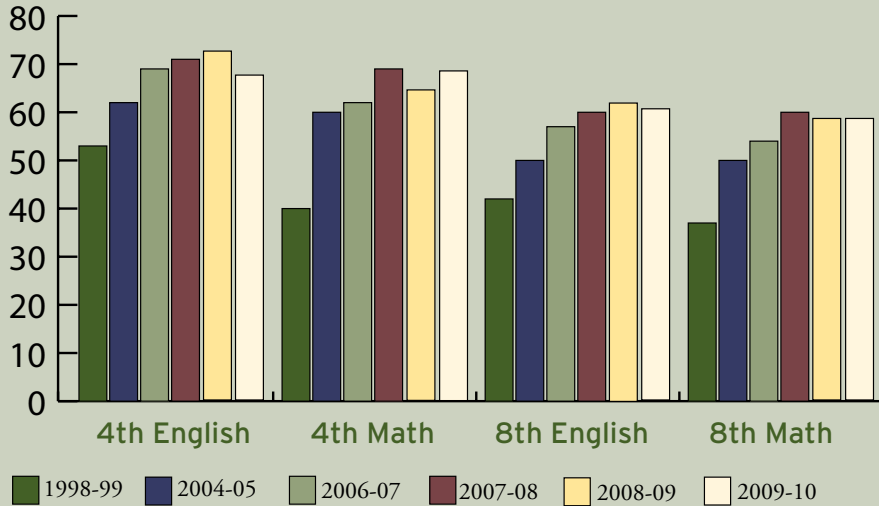


## K-12 Academic Tests Scores

% All Students At or Above "Basic" on LEAP test\*



\*LEAP test scale: Advanced, Mastery, Basic, Approaching Basic and Unsatisfactory.

## 2010 Quality Counts

	Louisiana	National Average
Chance for Success	C-	C+
K-12 Achievement	D-	D+
Standards, Assessments, and Accountability	A	B
Transitions and Alignment	C	C
The Teaching Profession	B	C
School Finance	D+	C
<b>Overall Grade</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>

—Education Week

## NAEP: % Total Students At or Above "Basic" Level

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is a national education assessment program in which Louisiana voluntarily participates. NAEP tests 4th and 8th graders on reading, mathematics, science, and writing on a rotating basis.

	1992	2003	2005	2007	2009	
4th Grade Reading	LA	46%	49%	53%	51%	
	US	62%	63%	64%	67%	67%
4th Grade Math	LA	39%	67%	74%	73%	72%
	US	59%	77%	80%	82%	82%
8th Grade Reading	LA	63%	64%	64%	64%	64%
	US	69%	74%	73%	74%	75%
8th Grade Math	LA	37%	57%	59%	64%	62%
	US	58%	68%	69%	71%	73%

## Highlights

### 1 LEAP Results Continue to Fluctuate.

The percentage of all 4th graders in Spring 2010 who scored at "Basic level or above" on Reading/language *LEAP* tests decreased 4 points from 2009, back to about a 2006-07 level. The number went down 1% for all 8th graders. Meanwhile, the number of 4th graders who scored at "Basic or above" in math increased 4% in Spring 2010 over the previous year, after a decline last year. Eighth graders scoring at "Basic or above" on *LEAP* math scores stayed the same as last year. The upward trend of students who scored at the "Basic level or above" in the past seems to have reached a plateau in the last 3 years, with small ups and downs. "Basic" is a modest goal, a minimum grasp of grade skills, not a *mastery*. And yet, we still have 3 to 4 out of 10 kids in public schools scoring below "Basic." It is important to know the annual outcome for **all** *LEAP* test takers at "Basic or above" and not just "first-time test takers" as is often reported. "First-time test takers" do not include students who have been retained and taken the *LEAP* more than once, our lowest achievers. Citizens and policymakers should have an accurate accounting on just how many of **all** our 4th and 8th graders are being educated on grade level each year.

### 2 Gaps Remain on National Measures.

On the recent national skills test, NAEP, Louisiana ranks 50th among states in the number of 4th graders who read at the proficient level. And, there has only been a dismal 5% gain in the past 17 years for 4th graders reading at the "Basic" or above level. Just as disconcerting, the number of 8th graders reading at the "Basic" or above level has only increased by 1% in the past 11 years. Both 4th and 8th graders in Louisiana, however, now score significantly better in math than in 1992. Meanwhile, the widely reported "Quality Counts" by *Education Week* recently gave the state a composite grade of "C" for K-12 public education. But, once again, *high marks* given for state policy, assessment and accountability were **offset** by *low marks* for actual K-12 academic achievement. As in the past decade, *state-level* policies garner accolades by national independent reviewers while academic results are relatively poor. This suggests continued ineffective implementation by some local districts.

# Accountability

## School Performance Scores: All Schools

SPS Index is from 0-200; Index is based on LEAP & iLEAP tests, attendance, dropout rates and diplomas.

Label	Index Score	Averaged 99/00+00/01	Annual 2005/06*	Annual 2006/07	Annual 2007/08	Annual 2008/09
★★★★★	>140	4 schools	4 schools	4 schools	10 schools	13 schools (1%)
★★★★	120-139	15	24	21	30	36 (2.8%)
★★★	100-119	203	228	245	261	312 (24.5%)
★★	80-99	455	451	447	505	501 (39.4%)
★	60-79	665	338	331	367	356 (28.0%)
Academically Unacceptable	< 60	39	82	68	90	55 (4.3%)

\*226 schools were not included in the 05-06 SPS totals because of 2005 hurricanes.



## 3 Majority of Schools Did Not Reach Louisiana's 10-Year Performance Goal.

A disturbing 72%, or 912, of our public schools did not reach Louisiana's **Ten-Year Performance Goal** that was set for the 2008-09 school year (scores released last fall). This goal was set at a *School Performance Score* [SPS] of 100 (out of 200) or "3-stars." The 100 SPS means that students at the school are at the "Basic" grade skill level on average – not mastery of the skills, but *basic* grade skills. Most people would agree that is a modest and desirable goal. Still, 411 public schools are performing at the lowest "1-star" or "Academically Unacceptable" failing levels, while another 501 schools are at the "2-star" level. These schools enroll scores of thousands of students. BESE has since set a new SPS goal of 120 for 2014, but tremendous change would have to occur at the local level for all schools to reach this even higher goal. In addition, the state sets *Growth Targets* each year for schools to reach toward the state performance goal. Last year, only 4 out of 10 schools actually met their goal.

It is important to note that in the past twelve years, the state has implemented comprehensive improvement and accountability policies and higher learning standards – ranked among the best in the nation – while providing significant funding increases and technical help for local districts. Given this, it is reasonable for parents, policymakers and taxpayers to expect public schools to educate students at least at the minimum "Basic" level.

## District Performance Scores 2008-09

	Percentage of Total Districts
4 Stars, 5 Stars	0
3 Stars	24 %
2 Stars	59 %
1 Star	16 %
Unacceptable	1 %
<b>State Average</b>	<b>2 Stars</b>

**Overall State School Performance Score 2008-09:** 91.0

### Growth Targets 2008-2009

	Percentage of Total Schools
Achieved Growth Target	43 %
Didn't Achieve Growth Target	57 %

Local district decisions on hiring, instruction, leadership, innovation, budgets, etc. drive school improvement or lack thereof. Obviously, some districts are not making the necessary changes to improve learning for children in hundreds of chronically low performing schools. It's no surprise then that 76% of **districts** fall far short of a good (3-5 stars) *District Performance Score*.

Given the state's chronic issues with poverty, it is easy for some to make it an excuse. But there are many examples of high-poverty schools in Louisiana that are doing a good job. Citizens and policymakers should focus on the effectiveness of school boards and superintendents as to why their failing schools have not replicated the strategies and results of these higher performers. Meanwhile, Louisiana's bid for the federal Race-to-The-Top grant seeks to drive improvement in low performing schools where districts that have agreed to participate.



# 4 Dropouts Decrease. Big Challenges Remain.

Overall performance for high schools continues to be generally low with a majority still falling below state goals in the School Accountability System. However, the number of dropouts from grades 7-12 did decline in 08-09. Reasons for the decrease have been suggested, but some of the decrease may be attributable to the general loss of population in the state since 2005. More than likely the decrease is attributable to the fact that Louisiana has put into place an early warning system for dropouts and added 9th grade academies, credit recovery courses and more workforce oriented programs (i.e., JAG).

The sad fact, however, is that in the last three years on record over 46,400 kids in grades 7-12 dropped out of school in our state. This is the #1 education factor tied to Louisiana's on-going high poverty rates, crime statistics and workforce problems.

Recent 10th Grade Graduate Exit Exam passing rates (Spring 2010) went up slightly from last year in English, 88 to 89% and down slightly in math, from 89 to 87%. BESE plans to discontinue GEEs in favor of End-of-Course Tests in four key subjects. These new tests can provide meaningful assessments of students on basic high school skills, show where classroom instruction needs to be improved and set standards for graduation. The first EOC Tests have been given in English II and Algebra I, with one-third of students failing to pass Algebra I.

Public high schools continue to lag behind the nation in the number of college-bound kids who take and do well on AP exams. It is important to note that unlike most other states, Louisiana has a high number of private schools, educating 16-20% of our total student population. When private school students are taken into account, many more college-bound young people in the state actually take and score well on AP exams.

## High School Indicators

	00/01	06/07	07/08	08/09
<b>Annual School Dropouts Grades 7-12</b>	19,813	15,914	15,750	14,616
<b>ACT Composite Score public &amp; nonpublic (U.S. Average 21.1, out of 36)</b>	19.6	20.1	20.3	20.1
<b>% Passing Rate Grade 10 Graduate Exit Exam*</b>				
English Language Arts	79%	83%	82%	88%
Math	66%	81%	82%	89%

**Public High School Students who took one AP Exam** (class of 2009) 9.5% (nation = 26.5%)

**Public High School Students Scoring 3 or higher on one AP Exam** (class of 2009) 4.1% (nation = 15.9%)

**Percent High School Students Passing End-of-Course Tests\*\*** (2008-09)

English II	77%
Algebra I	67%

\* GEE passing level is set at the "Approaching Basic" skills level.

\*\* End-of-Course Tests scale: Excellent, Good, Fair, Needs Improvement. Passing level is set at the "Fair" achievement level.

## The Workforce Gap

**How Louisiana's Class of 2004 (not just graduates) Choose to Prepare for the Workforce**

VS

**U.S. Jobs Profile Forecast for 2014**

- 35% entered 4-year public/private colleges
- 8% entered 2-year or technical colleges, proprietary schools or apprenticeships
- 20% graduated and entered labor market
- 37% dropped out of the system or left the state

- 21% require college degree
- 55% require 2-year associate degrees or post-high school training
- 24% require minimum skills for employment



## 5 Some College Indicators Improve, Others Lag.

Nine years ago the state Board of Regents adopted minimum college admission standards. Also TOPS has been in place since 1998 and the community/ technical college system was established in 1997. As these elements in the post-secondary education landscape took shape in the past decade, Louisiana had overall improvement in the number of degrees awarded, freshmen with higher ACT scores, the reduction of those taking remedial courses, and increases in community and technical college enrollment. However, *6-year graduation rates* for full-time freshmen seeking a baccalaureate degree remain well below the SREB average and in fact, have improved little or declined for many schools during this same time period. In addition, the *distinct imbalance* in enrollment between 2-year community/technical and 4-year baccalaureate schools remains, though with some slight improvement.

It is important to note that graduation rates vary widely by school and coorelate to level of admission standards. Students who are academically prepared for college work have a better chance at getting a degree. LSU-BR has the highest standards, followed by LA Tech and ULL, with the remaining schools having used the minimum standards adopted at the beginning of the decade. Eight of ten schools in this last group only graduate a third or less of its students. Louisiana's policies in the past fifteen years have yielded marginal or no improvement. Recently, the Board of Regents and management systems have acted to raise standards, and in four years we can begin to measure impacts.

On top of recent pressures for policy change, post-secondary education has experienced extraordinary, disproportionate budget cuts in the past two years. These cuts have driven expanded efforts by Regents to reduce inefficiencies and focus schools on their primary missions, though some glaring campus problems remain. Meanwhile, existing good schools and programs will find it difficult to recover from additional cuts and Louisiana will find it equally difficult to catch-up to states like North Carolina, Virginia and Georgia that have made economic strides through higher education in the past two decades.

## Higher Education Indicators (LA Public Colleges and Universities)

	2001	2006	2007	2008
<b>Bachelor degrees awarded</b> (source, SREB)	16,659	16,955	17,400	17,631

<b>First-time College Freshmen in Non-credit Developmental Courses</b> (source, LDOE)	2001	2006	2007	2008
	39%	29%	29%	26%

<b>Public Colleges and Universities</b>				
<b>6-year graduation rate*</b> (reported by SREB)	2001	2006	2007	2008
	36%	36%	37%	38%

<b>Percentage of FTE Post-secondary Students Enrolled in</b>					
	Fall	2003	2006	2007	2008
<b>4-year colleges/universities</b>					
LA		75%	77%	74%	72%
South		55%	55%	56%	55%

<b>2-year community colleges/technical</b>					
		2003	2006	2007	2008
LA		25%	23%	26%	28%
South		45%	45%	44%	45%

<b>Educational Attainment of Adults &gt;25</b>		LA	US
Associate Degree (2008 est.)		4.9%	7.5%
Bachelor's Degree (2008 est.)		20.3%	27.7%

\*The SREB graduation rates do not include transfers and are therefore lower than rates from LA Regents. The SREB average graduation rate was 53% in 2008. The six-year graduation rates vary widely among individual state institutions (see below).

## LA Public College 6-Year Graduation Rates (includes transfers)

Campus	2005	2006	2007	2008
	freshmen fall '99	freshmen fall '00	freshmen fall '01	freshmen fall '02
LSU – BR	64 %	65%	65 %	66 %
LA Tech	54	53	51	52
UL, Lafayette	43	45	45	44
McNeese	35	31	36	38
Grambling	37	39	34	36
Northwestern	35	37	38	33
UL, Monroe	31	31	34	33
Southeastern	29	32	34	31
Southern University	28	30	32	30
Nicholls State	32	30	28	28
UNO	26	27	28	27
LSU Shreveport	26	29	35	27
SUNO	9	13	10	6
<b>State</b>	<b>42 %</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>43 %</b>	<b>42 %</b>
<b>South*</b>	<b>52 %</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>52 %</b>	<b>53 %</b>

Source: LA Board of Regents

\*SREB rate does not account for transfers, meaning the actual rate is likely to be slightly higher than reported.