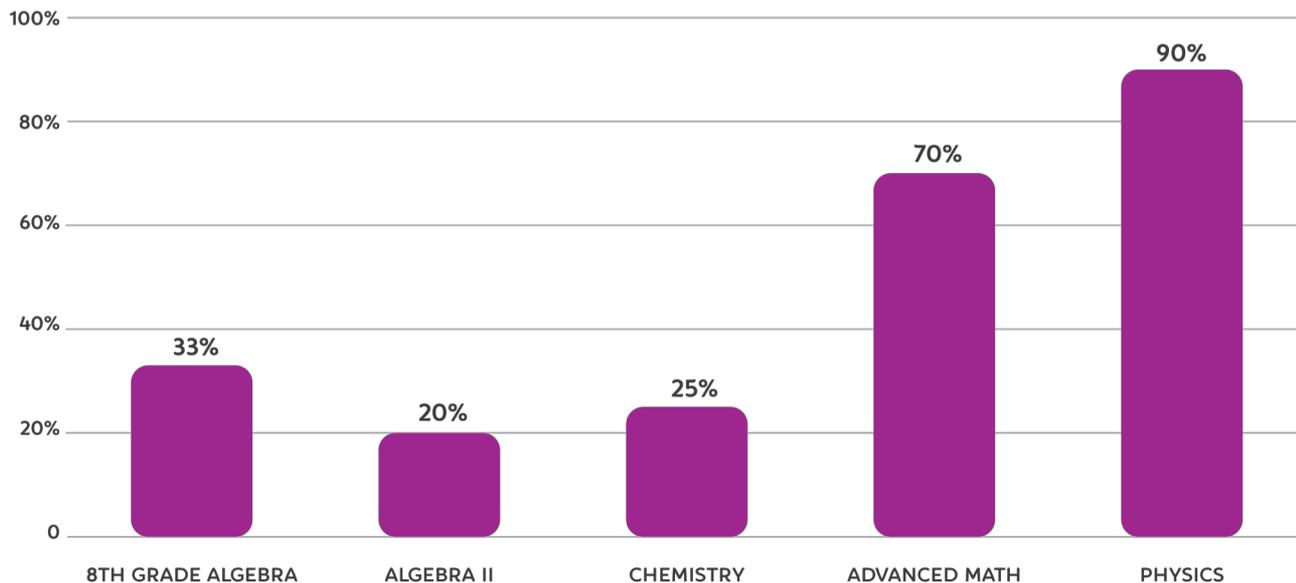


# Access to High School Coursework

*Louisiana has increased access to postsecondary pathway courses for all students, however, equity of access remains a problem.*

*For high schools that have a majority of students of color, approximately 20 percent do not have access to Algebra II, and 25 percent do not have access to Chemistry, both courses required for TOPS.*

COURSE ACCESS FOR HIGH SCHOOLS WHERE MINORITY STUDENTS ARE THE MAJORITY



# Schools Increasing Access to Coursework

Student Group	Access to Enriching Coursework	Increasing Access to TOPS Aligned Coursework
Economically Disadvantaged	Baton Rouge Charter Academy at Mid-City (Charter) South Baton Rouge Charter Academy (EBR) Southern Hills Elementary (Caddo) Kenilworth Science and Technology Charter (Charter) Iberville Charter Academy (Charter)	Choudrant High School (Lincoln) Northwood High School (Rapides) Midland High School (Acadia) Merryville High School (Beauregard) Benton High School (Bossier)
Students of Color	West St. John High School (St. John) Thrive Academy (state school) Belfair Montessori School (EBR) St. Helena College and Career Academy (St. Helena) Scotlandville Magnet High School (EBR)	Merryville High School (Beauregard) Northwood High School (Rapides) Airline High School (Bossier) Bunkie Magnet High School (Avoyelles) Benton High School (Bossier)

*Students with disabilities and English Language Learners top growth schools are not reported because either schools did not have at least 10 students enrolled in these courses, or all schools declined with the subgroup.*

# Increasing Access to Enriching Opportunities

Since introducing the Strength of Diploma index to the high school accountability formula in 2013, **the percent of students earning early college credit or a statewide industry-based credential, valued in high-wage industries, has increased to 43 percent with the class of 2016** -- a six percentage point increase since 2013.

**Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, Louisiana's school and district accountability system will include an additional "Interests and Opportunities" indicator worth five percent of each school's annual rating.** The indicator will measure the extent to which schools are providing students with access to a well-rounded education, exposing them to diverse areas of learning in which they can develop their skills and talents.

A committee made up of a diverse group of educators began meeting in Fall 2017 to develop recommendations for the new indicator. **BESE will consider policy related to this indicator in 2018.**

# Increasing Equity of Opportunity in High Schools

## **Course Choice/Supplemental Course Allocation (SCA)**

The Louisiana Course Choice program, which is funded through the SCA component of the school system funding formula (MFP), gives school systems and schools an allocation of \$59 per student in grades 7-12 to be spent on approved providers of currently unavailable academic courses. Courses include core subjects required for the TOPS University Diploma, career and technical education courses required for the Jump Start Diploma, test preparation courses, and dual enrollment opportunities for students. Courses are delivered in online, face-to-face, and hybrid formats. Over the past few years, funding has increased from \$27 to \$59 per student enrolled in grades 7-12 in Louisiana school systems.

## **Direct Student Services**

Louisiana's approved ESSA plan includes a provision to implement a Direct Student Service (DSS) program. This program will provide school systems with specific funds to offer students expanded options such as access to advanced academic and career and technical education courses, support for taking college credit exams, opportunities to earn industry-based certifications, individualized services and tutoring, and academic enrichment opportunities. Ex. Costs for AP Exam Fees



# Access to Postsecondary Opportunities

# Early College Planning and Coursework Access

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*Although there are upward trends in students' attainment of postsecondary credit, barriers such as course costs and access speak to the need for ensuring all eligible students have equitable access to postsecondary opportunities.*

*One of the biggest challenges that must be addressed is the grave disparity in preparation for certain racial and ethnic subgroups, as well as low-income and first-generation college students.*

Since 2012, the state has increased the percentage of students with:

- AP credits by 92 percent;
- IB credits by 22 percent; and
- Dual enrollment (DE) credits by 27 percent.

Financial aid planning and FAFSA completion has also increased to 75 percent since 2013.

However, there are still areas for improvement. in 2016:

- Twenty-one percent of students were required to pay out-of-pocket expenses for dual enrollment courses.
- Only 22 percent of students represented in DE credits are African-American while African-American students comprise 43% of the students population
- Only half of the state's economically disadvantaged students attend a high school that offers dual enrollment courses, compared with 65 percent of non-economically disadvantaged students.
- Of the total population of students participating in dual enrollment, only a third are economically disadvantaged and even fewer are students of color.

# Increasing Access to Postsecondary Opportunities

In addition to Course Choice and Direct Student Services, the LDOE is offering additional supports to schools and schools system increase students' access to postsecondary opportunities.

## **Advanced Placement Exam Fee Funding**

The federal program that once funded Advanced Placement® test fees was discontinued, which means that Louisiana schools will need to offset this prior subsidy with other funds if they want to continue supporting economically disadvantaged students. The Department has provided [guidance](#) on the various funding options for student AP exams.

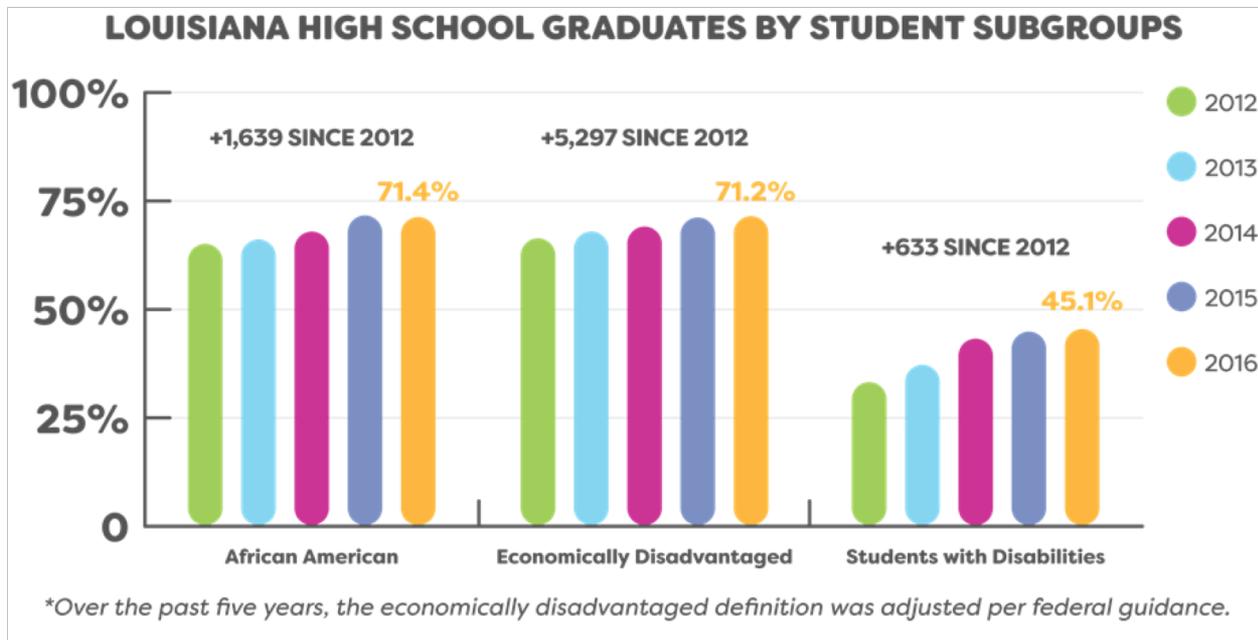
## **Financial Aid Planning**

Most Louisiana high school graduates are eligible for some form of state or federal financial aid – either merit-based or need-based. Financial Aid can remove the barriers to accessing four-year universities, two-year community colleges, and technical training programs. All 2018 graduates will be provided the opportunity to complete a financial aid planning session, including Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion and submission.

# High School Graduates

*While the graduation rates for historically disadvantaged students have been steadily increasing over the past five years, these rates are still below the state average of 77 percent.*

*In particular, less than half of students with disabilities in the state are graduating on time.*

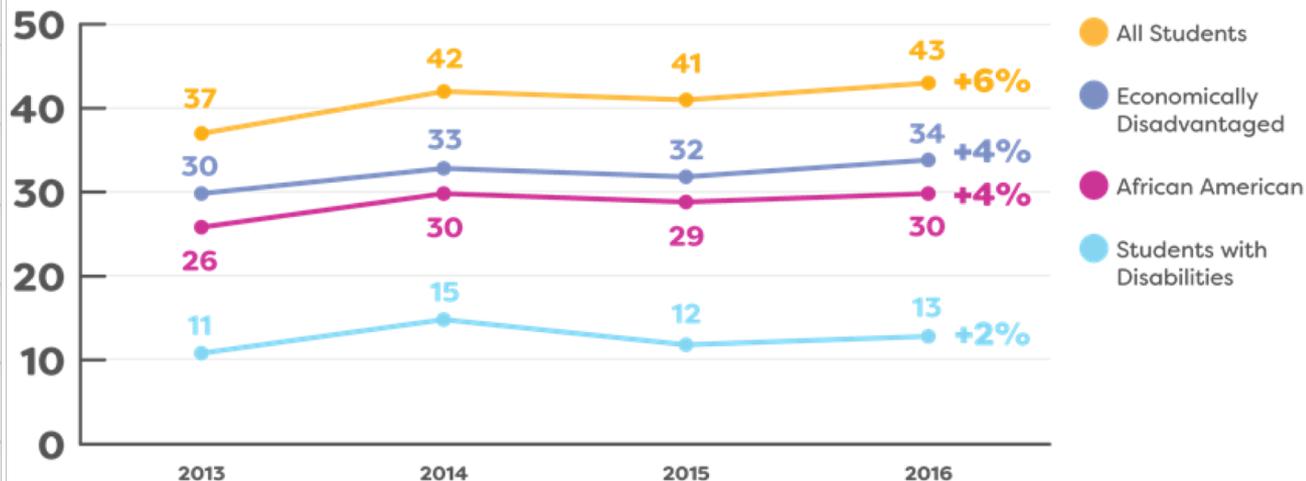


# College and Career Credential Attainment

*Nearly half of the Class of 2016 earned a credential during high school, more than any class ever in Louisiana.*

*However, this opportunity is not being experienced equally by all students. Historically disadvantaged students have less access to college or career opportunities than their peers.*

**STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED ADVANCED + BASIC CREDENTIALS**

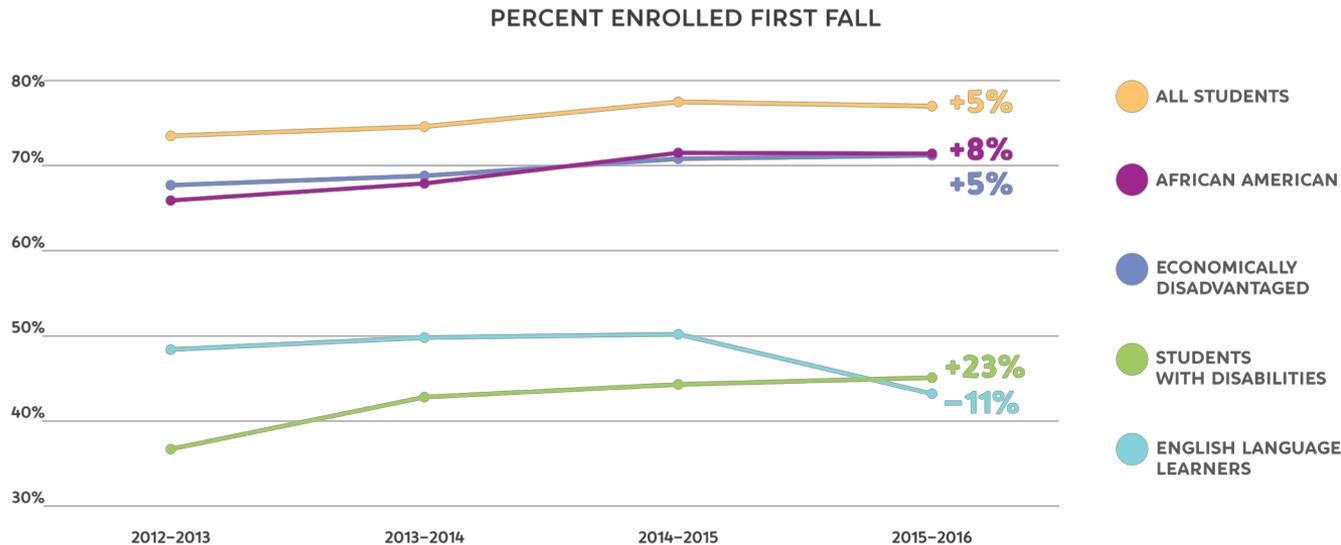


# College Enrollment

*The state rate of college enrollment has increased 5% in four years.*

*All subgroups have increased with the exception of ELL students which declined.*

*The gap for historically disadvantaged students is closing resulting in more at-risk students enrolling in college.*



# Increasing Access to Postsecondary Opportunities

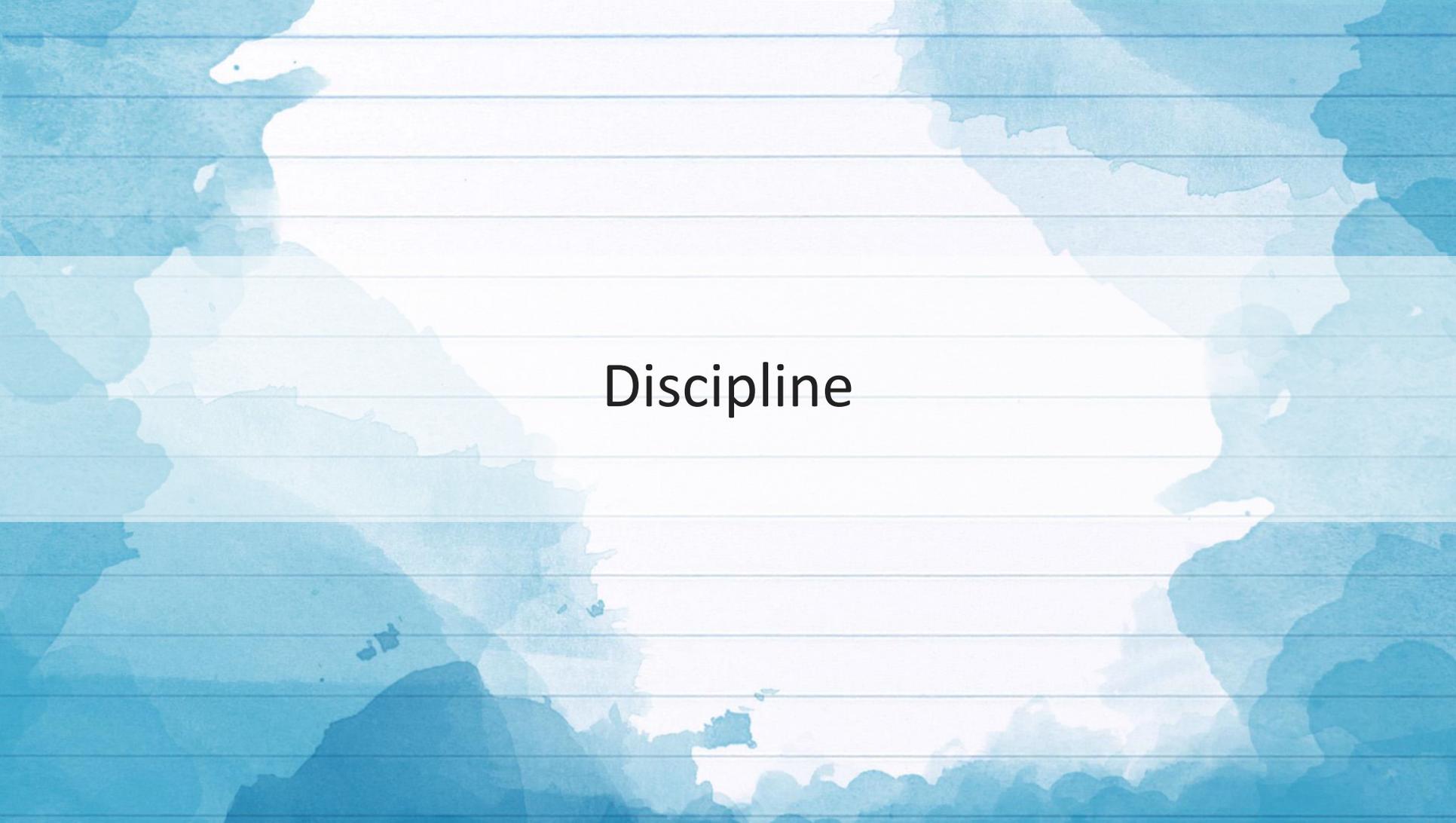
## **TOPS Aligned Diploma Pathways**

Beginning with the 2014-2015 incoming freshman class the Louisiana diploma requirements now align with TOPS scholarship Opportunities.

- **TOPS University Pathway:** ensures that students going to four-year colleges have taken a true college preparatory curriculum while in high school, and have every chance possible to receive TOPS. Prior to 2014-2015 students could attain a college preparatory diploma and not be eligible for TOPS due to missing the required courses.
- **Jump Start TOPS Tech Pathway:** ensures that students graduate with an industry-based credential, and are prepared to continue their post-secondary education with a TOPS Tech award. Prior to 2014-2015 students could attain a career diploma and not be eligible for a TOPS Tech scholarship due to missing required courses.

# Schools Increasing Access to Postsecondary Opportunities

Student Group	Raising Graduation Rates	Highest College Enrollment
Economically Disadvantaged	NorthSide High School (Lafayette) Lafayette High School (Lafayette) Carencro High School (Lafayette) Comeaux High School (Lafayette) Lacassine High School (Lafourche)	Baton Rouge Magnet High School (EBR) Benjamin Franklin High School (Orleans) Thomas Jefferson High School for Advanced Studies (Jefferson) Early College Academy (Lafayette) Louisiana School for Math Science & the Arts
Students with Disabilities	Zwolle High School (Sabine) Jennings High School (Jefferson Davis) Bogalusa High School (City of Bogalusa) Kentwood High School Magnet (Tangipahoa) Northwood High School (Caddo)	Edna Karr High School (Orleans) Northshore High School (St. Tammany) Captain Shreve High School (Caddo) Mandeville High School (St. Tammany) Benton High School (Bossier)
Students of Color	East Iberville High School (Iberville) Rayville High School (Richland) Northwood High School (Rapides) Centerville High School (St. Mary) Loreauville High School (Iberia)	Baton Rouge Magnet High School (EBR) Pine School School (Washington) West Ouachita High School (Ouachita) Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies (Jefferson) Ringgold High School (Bienville)
English Learners	L.W. Higgins High School (Jefferson) West Jefferson High School (Jefferson) Bonnabel Magnet Academy High School (Jefferson)	Helen Cox High School (Jefferson) Sci Academy (Charter) Bonnabel Magnet Academy High School (Jefferson) West Jefferson High School (Jefferson) L.W. Higgins High School (Jefferson)



Discipline

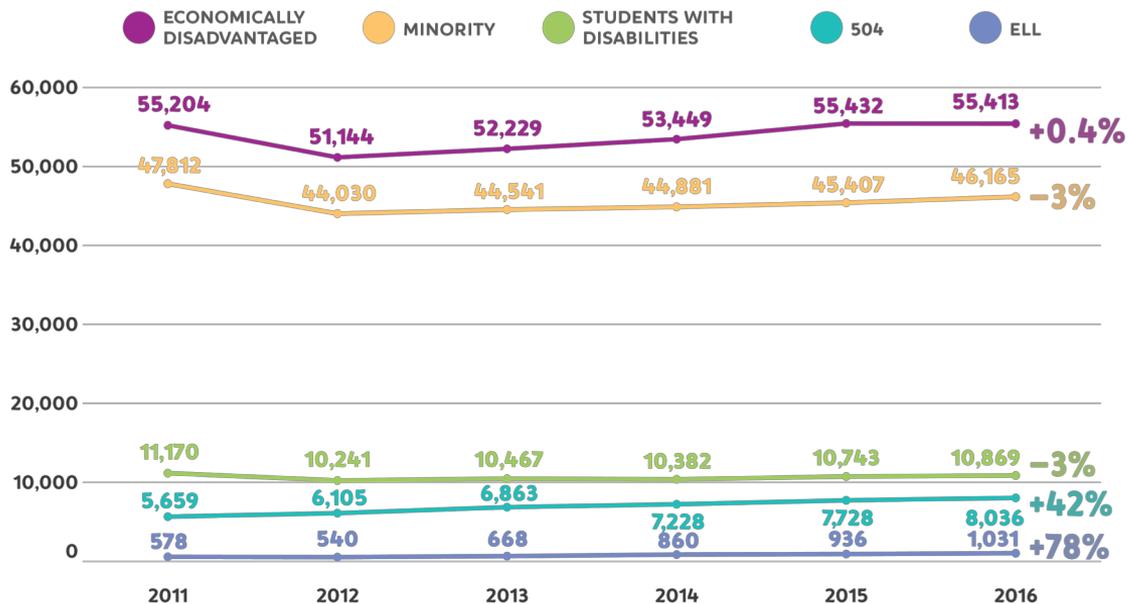
*Although there is a decrease of suspensions and expulsions statewide, there still exists a significant number of students impacted by exclusionary discipline practices.*

*Access to, and implementation of evidence-based behavioral interventions, still varies across school systems. One of the biggest challenges that must be addressed is the grave disproportionately that exist for racial and ethnic subgroups, as well as low-income students and students with disabilities.*

# Out-of-School Discipline

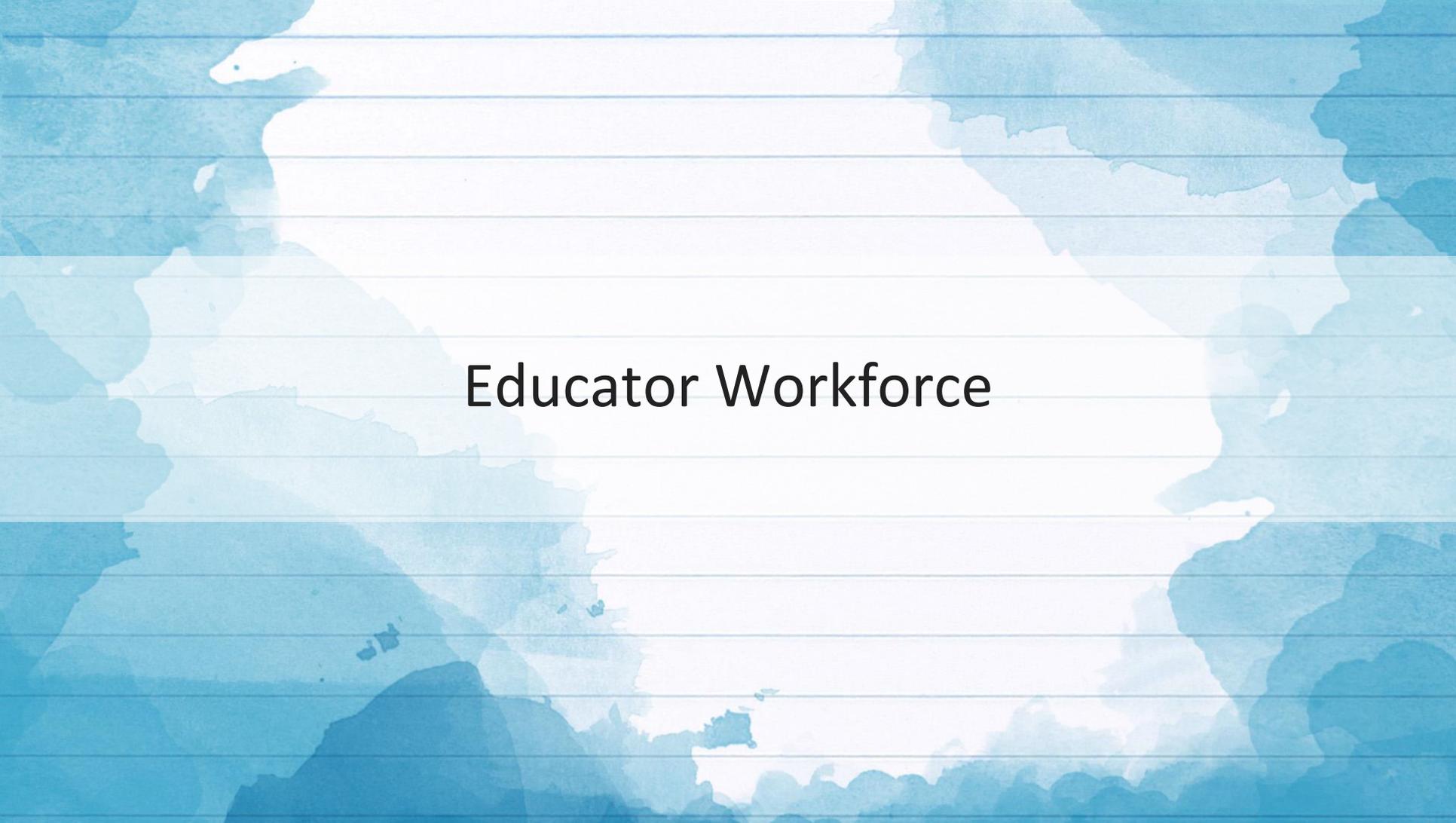
The rate of out-of-school suspensions has decreased 7 percent from 2011 to 2016. However, the discipline gap is not closing, and for students with disabilities and English learners, it continues to increase.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION



# Addressing Inequities in Out-of-School Discipline

- **[Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline](#)**: In 2016, an advisory council convened to provide guidance to BESE and the LDOE regarding best practices in providing support to school systems in the adoption and implementation of each school's master plan for improving student behavior and discipline.
- **[Louisiana School Finder](#)**: In 2017, the LDOE released a comprehensive online reporting system detailing how well Louisiana schools are preparing students, birth through 12, for the next grade level and beyond. School profiles include student discipline data, specifically out-of-school suspension rates and chronic absenteeism (students missing 15 or more days of school).
- **Behavior Intervention Redesign**: A behavior intervention study group convened in November 2017 and will provide statewide guidance in spring 2018 to address out-of-school suspensions and expulsions. The guidance will seek to provide evidence-based frameworks and resources for behavioral interventions and supports that address and seek to reduce influencing factors of disproportionately.
- **ESSA and Title I Funding**: Starting in 2017-2018, schools with excessive out-of-school suspensions rates that are more than double the national average for three consecutive years, will be labeled as *Urgent Intervention Required* in School Finder, and will be required to submit an improvement plan to the LDOE and can apply for funding to address these issues.



# Educator Workforce

# Workforce Equity

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*Louisiana is making important shifts to ensure that all schools have access to fully prepared teachers through the state's nationally recognized Believe and Prepare program.*

*Access to fully prepared teachers varies, however.*

*It is less likely that students in less affluent schools, particularly rural schools, have access to such teachers.*

- **Student access to effective teachers:** Thirty-seven percent of students are taught by teachers with Ineffective or Effective: Emerging transitional student growth results versus 31 percent of their less affluent peers attending Title I schools and 32 percent for students of color attending Title I schools. This means that low-income students and students of color are more likely to be taught by effective teachers.  
(Source, added January 2019 : [Educator Workforce Report](#))
- **Student access to appropriately certified teachers:** Thirty-five percent of students are taught by uncertified or out-of-field teachers, versus 41 percent of their less affluent peers attending Title I schools. This number jumps to 44 percent for students of color in Title I schools.  
(Source, added January 2019: [Educator Workforce Report](#))
- **Classes taught by uncertified or out-of-field teachers in rural communities:** In urban or suburban communities, 13 percent of classes are taught by uncertified or out-of-field teachers, while in less affluent rural communities, 21 percent of classes are taught by uncertified or out-of-field teachers  
([Access to Full Preparation for Teachers in Rural Communities](#))

# Increasing Workforce Equity

Annual [educator workforce reports](#) include data on the extent to which economically disadvantaged and students of color are taught by uncertified, out-of-field, inexperienced, or ineffective teachers in relation to their peers. This data enables school and school system leaders to identify and act on teacher workforce inequities.

Since the inception of [Believe and Prepare](#) in 2014, Louisiana's teacher preparation pilot program, 850 aspiring teachers have participated in a year-long teaching residency. Grant funds have incentivized teacher preparation providers to serve high-need schools.

- The year-long residency will be offered statewide beginning with the teacher preparation cohort entering in 2018-2019.
- Newly designed [teacher preparation competencies](#) emphasize the need for teachers to address the needs of all students, and to use culturally responsive teaching practices.
- A recent report, [Access to Full Preparation in Rural Communities](#), highlights the need to ensure equitable access to fully prepared teachers; a [request for applications](#) enables eligible school systems to apply for funding and support to increase access to fully prepared teachers in their school system.
- Through the state's newly established teacher preparation [quality rating system](#), teacher preparation providers will receive credit for partnering with high-need schools and placing teacher residents in those schools.

Louisiana's \$67 million federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) [grant](#) provides funding and support to 17 rural school systems, most with high rates of economically disadvantaged students, to strengthen the educator pipeline.

# Schools Reducing Workforce Equity Gaps

School Systems with Largest Reduction in Teacher Effectiveness Gaps <sup>1</sup>	School Systems with Lowest Percentage of Uncertified Teachers <sup>2</sup>
Plaquemines Parish	St. Tammany Parish
Franklin Parish	Zachary Community Schools
Red River Parish	Lincoln Parish
East Carroll Parish	St. Charles Parish
Evangeline Parish	Bossier Parish

*1 - Based on percent increase of overall effectiveness of highly effective rated teachers*

*2 - Based on percent of classes taught by out-of-field or uncertified teachers*

# Conclusion

Every student in Louisiana deserves access to an excellent education that prepares him or her for a successful transition to college or the workplace. Recent targeted initiatives and supports implemented by school systems have reduced disparities between historically disadvantaged students and their peers, but significant challenges remain for students with disabilities, students of color, economically disadvantaged students, and English learners.

Pursuant to its new, federally-approved education plan, Louisiana will prioritize the elimination of achievement gaps and the promise of an excellent education for all students by providing schools with intensive support, allocating funding to support evidence-based school improvement plans, and regularly reporting progress.