



Prepared by GCR Inc. for the
Jefferson Community Foundation and
the Jefferson Business Council

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Jefferson Parish Public Schools

2013-2014 Status Report

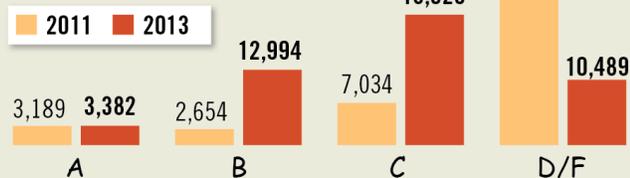


As one of the state's largest school districts, Jefferson Parish Public Schools play a critical role in the region's economy, culture, and attractiveness to new and existing residents. Recent statistics indicate that schools and students in Jefferson Parish are unequivocally higher-performing than they were three years ago, and the district's progress is outpacing statewide gains. Researchers at GCR Inc. analyzed a variety of performance indicators published by the Louisiana Department of Education and found that by nearly every metric, Jefferson Parish Schools have seen dramatic improvement throughout the past two to three school years. This improvement represents an important shift in the educational landscape throughout Jefferson Parish and, most critically, a cause for renewed optimism for the parish's students and their families.

GCR reviewed Department of Education statistics regarding student enrollment, graduation rates, ACT scores, LEAP and iLEAP assessment scores, School Performance Scores, and District Performance Scores, and we drew comparisons between the results of these data between the 2009-2010 school year and the most recent school year for which figures are available. A summary of our findings is as follows:

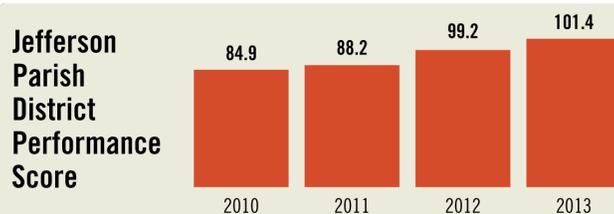
- The number of students enrolled in Jefferson Parish schools has increased from 45,585 in 2010 to 46,312 in 2013. Additionally, the percentage of students in Jefferson Parish schools receiving free and reduced lunch has increased from 74.9% to 77.5% during this time. The district is serving more students overall, and a greater percentage of its students come from relatively low-income households.
- The district has seen a 19% increase in its State District Performance Score and currently ranks 36th in the state, compared to 52nd in 2010. Jefferson's District Performance Letter Grade has risen from a D in 2011 to a B in 2013.
- The percentage of Jefferson Parish schools rated as "A" or "B" by the Louisiana Department of Education increased from 14% in 2010-2011 to 41% in 2012-2013.
- In nearly every grade level and subject, LEAP and iLEAP scores in Jefferson Parish have improved at a rate above that of the state average since the 2010-2011 school year.
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- Graduation rates have risen significantly in Jefferson Parish, seeing a higher rate of year-over-year increases in graduates than the state overall.
- The average ACT score among Jefferson Parish public school students increased over half a point between 2010 and 2012, substantially higher than the statewide and national increases.

Enrollment by School Performance Score



DISTRICT PERFORMANCE SCORES

Each year, the Louisiana Department of Education assigns a District Performance Score to each district in Louisiana based on LEAP, iLEAP, and Graduate Exit Exam scores as well as attendance, dropout rates, and graduation outcomes. In the last three years, the District Performance Score for Jefferson Parish schools increased from 84.9 in 2010 to 101.4 in 2013. The 2013 District Performance Score puts Jefferson at 36th among all school districts in Louisiana, compared to 52nd in 2010. The 2013 score means that Jefferson is classified with a letter grade of B in 2013, which has risen from a D letter grade in 2011.*



SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SCORES

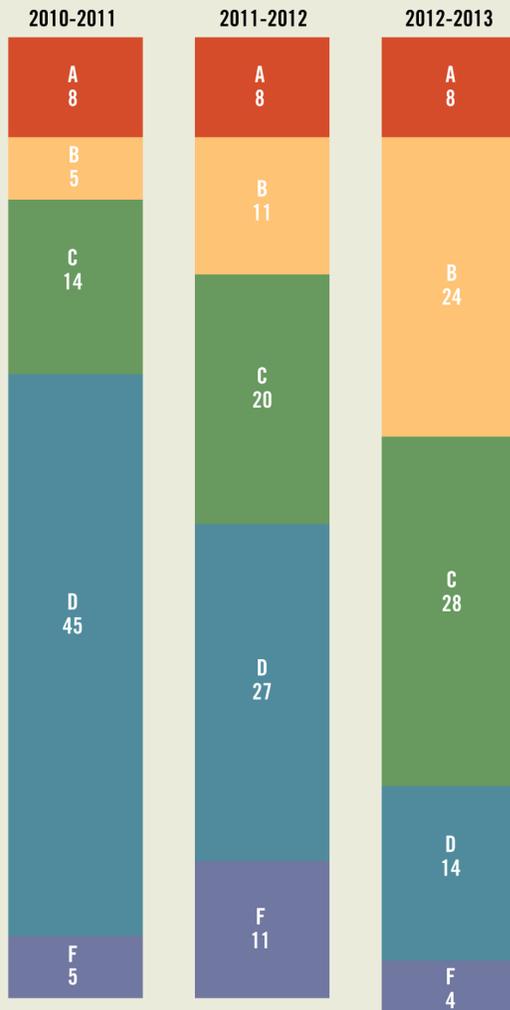
The Louisiana Department of Education assigns each school a letter grade between A and F based on factors including attendance and assessment indices, dropout and graduation rates, and LEAP, iLEAP, and ACT scores. In 2010, 14 schools in Jefferson Parish were rated as failing, and only seven were given the highest grades of A or B. After the 2012-2013 school year, 41% of schools (32) were rated A or B, and only four schools were rated as failing. Three of these failing schools are alternative schools. During the 2012-2013 school year, 34 schools in Jefferson Parish improved by at least one letter grade, and 12 schools improved by more than one letter grade.

At the end of the 2012-2013 school year, Jefferson Parish had 30 schools designated as Top Gains Schools—the highest number of any district statewide—indicating that they were either A schools improving by five or more school performance points or other schools improving by ten or more school performance points. Additionally, Jefferson Parish had 27 Top Gains Schools during the 2011-2012 school year, representing the highest number of Top Gains Schools among all districts statewide during that school year (tied with St. Tammany).

These increases in individual school performance mean that, districtwide, more students are attending better schools. In 2013, 16,376 students were attending schools rated as A or B, compared to 5,843 in 2011. In 2011, 2,237 students were attending failing schools; in 2013, that number dropped to 646.

*The state's scale for determining District Performance Scores changed during the 2012-2013 school year, from a 200 point system to a 150 point system. Under a new scale, Jefferson's District Performance Score was 85.9, which still ranked 36th among all school districts. LDE also published District Performance Scores for 2012-2013 based on the previous 200 point system, wherein Jefferson scored 101.4, to allow for year-to-year comparisons.

Number of Jefferson Parish Schools by Letter Grade



41% of schools in Jefferson Parish are classified as A or B, compared to 14% in 2011.

LEAP AND iLEAP TEST RESULTS

Every year the state of Louisiana conducts annual assessments that measure whether each student has gained the knowledge and skills for each subject in their grade level. Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP) tests are given to 4th and 8th graders in the subject areas of English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies while Integrated Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (iLEAP) tests are given to 3rd, 5th, 6th and 7th grade students. The results are reported by achievement levels: Advanced, Mastery, Basic, Approaching Basic, and

Students Scoring above Basic, LEAP

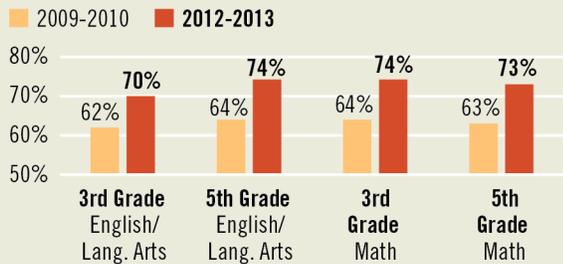
4TH GRADE	2009-2010		2012-2013		INCREASE	
	Louisiana	Jefferson	Louisiana	Jefferson	Louisiana	Jefferson
English / Language Arts	68%	65%	77%	77%	9%	12%
Math	69%	63%	71%	71%	2%	8%
Science	62%	55%	67%	67%	5%	11%
Social Studies	68%	63%	70%	70%	2%	7%

8TH GRADE	2009-2010		2012-2013		INCREASE	
	Louisiana	Jefferson	Louisiana	Jefferson	Louisiana	Jefferson
English / Language Arts	61%	59%	69%	66%	8%	7%
Math	58%	55%	66%	64%	8%	9%
Science	54%	49%	64%	60%	10%	11%
Social Studies	58%	55%	67%	67%	9%	12%

Percentage of Students Scoring at or Above Basic on iLEAP exams

GRADE	DISTRICT	2009-2010				2012-2013			
		ENGLISH/ LANG. ARTS	MATH	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES	ENGLISH/ LANG. ARTS	MATH	SCIENCE	SOCIAL STUDIES
3rd Grade	Louisiana	68%	67%	63%	66%	71%	72%	68%	66%
	Jefferson Parish	62%	64%	54%	58%	70%	74%	65%	62%
5th Grade	Louisiana	68%	70%	63%	66%	73%	72%	66%	67%
	Jefferson Parish	64%	63%	59%	60%	74%	73%	65%	61%
6th Grade	Louisiana	71%	68%	63%	65%	70%	69%	65%	68%
	Jefferson Parish	64%	62%	57%	56%	62%	63%	59%	60%
7th Grade	Louisiana	68%	68%	61%	68%	70%	69%	63%	67%
	Jefferson Parish	62%	64%	60%	64%	62%	58%	61%	61%

Students Scoring at or Above Basic, iLEAP



Unsatisfactory. Any student scoring at Basic or above is considered to be performing at or above grade-level proficiency in that subject.

In every subject throughout both 4th and 8th grades, a greater percentage of students scored at or above grade level on LEAP exams in 2012-2013 than in 2009-2010. Furthermore, the gains in the percentage of students scoring at or above grade level outpaced those of the state for nearly every subject in both grades during this period. For example, 77% of 4th graders scored at or above grade level in English/Language Arts in 2012-2013, compared to 65% three years ago. This percentage increased from 63% to 71% for 4th grade Math. Similarly, the percentage of 8th graders scoring at or above grade level jumped seven percentage points in English/Language Arts and nine percentage points during this time period.

Jefferson Parish has also seen substantial growth among students completing the iLEAP assessment. In 12 of the 16 total tests administered (four subjects across four grade levels), the percentage growth of students scoring at or above grade level in Jefferson Parish improved between the 2009-2010 and 2012-2013 school years. In eight of these, Jefferson's growth outpaced statewide gains during this period. The gains in Jefferson Parish were strongest in third and fifth grade English/Language Arts, Math, and Science, where the growth in the percentage of students testing at or above grade level grew by between twice and five times the statewide increase.

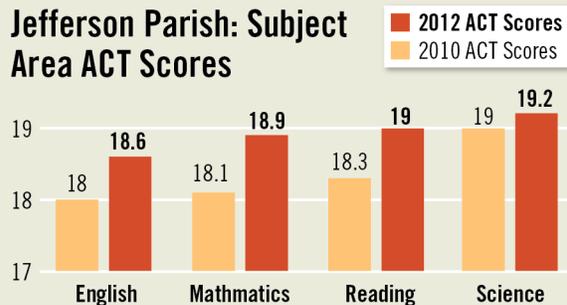
Jefferson Parish Cohort Graduation Rate



GRADUATION RATES

The Louisiana Department of Education reports graduation rates by identifying the “cohort graduation rate,” which is the percentage of students who entered 9th grade during the same year and graduated within four years. For the 2009-2010 school year, the cohort graduation rate was 61.5%, and by the end of the 2011-2012 school year, it was 70.4%, a jump of 8.9 percentage points. By comparison, the statewide cohort graduation rate increased 5.1% during this two-year period.

Jefferson Parish: Subject Area ACT Scores



ACT SCORES

As the national standard for assessing college readiness, the ACT tests proficiency in English, Math, Reading, and Science in high school juniors and seniors. As with other metrics, the average composite ACT scores in Jefferson Parish have demonstrated marked improvement over the course of the last few school years. In 2010, the average composite ACT score in Jefferson was 18.5; by 2012, this average had increased 0.6 points to 19.1. Put into context, the statewide average composite ACT score increased 0.2 points during this period and the national score increased 0.1 points (Both the statewide and national figures includes both public and non-public school students).

CONCLUSION

By every metric published by the Louisiana Department of Education, the performance of schools and students in Jefferson Parish has improved substantially over the past two to three school years. As additional data (especially ACT scores and cohort graduation rates) is published for the 2012-2013 school year, it is reasonable to expect that these gains will continue or even accelerate. Teachers, administrators, district leaders, and communities everywhere, of course, constantly strive to improve the quality of education on which students and their families rely. The fact that recent gains of this significance have been made in Jefferson Parish is a reflection of this collective effort, and is an encouraging trend for the parish and its surrounding region.