

Academic Facts: St. James Parish School District



The State education system as a whole has made **real progress** in the past 15 years (more students at basic grade level, fewer dropouts, better school performance) with the implementation of the top-rated School & District Accountability System and other major state policies. But, significant gaps in student achievement remain. While many local school districts have made improvements, we have a long way to go in others. **What remains is a state with a quarter-million kids below minimum basic grade skills (standards which are actually lower than national proficiency), yearly dropouts still in the thousands, and many graduates underprepared for careers or college.** While the State continues to pursue more recent programs that support instructional quality and school choice for at-risk kids, it's clear that local education officials and educators make the difference in student learning. **Below is a snapshot of some key district academic indicators.**

- **“C” District Performance Grade** (2011-12)
104.7 DPS compared to **100.5** State Performance Score (0-200 point scale); based on state LEAP, iLEAP, dropouts and graduation index. The district ranked **#31** out of 69 local school districts.
- **75%** of the district's **3rd graders** at or above *Basic* grade level in **reading/language arts** knowledge and skills (iLEAP 2012)
- **86%** of the districts **4th graders** at or above *Basic* grade level in **reading/language arts** knowledge and skills; and **82%** at or above *Basic* grade level in **math** (LEAP 2012)
- **56%** of the districts **8th graders** at or above *Basic* grade skills and knowledge in **English/language arts**; **58%** at or above *Basic* grade level in **math**; and **44%** at or above *Basic* grade skills and knowledge in **science** (LEAP 2012)
- **64%** of high school students scored at or above *Basic* skills and knowledge in **science** on (Graduate Exit Exam, all initial test takers 2012).
- **National Percentile Ranks** (2010-11): 55th for third graders, 50th for fifth graders, and 52th for seventh graders.
- **332 students dropped out** (7-12th graders) in the past five years on record (2006-2010)
- For 9th grade freshmen, **75% graduated four years later** (2011).
- **26%** of college freshmen who graduated from this district's high schools had to take non-credit **remedial courses** (2010)
- **19.1** Average **ACT** score compared to **20.3** State Average and **21.1** National Average (2012)

Note on State LEAP/iLEAP tests: Grade-level skills and knowledge students achieve on these tests are rated as *Advanced, Mastery, Basic (minimum needed), Approaching Basic, and Unsatisfactory*. **The State's goal has been to educate all students to at least the minimum Basic grade level** - not a mastery of skills and knowledge, just *Basic*. **How many kids in your district have not been educated to this minimum level?** In addition, LA's *Basic* level is considered a **lower standard than national levels of Proficiency**. The good news is that LA is raising standards and transitioning from LEAP to "Common Core" tests (consortium of 45 states) in the next 1-2 years.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GRADES (2011-12)

Letter Grade	# of Schools	% Students <i>Below</i> Basic
A	0	0-12%
B	4	13-24%
C	3	25-36%
D	1	37-61%
F	0	62-100%

School performance scores/grades are currently based on state test scores, dropouts, graduation index, and new 'bonus points' for certain gains.

Additional district information:

- 70.8% of students were eligible for **free and reduced lunch** (2011)
- \$12,843 was **spent per pupil** in this district compared to the \$10,622 state average (2010)
- 3,825 **students were enrolled** in 2010-11 compared to 4,101 in 2005-06

