

Louisiana Believes

Educational Equity in Louisiana

December 1, 2019

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 groups 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.

Reviewing the Data

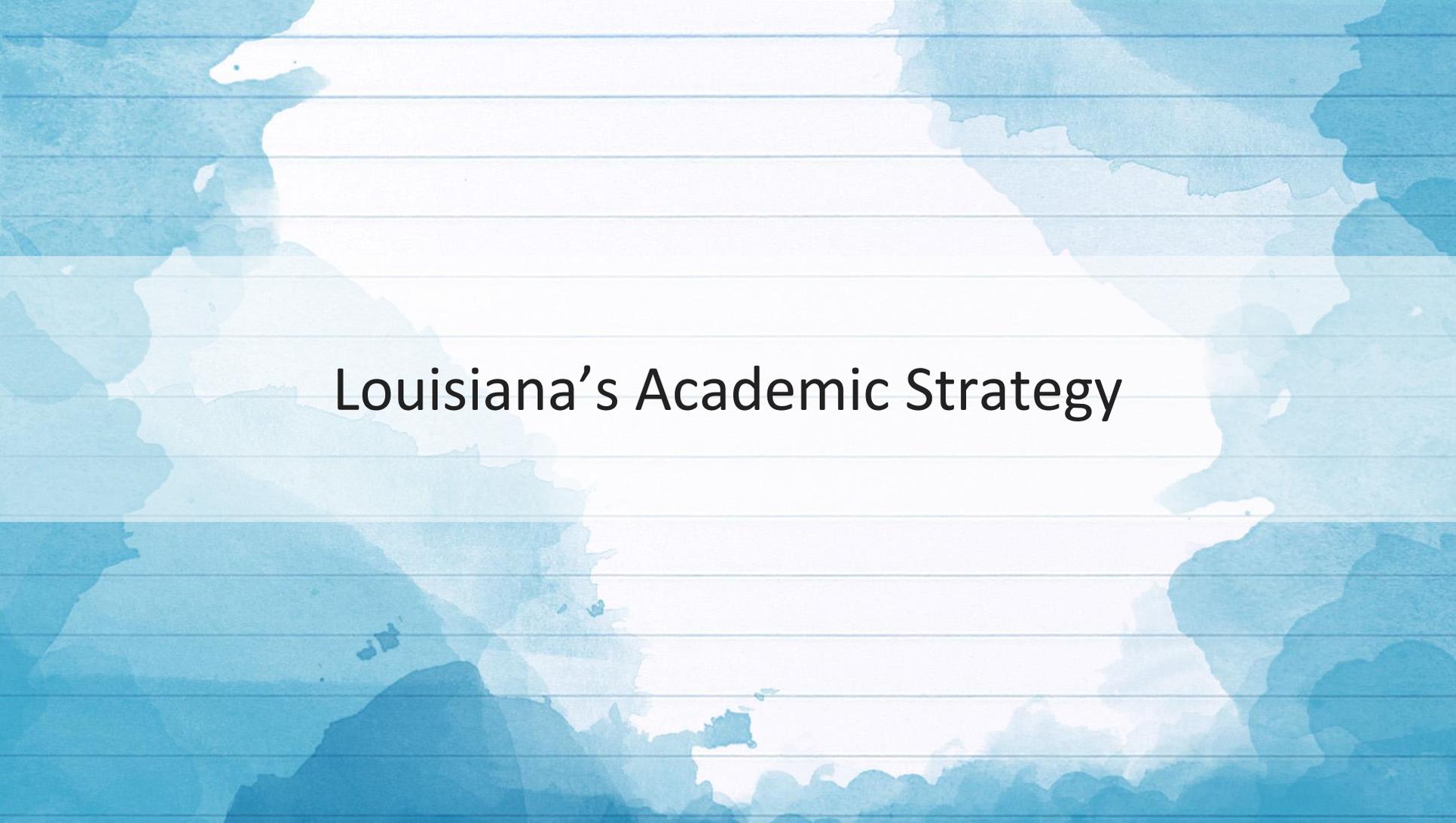
Included in this report are data required in the law and demonstrative of equity and excellence in public education in Louisiana, from early childhood through high school.

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

All available school system and school-level data are available in the [“Closing the Equity Gap”](#) library on the Louisiana Department of Education’s website.

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Louisiana's Academic Strategy

Louisiana students are *smart* and *capable*.



The percent of students scoring **Mastery and above** on LEAP ELA and Math tests has **increased 13%** since 2013.



Since 2012, the number of students scoring a **21 or higher** on the ACT has **increased by nearly 40%**.



More students graduated in **2017** than **ever before**.

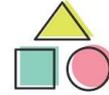


Since 2012, the number of students earning **AP credit for college** has **increased by 167%**.

Every day in Louisiana, educators are committed to ensuring that *every child and school* has the opportunity to grow and thrive.



As a result of this vision, Louisiana has a relentless focus on these four areas:



**Unified Early
Childhood Systems**



Academic Alignment



**Teacher and
Leader Preparation**

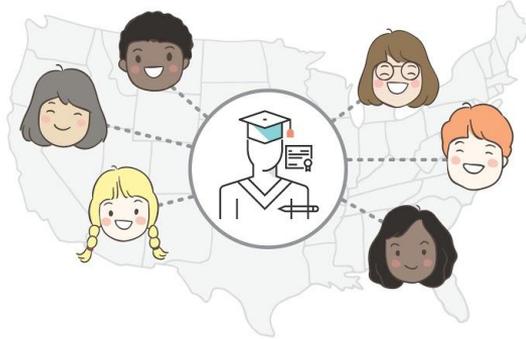


**Pathways to
College or a Career**

As a result of this process and focus,
Louisiana's birth through 12 system will:



ensure students are ready for the next level of study,



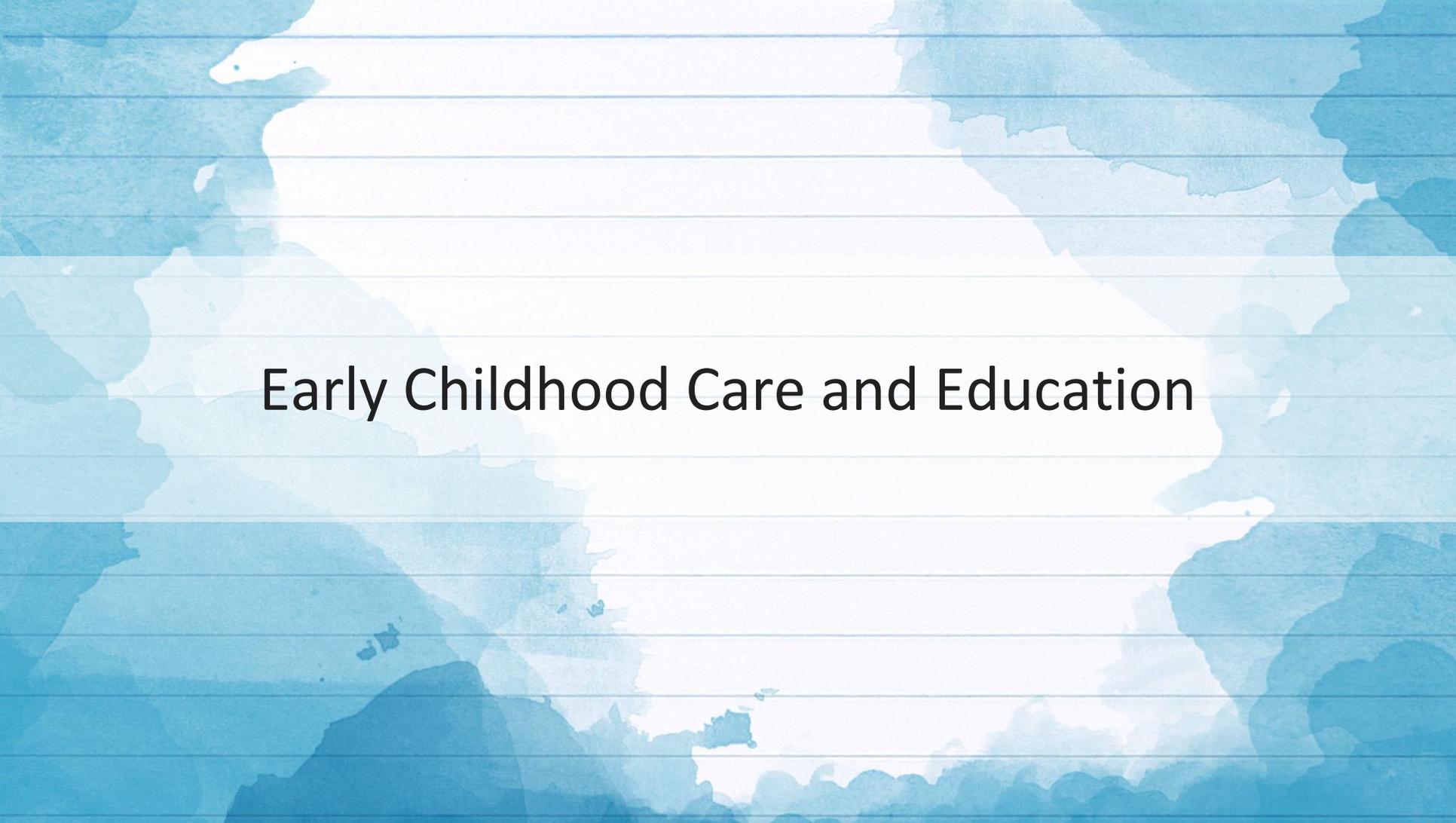
give all students access to the same opportunities as their peers across the country,



provide comprehensive support for struggling schools, and



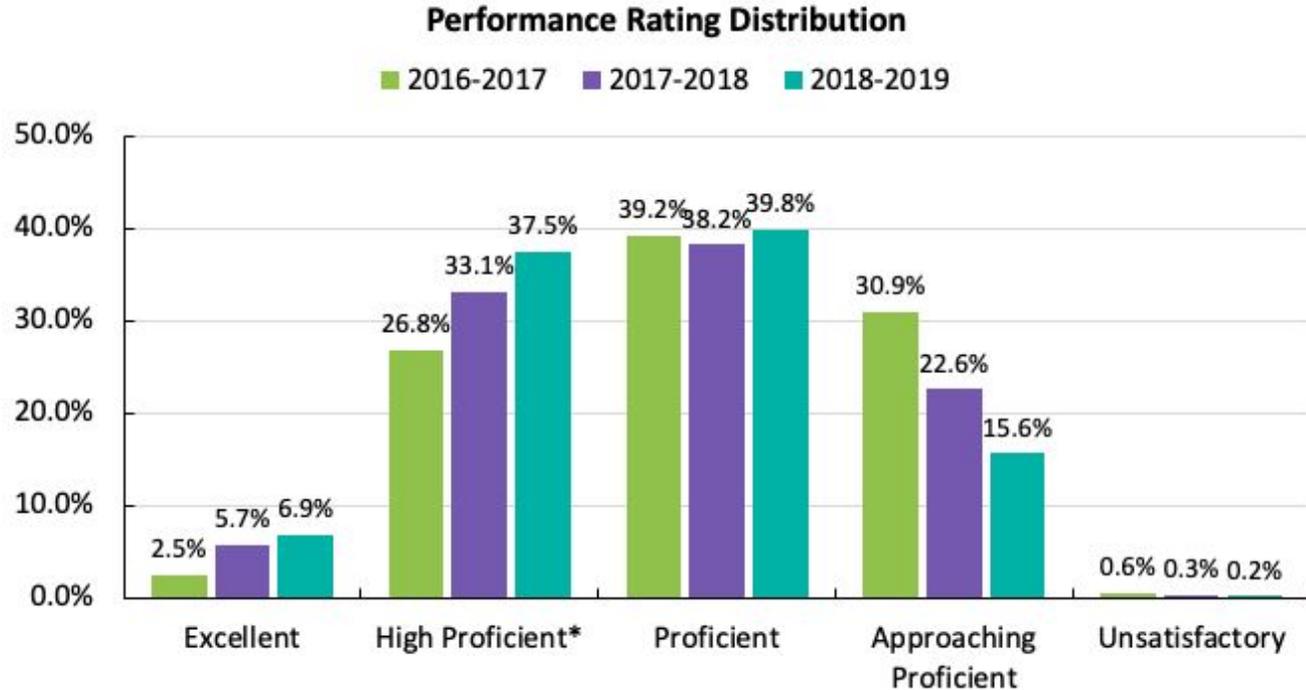
provide families and communities with an accurate picture of school, center, and system performance and quality.



Early Childhood Care and Education

Early Childhood Care and Education

Compared to last year, 126 more sites (7 percent) achieved Proficient or above in 2018-2019, indicating that more children across the state are receiving quality care and education than in years past.

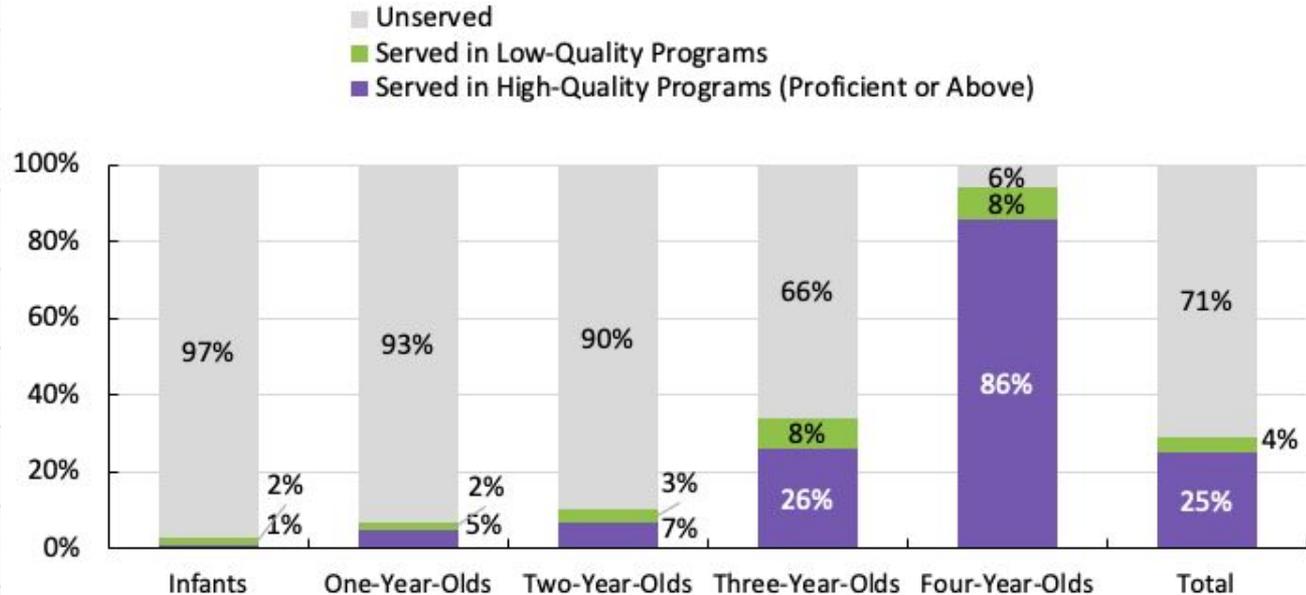


*The 'High Proficient' performance category is new in 2018-2019.

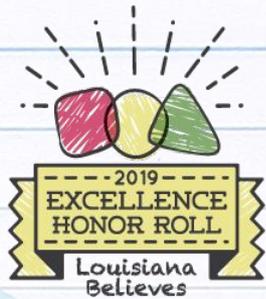
Early Childhood Care and Education

On average, approximately 4,000 children per month are on the waiting list to receive child care assistance. As a result, these children are not afforded the opportunity to attend a high-quality, early childhood program. Over two-thirds of these children are under the age of four.

Percent of Students in Early Childhood Programs



Early Childhood Performance Profile Honor Rolls



To highlight quality services, the Department announced [nearly 400 early childhood education programs that have earned a spot on the state's "Honor Roll"](#) as a result of high performance in the 2018-2019 school year. The Honor Roll recognizes early childhood programs, including child care centers, Head Start programs, and pre-kindergartens, in three award categories:

- **Excellence:** Sites achieving a rating of "Excellent," the highest possible rating
- **Birth to Three:** Sites providing high-quality instruction and care to the state's youngest learners
- **Top Gains:** Sites significantly improving their performance from one year to the next

The early childhood programs listed on the Honor Roll will receive a special badge on their performance profiles in the [Louisiana School and Center Finder](#) to signify the accomplishment, as well as a state certificate to display on-site.

Increasing Equity in Early Childhood

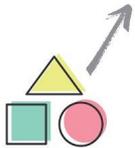
UNIFIED EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS

EXPANDED
ACCESS

PREPARED
TEACHERS

QUALITY
ENVIRONMENTS

INSTRUCTIONAL
TOOLS



EXPANDED ACCESS:

All children have the opportunity to access a high-quality early learning program.



PREPARED TEACHERS:

Every early learning classroom has a teacher who is equipped with the necessary knowledge to promote child development, and provided opportunities to improve his or her skills.



QUALITY ENVIRONMENTS:

Birth through five classrooms are safe, structured spaces where children can learn through exploration, interaction, and conversation.



INSTRUCTIONAL TOOLS:

Developmentally appropriate and standards-based instructional tools, including curriculum and assessments, are used daily in every early childhood classroom.

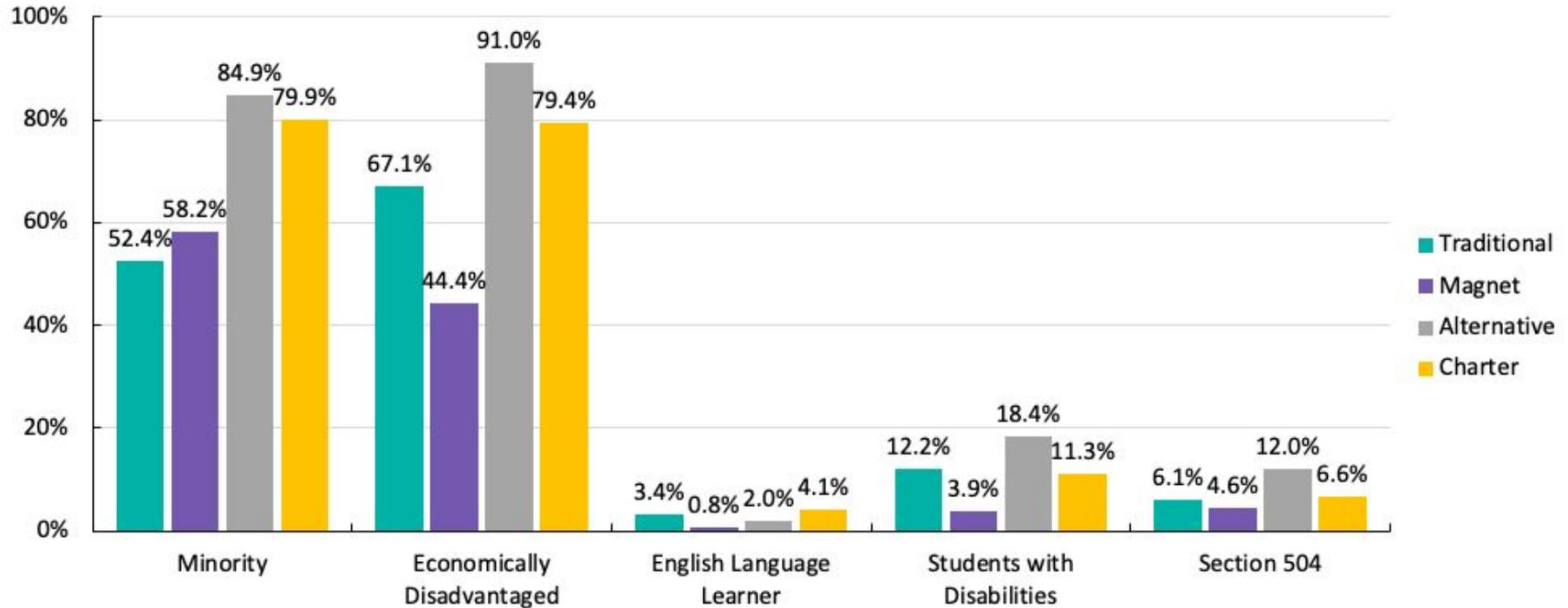
Increasing Equity in Early Childhood

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 to support child care centers access [Tier I \(top rated\)](#) toddler and pre-K curriculum. 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 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](#).
- **Early Childhood Site Improvement Planning:** Low-performing sites are assigned a regional field support consultant and assisted in creating an improvement plan based on individualized site needs and self-assessment results. These sites receive prioritized resources.

Academic Achievement in K-12

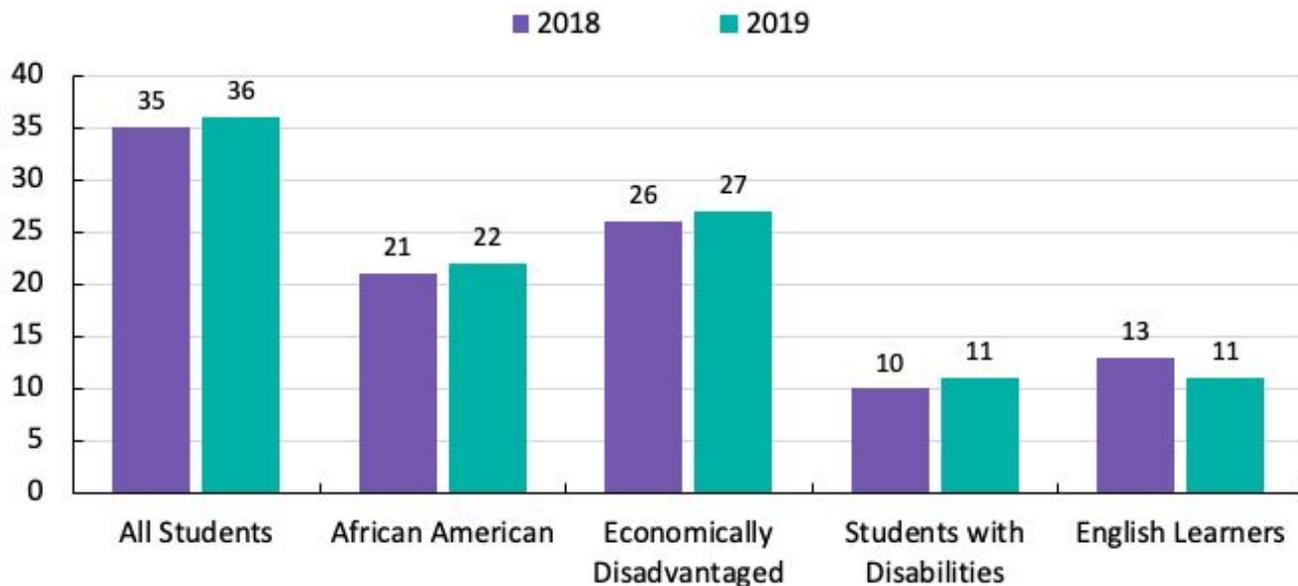
Student Enrollment by School Type



LEAP 2025 Grades 3-12

Though Louisiana has improved performance among most subgroups, the performance levels and rates of improvement for students with disabilities and English learners remain significantly below peers.

Percent Mastery and Above
Grades 3-12 ELA, Math, and Social Studies

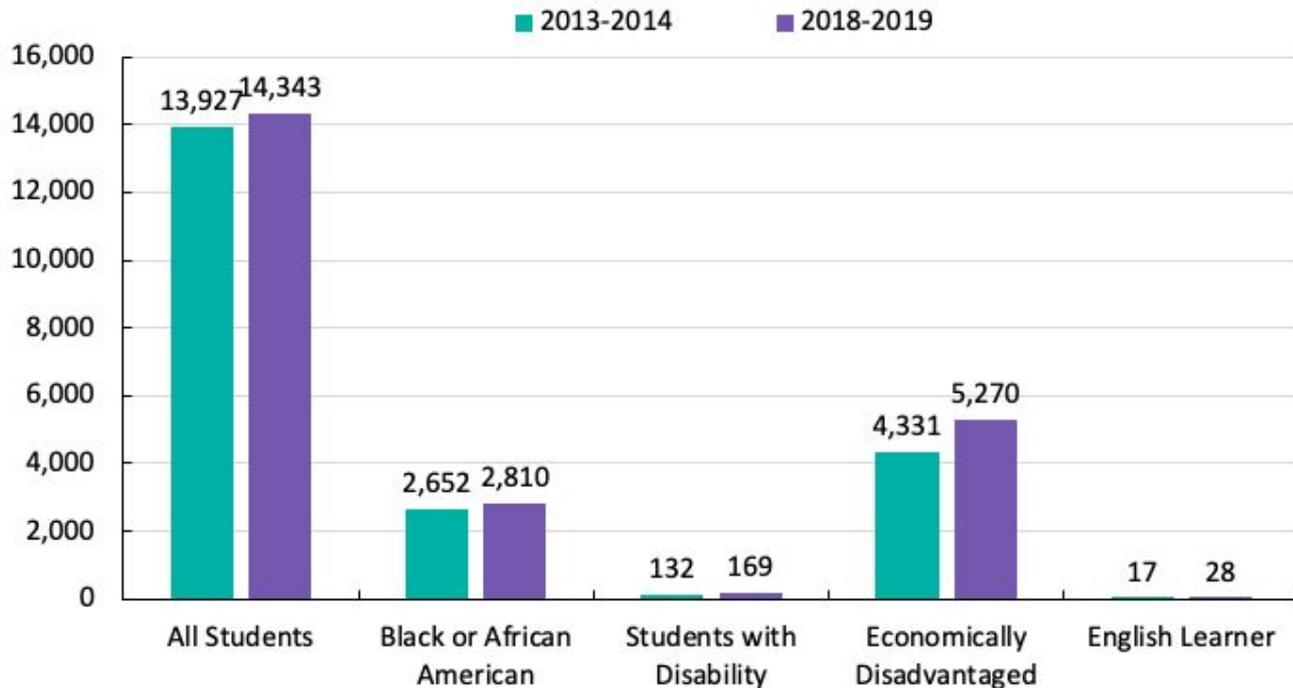


ACT

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.

Number of Students Scoring 21 and above on the ACT



2019 Equity Honoree Schools



With the release of the 2019 school performance scores:

197 schools were identified as “Equity Honorees” for demonstrating excellence in educating students with disabilities, English learners, and/or economically disadvantaged students.



452 schools were identified as “Top Gains Honorees” for demonstrating excellence in student progress from one school year to the next

[View 2019 Honorees](#)

SCHOOL SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

To address the continued need for school improvement statewide, the Louisiana Department of Education...



IDENTIFIES STRUGGLING SCHOOLS AND CENTERS:

Annual performance scores are issued to identify struggling schools and early childhood centers in need of improvement.

APPROVES AND FUNDS IMPROVEMENT PLANS:

School systems develop, submit, and receive approval for annual improvement plans that are

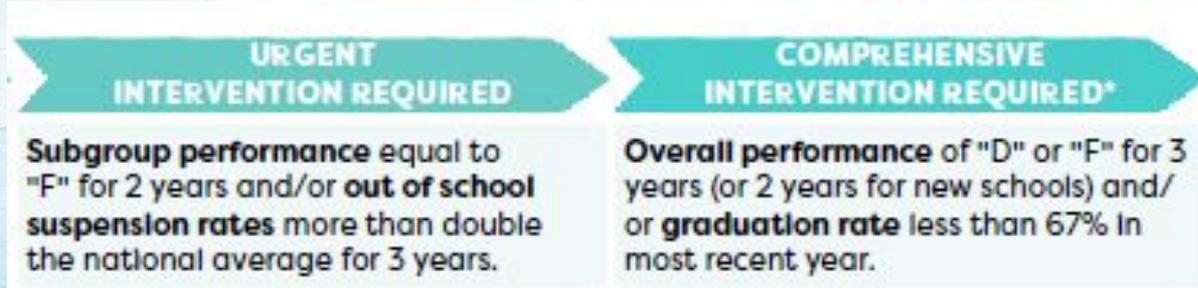
- **focused** on proven strategies across the Department's five priority areas,
- **driven** by the school system planning framework, and
- **executed** through a consolidated application system.

SUPPORTS PLAN IMPLEMENTATION:

School systems implement improvement plans with support from the Department, network teams, and education partners.

Identifying Struggling Schools

As part of Louisiana's ESSA plan, any school identified under one of the following intervention labels is required to submit a plan to the Department for improvement and an application for funding to support its implementation.



The labels (CIR/UIR) also appear on a school's report card in School Finder.

[Act 555](#) of the 2018 legislative session also requires any school with a state-approved improvement plan, to present it within 60 days of approval to families at a public meeting.

2019 Struggling Schools

*Based on the 2018-2019 results, **271 schools have been identified as in need of comprehensive intervention in 2019-2020 and will submit plans for whole-school improvement.***

An additional 300 schools struggled persistently with one or more groups of students and/or school discipline and are required to submit a plan for urgent intervention.

If a school has this label:	Then, the school strategy focuses on:	This year, # schools planning for label:
CIR	CIR	271
UIR-Academics, no CIR	UIR-Academics	267
UIR-Discipline, no other labels	UIR-Discipline	33

Plans for Improvement in Struggling Schools

To support school systems in improving schools labeled as struggling, the Department has improved its [school system planning process](#) to focus on:

- identifying specific criteria for approving local plans, including high-quality curriculum, assessments, and professional development;
- developing [resources](#) that will help school systems meet these criteria; and
- deploying field staff to help school systems design a plan that meets the needs of their system.

2019-2020 Department Support for Struggling Schools

Trainings	Ongoing Support	Tools
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Teacher Leader Summit Principal Track● School Support Institutes● Content & Intervention Content Leader Trainings● Mentor Teacher Trainings● Super App Launch Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● During the summer — Networks support district preparation for the 2019-2020 school year● During the school year — Networks observe classrooms and common planning time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Classroom Observation Tools (ELA K-2/3-12, math)● Common Planning Time Tool

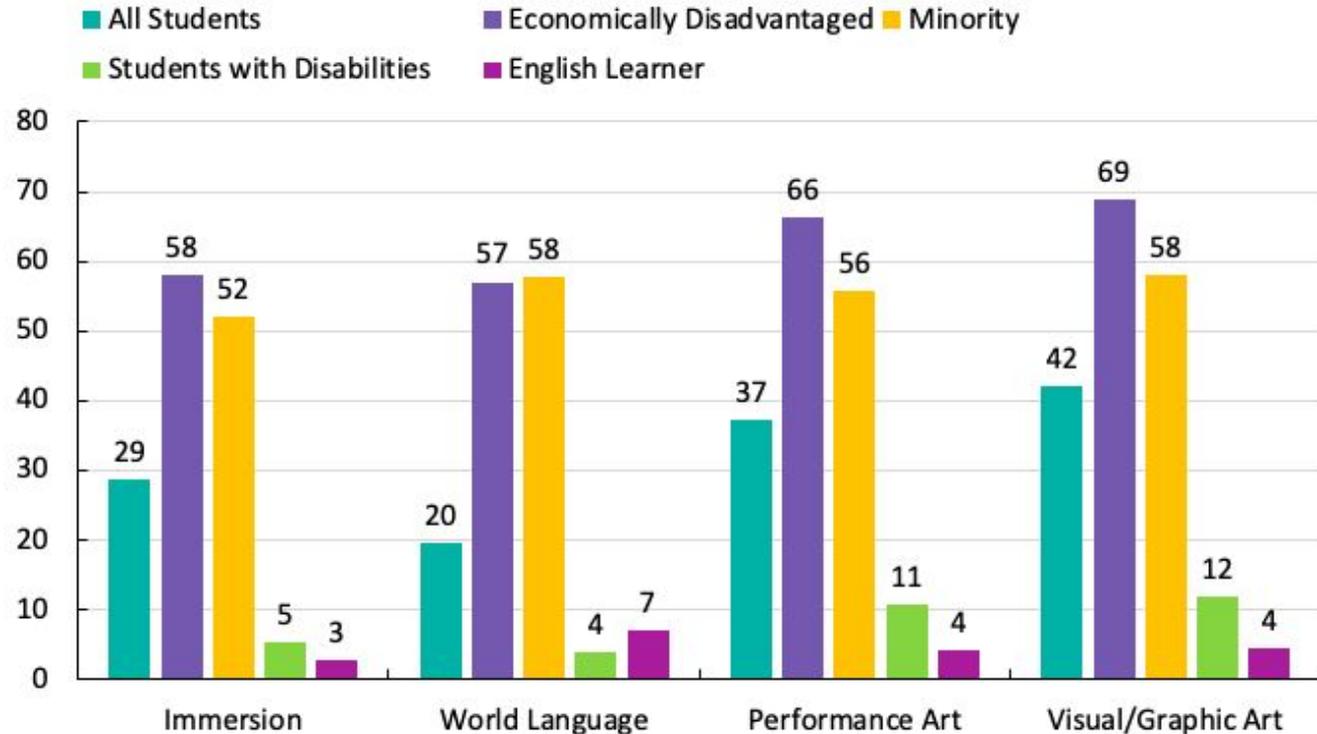


Increasing Course Access

Access to Enriching Instruction

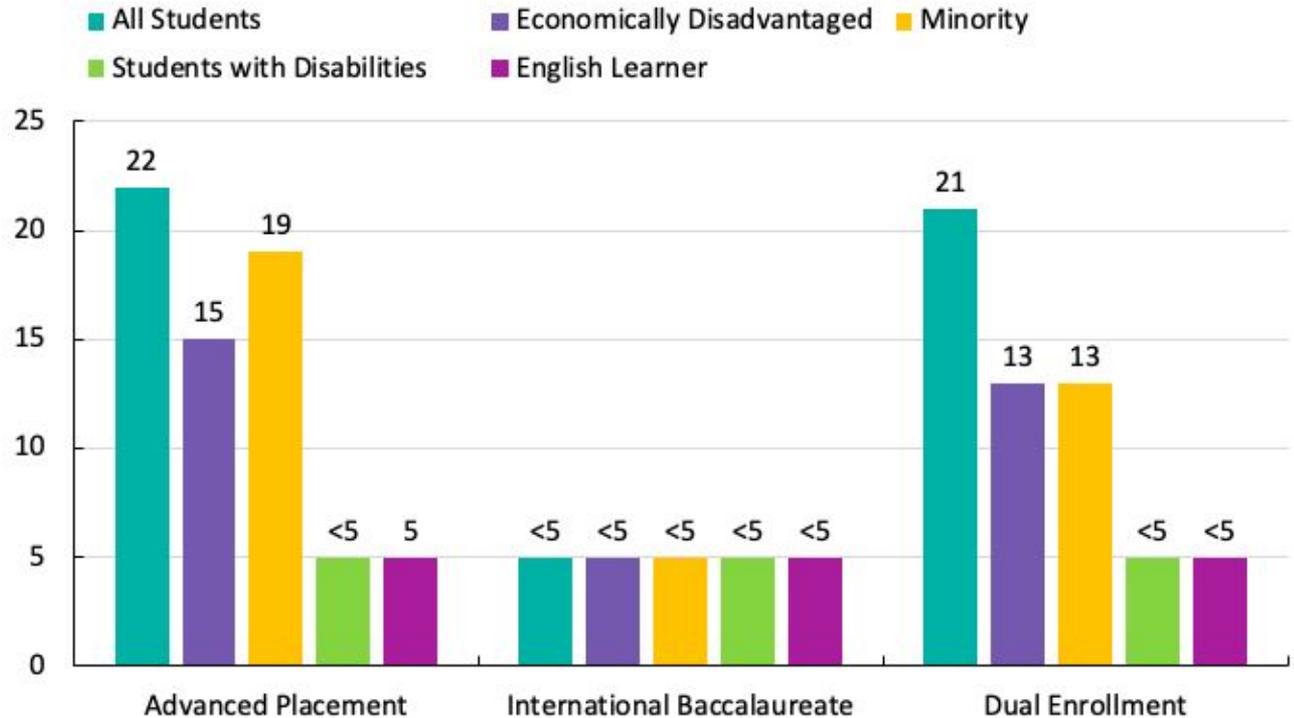
The percent of students in enriching courses such as immersion, world languages, and visual and performing arts that are historically disadvantaged has increased over the last four years.

Percent of Students Enrolled in Enriching Courses by Student Group



Access to Postsecondary Coursework

Percent of High School Cohort Graduating with Postsecondary Coursework



*Louisiana has **increased** the percentage of students completing post secondary coursework statewide, an increase that has been seen by all students.*

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 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, Jump Start Summers programs 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. Eg. Costs for AP Exam Fees, CLEP fees, or NCCER certifications.

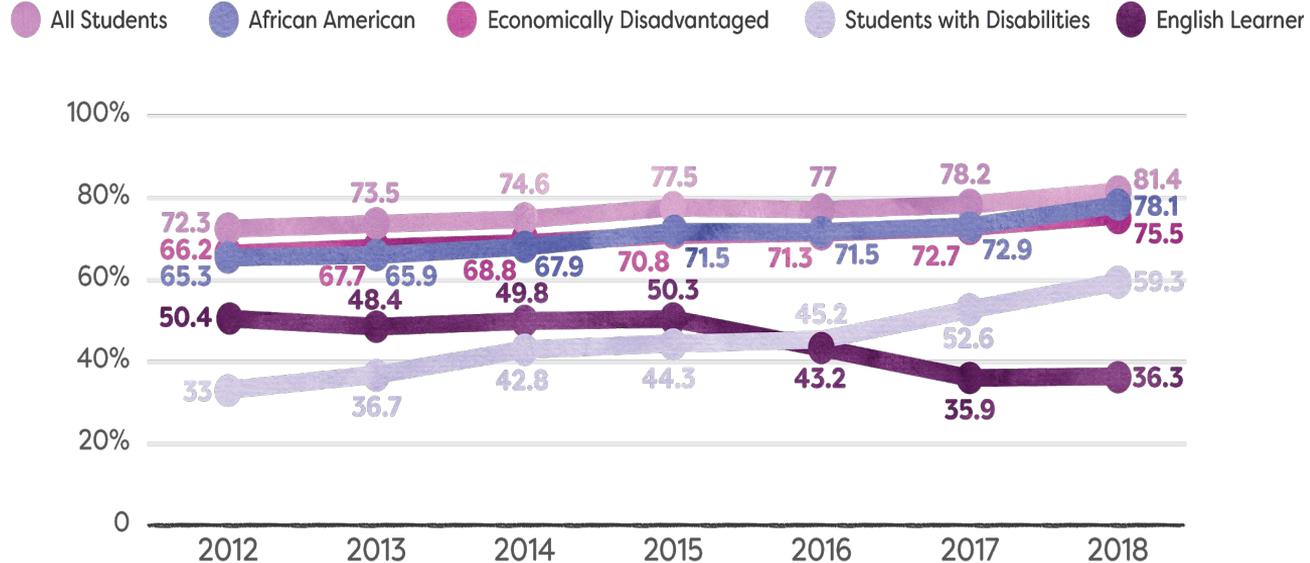


Access to Postsecondary Opportunities

High School Graduates

Graduation rates for historically disadvantaged students have been steadily increasing since 2013, with the exception of English learners.

COHORT GRADUATION RATES BY SUBGROUP, 2013-2018

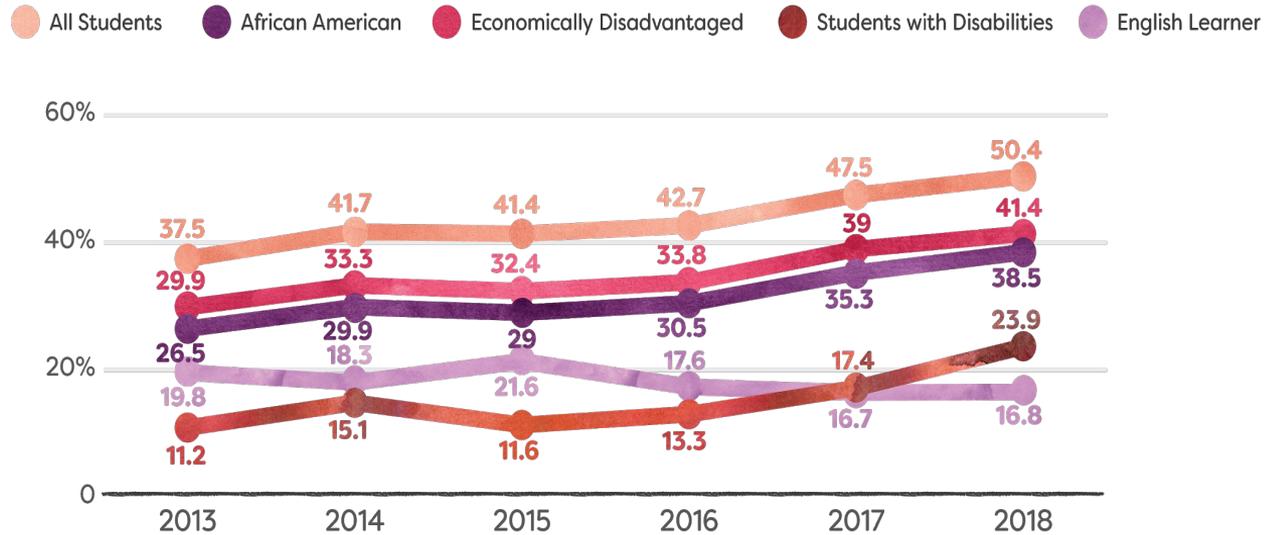


Credential Attainment

While more than half of the Class of 2018 earned a college or career credential during high school, this opportunity is not being experienced equally by all students.

Historically disadvantaged students are attaining college and career credentials at a lower rate than their peers.

PERCENT OF COHORT EARNING BASIC OR ADVANCED CREDENTIALS BY SUBGROUP, 2013-2018

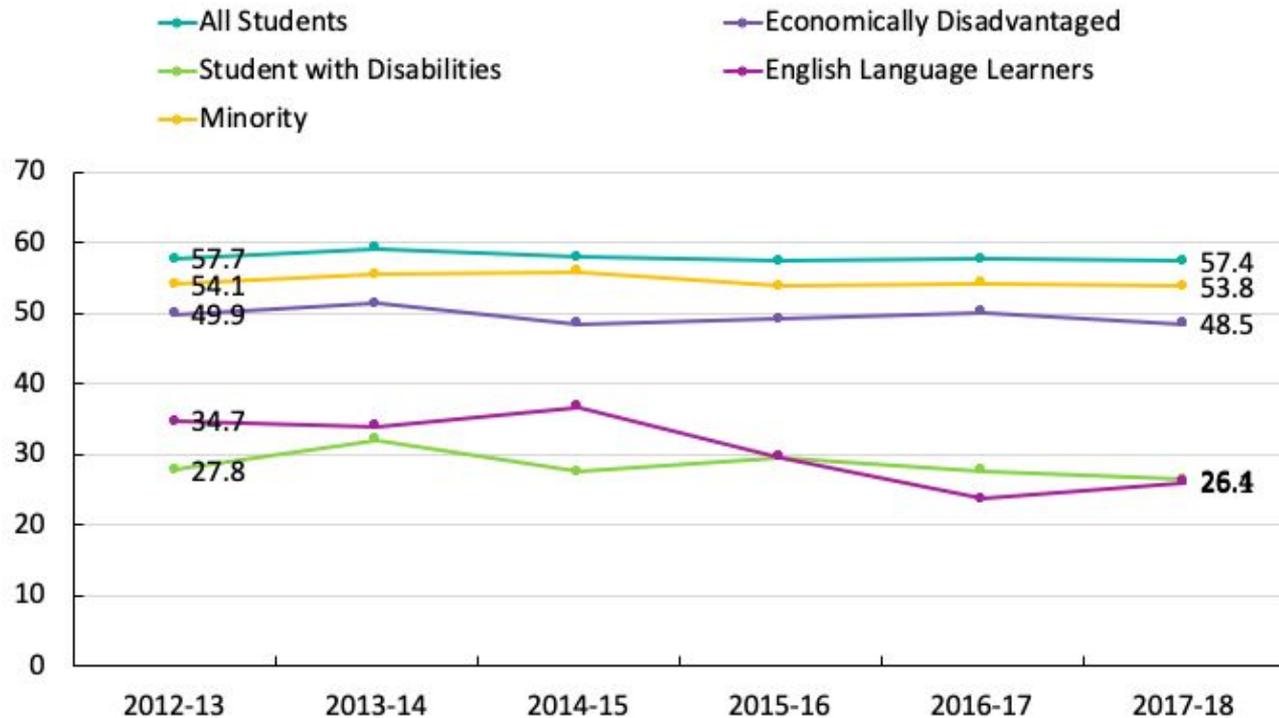


College Enrollment

Louisiana's college enrollment rates have remained steady even as graduation rates and the number of graduates have increased over the past five years.

English learners have experienced a decline in enrollment rates while the number of graduates have increased.

Percent of Graduates Enrolling in College



PATHWAYS TO COLLEGE OR A CAREER

The Department seeks to assist all students with developing an individualized graduation plan for a prosperous future, and the skills and resources to achieve that goal.

Regardless of their future path, Louisiana provides all students with:



the opportunity to experience on-the-job training and obtain credentials in Louisiana's top industries, and

access to college-preparatory coursework and credentials to prepare students for college.



Increasing Access to Postsecondary Opportunities

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

Financial Aid Planning

Starting with the Class of 2018, all graduates are provided the opportunity to complete a financial aid planning session, including Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion and submission.

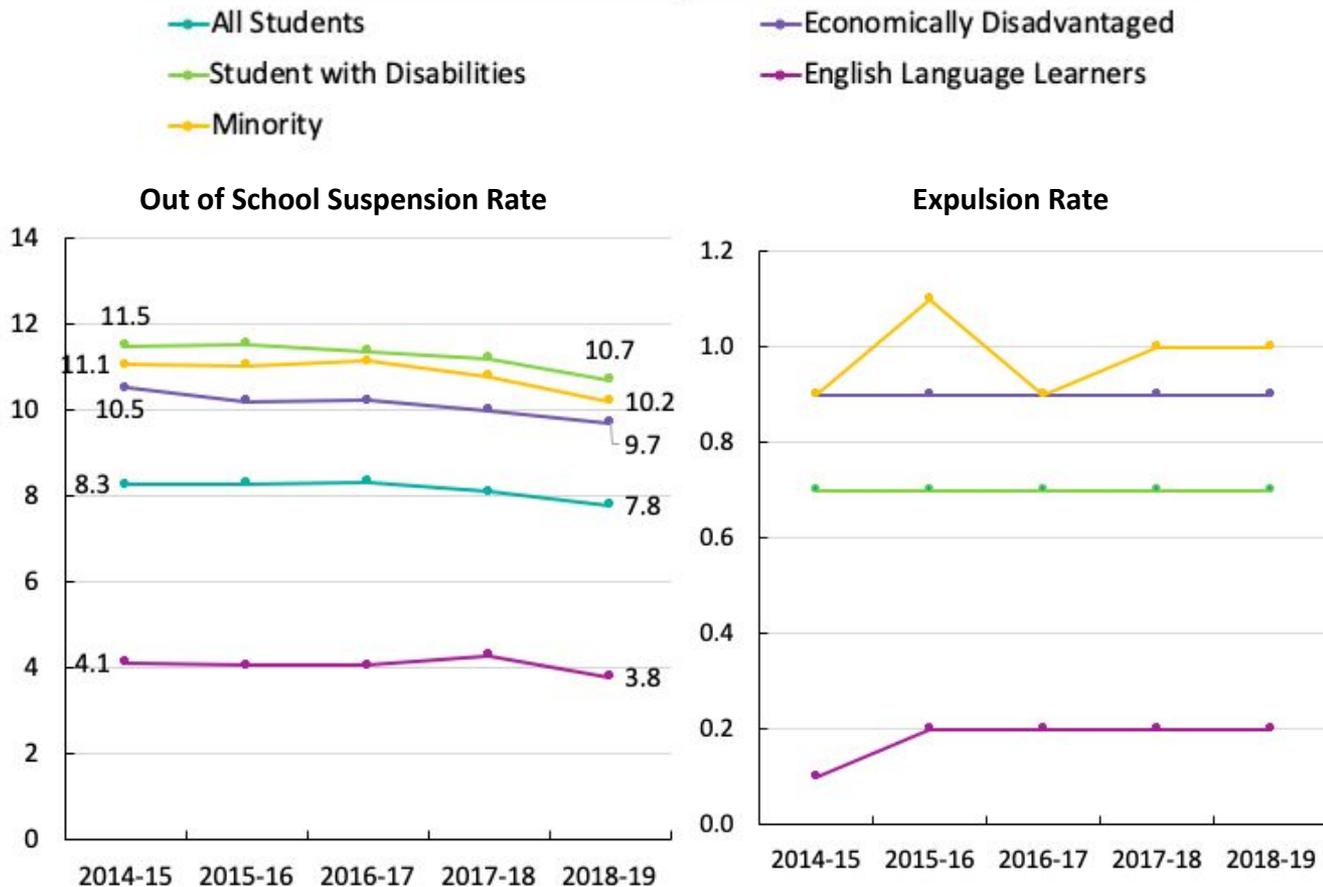
TOPS Aligned Diploma Pathways

Both the TOPS University and Jump Start TOPS tech Pathways ensure that students are prepared for postsecondary education and have the funds needed to pursue their interests.

Student Behavior and Discipline

Out-of-School Discipline

While the percentage of out-of-school suspensions has decreased statewide with historically disadvantaged students since 2015, there still exists a significant number of students impacted by exclusionary discipline practices, specifically with students with disabilities.

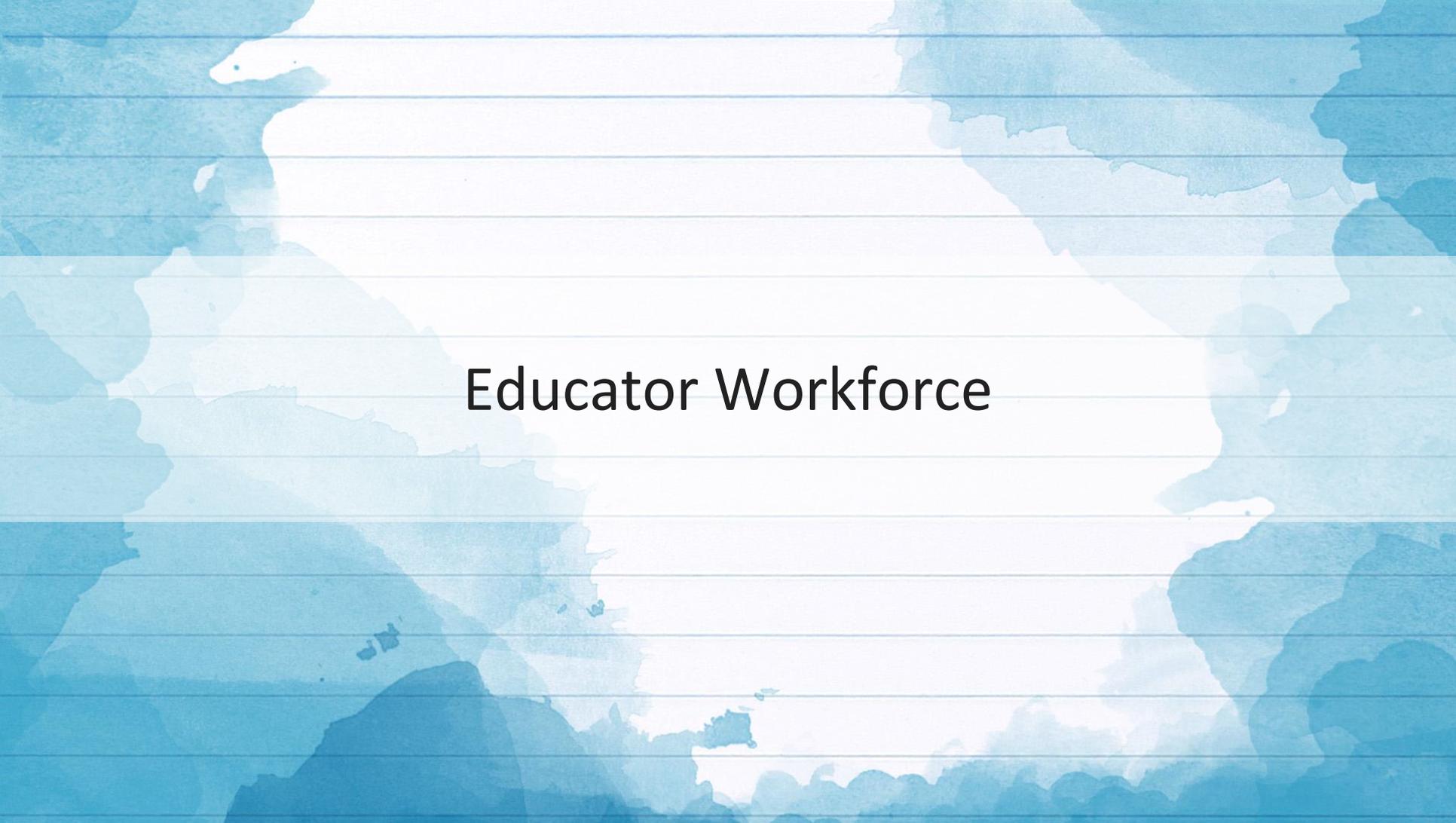


Addressing Inequities in Out-of-School Discipline

Behavior Intervention Redesign: As part of Louisiana's ESSA plan, schools have been identified as Urgent Intervention Required (UIR) for discipline if they have out-of-school suspension rates more than double the national average for three years. UIR schools are required to submit a plan to the Department for improvement and an application for funding to support its implementation. The UIR discipline plan will include identification of a high quality partner to assist in implementation of a multi-tier system of support to respond to student behavior.

Expanded Resources: The Department has released several resources and strategies to support UIR schools in development of a plan to address discipline in 2019. This includes:

- A [Behavioral Intervention Vendor Guide](#) to support school systems identifying high quality partners to support development and implementation of ESSA redesign plans
- A portfolio of [evidence based behavioral interventions](#) to assist school systems in providing targeted multi-tier system of supports to students in need of behavioral remediation
- A portfolio of evidence based [social-emotional learning curriculum](#) to support school climate and culture
- The Department will host a Behavioral Intervention Summit on January 30, 2019. This summit will provide professional development on evidence based behavioral interventions, implementation of a Multi-Tier system of support, new behavioral intervention resources from the Department and alternative education redesign.

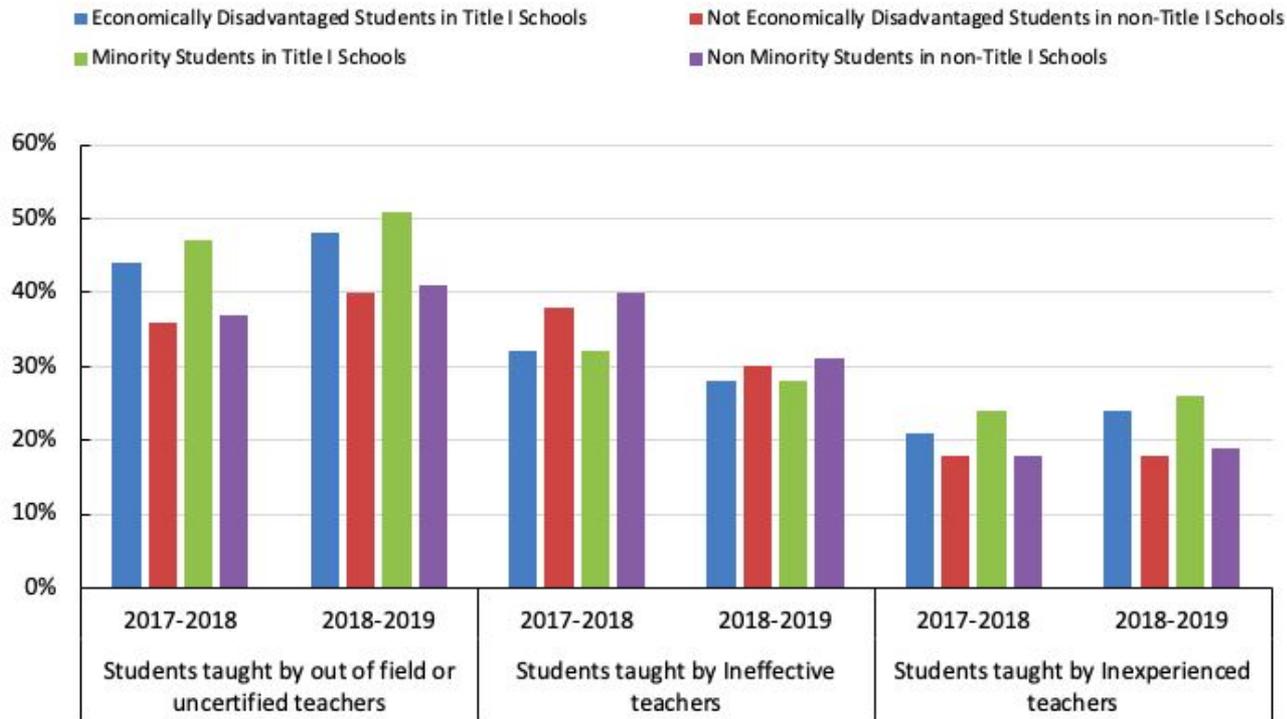


Educator Workforce

Workforce Equity

Louisiana is making important shifts to ensure that all students have access to excellent educators.

However, students in Title 1 schools are less likely to be taught by teachers who are experienced and appropriately certified as compared to their peers attending more affluent schools.



TEACHER AND LEADER PREPARATION



FULL PREPARATION FOR TEACHERS:
Ensure meaningful preparation for prospective teachers through strategic partnership between school systems and educator preparation providers.



CONTINUUM OF LEADERSHIP ROLES:
Establish and expand leadership roles to ensure that teachers are supported.

LOUISIANA 2017-2018 EDUCATOR WORKFORCE REPORT

State Profile: 1,626 Schools • 48,196 Teachers • 25% Minority • 722,646 Students • 6% EDS • 12% SWD • 55% Minority

EDUCATOR WORKFORCE OVERVIEW
These data provide information relative to teacher certification status and effectiveness by school, subject area, and by student demographics.

School Letter Grade	TEACHER CERTIFICATION BY SCHOOL LETTER GRADE			
	Out-of-field*	Teacher Certification Status	Uncertified	
All Schools	6,297	14%	2,529	6%
A	1,575	15%	411	4%
B	1,931	16%	524	4%
C	1,528	16%	738	8%
D	778	14%	606	11%
E	279	20%	190	13%
F				9%



INFORMED WORKFORCE DECISIONS:
Publish **educator workforce data** to inform school and school system leaders' workforce decisions.

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; the Department is supporting school systems through a statewide planning process and targeted funding to act on teacher workforce inequities.

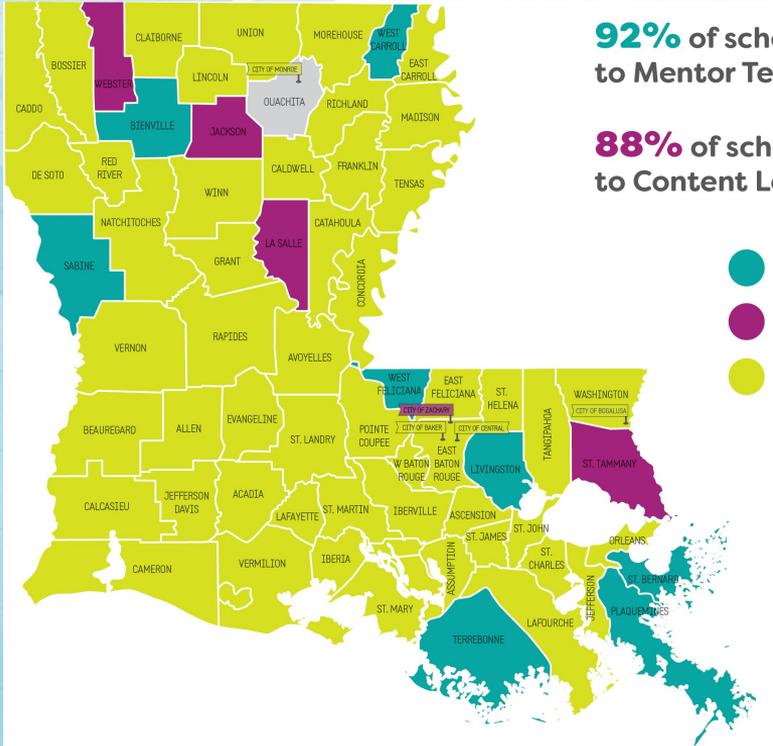
In October 2016, the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), with support from the Louisiana Board of Regents (BoR), adopted landmark regulations to [expand yearlong residencies and competency-based curricula statewide](#).

- [Teacher preparation competencies](#) emphasize the need for teachers to address the needs of all students, and to use culturally responsive teaching practices.
- Through the state's teacher preparation [quality rating system](#), teacher preparation providers will receive credit for partnering with high-need schools and placing teacher residents in those schools.

To assist school systems with building a continuum of leadership roles, the Department is offering statewide [mentor teacher](#) and [content leader](#) trainings.

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.

Content Leader and Mentor Teacher Statewide Participation



92% of school systems have sent at least one teacher to Mentor Teacher training (Cohort 1 and/or 2).

88% of school systems have sent at least one teacher to Content Leader (Math/ELA) training (Cohort 1 and/or 2).

- Mentor Teacher Training
- Content Leader Training
- Mentor Teacher & Content Leader Training

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020 (projected minimum)	Total (minimum)
Mentor Teacher	322	521	1,000	1,843
Content Leader	119	570	511	1,000

Workforce Talent Strategies to Support CIR and UIR Schools

A growing body of research suggests that in order for students to achieve grade level standards:

1. All students should access on-grade-level instruction every day through a high-quality curriculum in the least restrictive environment.
2. Intervention should supplement instruction and accelerate student progress by preparing students for new learning.
3. All teachers who support struggling learners, including but not limited to general education, special education, English learners, and intervention teachers, should be trained on the curriculum and should plan in a coordinated way to ensure all students are prepared for Tier 1 content during core instruction.

At CIR schools:

- At least one Mentor Teacher to support new and resident teachers
- One ELA and one math Content Leader who will receive training on how to support their peers with strong implementation of the curriculum

At UIR schools (for academic struggles only):

- An administrator and a teacher to participate in the Intervention Content Leaders program that will focus on supporting schools to build a strong intervention model that engages all teachers within the school building

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 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.