

NUMBER OF NEW ORLEANS STUDENTS WITH PASSING SCORE ON ACT® INCREASES SINCE 2013

Average ACT Composite Score For African-American Students Higher than National Average

NEW ORLEANS (August 9, 2017) – Today, the Louisiana Department of Education released results from the ACT® college readiness assessment that showed improvement in the number and the percentage of students earning a passing score on the test. Since 2013, when the ACT® became required of all high school students, the percentage of students scoring 18 or higher on the exam has risen by 5 percentage points to 54 percent in 2017, increasing from 1,051 students to 1,301 students.

New Orleans students performance on the ACT® continues to exceed expectations:

- The average ACT® composite score has risen from 17.0 in 2005, before the state intervention into schools in New Orleans, to 18.9 in 2017. This is despite the 2005 score reflecting only college-going students while the 2017 scores reflect all high schoolers.
- The average ACT composite score for African-American students in New Orleans (17.8) is higher than the national average composite score (17.0), a trend that has continued since 2013.

Group	2005 Composite	2013 Composite	2014 Composite	2015 Composite	2016 Composite	2017 Composite	4 Year Growth
Orleans Parish – OPSB and RSD	17.0	18.2	18.4	18.8	18.9	18.9	0.7
Louisiana	19.8	19.1	19.2	19.4	19.5	19.6	0.5
National Average	20.9	20.9	21	21	20.8	N/A	N/A

Group	2005 18+ Pass Rate	2013 18+ Pass Rate	2014 18+ Pass Rate	2015 18+ Pass Rate	2016 18+ Pass Rate	2017 18+ Pass Rate	4 Year Growth
Orleans Parish – OPSB and RSD		49	51	55	53	54	5
Louisiana		60	59	62	62	63	3
National Average							

“New Orleans students and educators should be proud of the growth they have seen in ACT® performance in recent years. Despite these promising results, critical work remains to ensure that the progress we have seen in New Orleans is sustained,” said Superintendent Kunjan Narechania. “This will take a focused effort on the part of the Orleans Parish School Board, charter school leadership, and partner organizations at improving academic quality through high authorizing standards, and increasing resources and opportunities for the most at-risk students.”

Superintendent Narechania is calling for a new strategy to ensure continued progress, focused on:

- Managing the portfolio of schools: OPSB will have to continue to identify new, strong school operators and to hold all current school operators to a high bar for achievement.
- Building a strong talent pipeline of board members, school leadership, principals, and teachers: The city’s education leaders should partner closely with non-profits and local universities to build a strong local pipeline of talent and will have to continue to attract new talent to the city at all levels.
- Cultivating a network of high-quality early childhood providers: A stable source of early childhood funding must be identified and more must be done to strengthen the quality of education provided to our city’s youngest learners.

- Creating career pathways to high-wage/high-demand jobs: Students should have the opportunity to pursue industry-led training that leads to a career or to college. It is incumbent upon local employers, non-profits, and universities to work together with the school system to develop these opportunities.
- Developing solutions to support students with unique needs: While the RSD has launched the New Orleans Therapeutic Day Program to support students with behavioral health needs and the Youth Opportunities Center to support students who are disengaged from school, more solutions are needed, including for students who need more intensive psychological support, students with severe autism, and students who are transitioning from secure settings.

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