

Louisiana Believes

Louisiana's Gradual Transition to Higher Expectations

Superintendents' Advisory Council

September 19, 2013

Background

The "What" of Student Achievement

Since 1999, Louisiana used LEAP and iLEAP assessments to measure student achievement across the state. These results informed student promotion, school accountability and instructional decisions.

Though we have seen great progress on LEAP and iLEAP, Louisiana's current tests expect less of our students than do tests of their peers in other states.

Our state's mission is thus to level the playing field for its students. That starts with measuring their performance on the assessments identical to those administered in 21 other states.

These back-to-basics assessments represent 'what' parents and educators expect their children to know and be able to do each year.

The "How" of Student Achievement

While the 'what' may be something we can all agree on, the 'how' of educating a student should be unique to the community, the school, and the child.

- Local administrators should make decisions about personnel and how best to spend resources.
- Local educators should make day-to-day choices about lessons and instructional materials, including textbooks and curricula.
- Parents should choose the schools and courses that best suit the needs of their children.

A Gradual Transition in 'the What'

2010

- BESE adopts new basic expectations for reading, writing, and math

2011-2012

- BESE adopts school and district accountability system to support these expectations

2012-2013

- Louisiana assessments include new writing prompt aligned to the new expectations

2013-2014

- Louisiana tests align fully with the new expectations so as to reflect accurately the work of Louisiana educators and students
- BESE determines transition plan for student and educator accountability

2014-2015

- Louisiana students are assessed alongside their peers from 21 other states.

Policy Decisions

Continuing Our Gradual Transition: Overview

Louisiana is continuing its gradual transition to higher standards and assessments aligned to those standards.

In 13-14, the LEAP, iLEAP and EOCs will be aligned to new, competitive expectations. In 14-15, Louisiana will transition to competitive assessments.

This transition necessitates a series of important policy decisions. Louisiana will make these decisions with educators and the public over the coming months (e.g., roadshow, accountability commission).

Elementary policies will be presented to BESE in December and high school policies will be presented to BESE in January.

Elementary and Middle School Decisions for today:

1. Test scheduling for grades 3-8
2. Test Score approach
3. Letter grade plan

Test Scores

Recommendation: Gradually raise the bar

- Allows educators and students time to adjust to higher expectations
- Retains transparency of ultimate goal through “aspirational cuts”

Other option:

- New York approach (i.e., adjust definition of proficiency immediately)

Grades 3-8: Test Scheduling

Recommendation: Move to PARCC assessments in ELA and math for grades 3-8 during the 14-15 school year.

Other option:

- Phase PARCC in over time (e.g., only grade 3 in 14-15)

Note: High school adoption timelines will be discussed at a later meeting.

School Letter Grades

Recommendations:

- (1) Maintain current system – with points for “3” or “Basic” – in 14-15
- (2) Set timeline for raising the bar to “4” or “Mastery” after 14-15 results
- (3) Create safeguard that letter grades cannot drop more than one letter grade in initial year of PARCC implementation (14-15)

Other option:

- Raise bar in accountability system for 14-15 school year (e.g., 100 points or “A” for “4” or “Mastery,” rather than for “3” or “Basic”)

Next Steps

The LDOE will continue to seek feedback on the policies throughout the Fall.

Final versions of the policies presented today will be proposed to BESE in December 2013.

Future decisions for discussion:

1. Test scheduling for grades 9-12
2. Promotion and graduation guidelines
3. Teacher evaluation transition