

BELIEF IN EDUCATORS,
STUDENTS, and FAMILIES

LEADS TO HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT

The Louisiana Department of Education's "Louisiana Believes" program contains a plan to ensure all students are on track to college or a career. Since Louisiana launched the program in 2013, the state has seen:

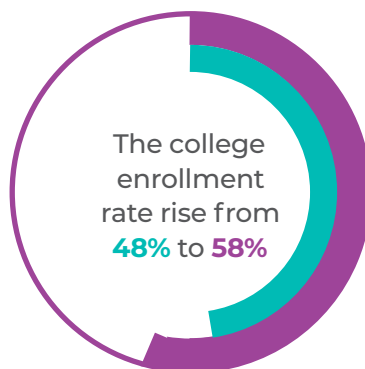
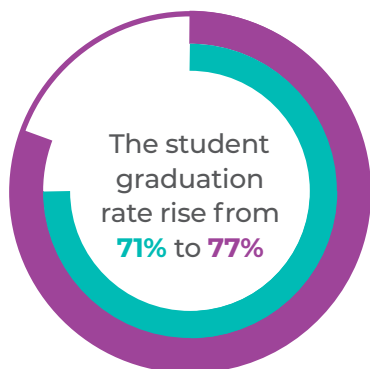
7,000

more students
earn a score of
18 or higher



A **0.5**

point increase in
the average ACT
Composite score



Now, Louisiana has the **third highest average Composite score** and the **largest Composite score growth** of the Southern states that test all students statewide.

Belief in Educators, Students, and Families Leads to Higher Achievement

Before John White stepped into the state superintendent role, Louisiana faced many challenges. Students across the state received educations of varying quality, often depending on the type of resources available in their area. Also, the state required students to know a large system of standards, and educators were not being held accountable for their own performance¹.

As a result, of every 100 students in the state:

- 71 would graduate from high school in four years
- 49 would enter college within a year
- Fewer than 19 would gain a degree within six years

Despite these numbers, the job outlook in the state became increasingly more demanding. In the coming years:

- 51% of jobs would require education after high school
- Employers would have to fill more than 600,000 job vacancies
- More than 300,000 of these vacancies would require specific degrees after high school

With a discrepancy between student achievement and the demand of Louisiana's workplace, White set out to ensure that every student was on track to college and a career by launching a program called Louisiana Believes, which incorporated and used data from the ACT[®] test.

“Louisiana Believes’ starts with the idea that parents, educators, and leaders know best how to achieve with children, and that they should be empowered to make choices for the children they know and love.”

“Louisiana Believes” Plan

By implementing the ACT, White was able to unify Louisiana's curriculum and establish rigorous standards across the state. The ACT test data gave schools and educators feedback based on their student achievement, which in turn allowed these schools and educators to strengthen areas of instruction that needed improvement. This allowed a new incentive and accountability system to be installed and a chance for every student, no matter their starting achievement level, to grow and attain even higher levels of academic success.

After four years, there is a stark difference within the state.

Louisiana's public school average ACT score is now 19.6, an increase of 0.5 since 2013. Among the graduating class of 2017, more than 25,000 students achieved a score of 18 or higher, contrasted with 18,000 graduates in 2012. Earning this score allows these students to enter college without needing to retake high school courses.

“Four straight years of gains on the ACT proves, beyond a doubt, that when you raise expectations for all students, they can achieve great things. It also proves that we can go further.”

John White, State Superintendent of Louisiana

Since 2012, Louisiana's high school graduation rate has risen by 5.2 percent. More than 6,300 more graduates from the class of 2016 achieved a college-ready ACT score than in the class of 2012, and over the last three years, Louisiana is the most improved state on the ACT among states using the ACT as their high school test. Louisiana now ranks third in the South among such states for average ACT Composite score.

In addition to all of this, Louisiana's African American students have excelled, achieving an average ACT score of 17.5, exceeding the national average of 17.

“Our state has sustained progress over that period of time and that progress, also without question, must continue.”

John White

To find out more about how you can administer the ACT to your students and raise student achievement, visit: www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act-educator/states-and-districts.html

¹The state of Louisiana as told by the Louisiana Believes plan