

ATTENDANCE RATE (PUBLIC SCHOOLS)

DEFINITION: The attendance rate is calculated by dividing the aggregate number of days that students are present at school by the aggregate number of days that students are enrolled (but not necessarily present at the school site) over the course of the school year.

SIGNIFICANCE

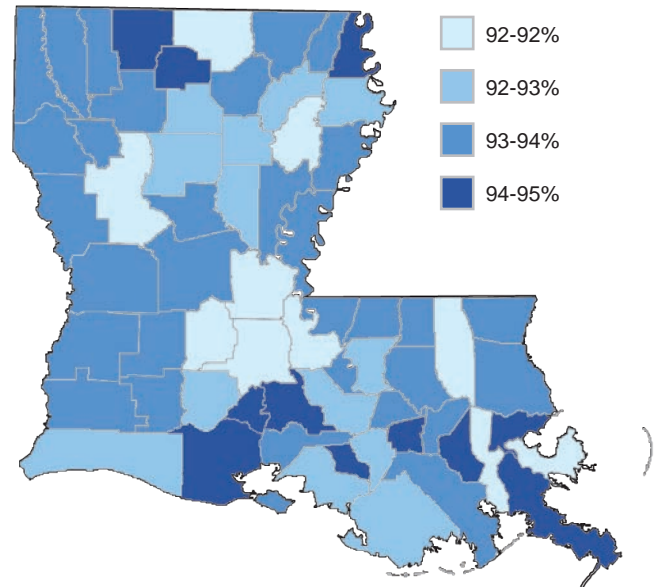
School attendance is important to a successful education. Research indicates that higher attendance is related to higher levels of student achievement. This is true for children of all backgrounds, including children from both low- and high-income families, as well as children from all races and ethnicities.¹ Conversely, research shows that students with low attendance are at a high risk for dropping out of school altogether. In one study, students who missed at least one class a week, were tardy 10 or more times in a month, or were chronically absent were six times as likely as other students to drop out of school.² Beyond illness, many factors can affect a student's attendance, including transportation issues, financial concerns, substance abuse, and a school's climate.³

Attendance rates give us an idea of what percentage of students actually attended school on a typical day. For example, if a parish with 10,000 public school students has an attendance rate of 95%, we can expect that on a typical day, approximately 500 students will be absent, and 9,500 students will be present. Four parishes tied for having the lowest attendance rate—Avoyelles, Evangeline, Pointe Coupee and Franklin parishes all had attendance rates of 91%. Ten parishes had attendance rates of 95% or more.

Elementary schools had the highest attendance rates (94.8%) of all school types, followed by middle schools (93.4%), combination schools (92.3%), and high schools (92.9%).⁴ Attendance rates account for 10% of School Performance Scores for K-6 schools. Attendance rates and dropout rates together account for 10% of the School Performance Scores for schools serving seventh and eighth graders.⁵

RACIAL DISPARITIES

Attendance is one indicator of child well-being in which we do not see consistent disparities. In fact, attendance rates were slightly higher for black students than for white students in 32 parishes and equal in another 13 parishes. White attendance rates were higher than black attendance rates in 19 parishes. Note that due to rounding, two rates appearing to be equal in the table may actually have slightly different values.



PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RATE
(PERCENT) — SY 2006

DATA SOURCE

Department of Education, Division of Planning, Analysis, and Information Resources, by special request

DATA NOTE

Data for City of Baker and City of Zachary school districts are reflected in East Baton Rouge data. Data for the City of Monroe are reflected in data for Ouachita Parish. Data for City of Bogalusa are reflected in data for Washington Parish. Data for Lab schools and all other charters are not included in the parish-level data, but are included in the statewide data.

RATE CALCULATION

$100 * (\text{total number of days that students are present at school} \div \text{total number of days that students are enrolled})$

¹ Child Trends, "Student Absenteeism," Child Trends Data Bank, retrieved from www.childtrendsdatabank.org/ on 4/1/2009.

² Lyndsay Pinkus, "Using Early-Warning Data to Improve Graduation Rates: Closing Cracks in the Education System," Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008, retrieved from www.all4ed.org/ on 4/1/2009.

³ Child Trends, "Student Absenteeism," Child Trends Data Bank, retrieved from www.childtrendsdatabank.org/ on 4/1/2009.

⁴ Louisiana Department of Education, Division of Planning, Analysis and Information Resources, *2006-2007 Louisiana State Education Progress Report*, (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana Department of Education, 2008), 20, retrieved from www.doe.state.la.us/ on 4/1/2009.

⁵ *ibid.*

ATTENDANCE RATE (PUBLIC SCHOOLS)

SY 2006	TOTAL	BLACK	WHITE	RACIAL DISPARITY RATIO*
LOUISIANA	94	94	94	1.0
Acadia	93	93	93	1.0
Allen	94	95	94	0.9
Ascension	94	94	94	1.2
Assumption	93	92	93	1.3
Avoyelles	91	91	91	1.0
Beauregard	94	95	94	0.9
Bienville	94	94	94	0.9
Bossier	94	95	94	0.9
Caddo	94	94	94	1.1
Calcasieu	94	94	94	1.0
Caldwell	93	94	93	0.8
Cameron	93	89	93	1.7
Catahoula	94	95	93	0.7
Claiborne	95	96	95	0.8
Concordia	94	94	94	0.9
De Soto	94	94	94	1.0
East Baton Rouge	93	93	94	1.2
East Carroll	95	95	90	0.5
East Feliciana	94	95	92	0.7
Evangeline	91	92	91	0.9
Franklin	91	91	92	1.1
Grant	94	94	94	1.0
Iberia	94	93	94	1.1
Iberville	93	93	92	0.9
Jackson	93	94	92	0.8
Jefferson	92	92	92	1.0
Jefferson Davis	94	94	94	1.0
Lafayette	95	94	95	1.2
Lafourche	94	93	94	1.2
La Salle	93	93	93	0.9
Lincoln	95	95	95	1.0
Livingston	94	95	94	0.9
Madison	93	94	91	0.8
Morehouse	94	94	94	0.9
Natchitoches	92	92	93	1.1
Orleans	S	S	S	S
Ouachita	94	94	94	1.1
Plaquemines	95	95	95	1.0
Pointe Coupee	91	91	92	1.3
Rapides	94	93	94	1.1
Red River	94	95	93	0.7
Richland	93	94	93	0.9
Sabine	94	94	94	1.0
St. Bernard	92	92	91	0.9
St. Charles	95	95	95	1.1
St. Helena	94	94	91	0.6
St. James	95	94	96	1.4
St. John the Baptist	94	94	93	0.9
St. Landry	92	92	93	1.1
St. Martin	95	95	95	0.9
St. Mary	93	93	93	1.0
St. Tammany	94	94	94	1.0
Tangipahoa	92	92	91	0.9
Tensas	94	94	92	0.7
Terrebonne	93	92	93	1.2
Union	92	92	92	1.0
Vermilion	95	94	95	1.2
Vernon	94	95	94	0.8
Washington	94	94	93	0.8
Webster	94	94	93	0.8
West Baton Rouge	94	94	94	0.9
West Carroll	94	94	93	0.9
West Feliciana	94	94	94	0.9
Winn	93	94	93	0.9

*The "racial disparity ratio" was calculated by dividing the non-attendance rates of black students by the non-attendance rates of white students. The resulting number shows the degree to which the black attendance rate was higher or lower than the white rate. A ratio of less than one shows that the black attendance rate was higher than the white rate, while a ratio greater than one shows that the black attendance rate was lower than the white attendance rate. A ratio of one indicates that there was no difference between the white and black attendance rates. In most parishes, there is little or no difference between the attendance rates of white and black students. S — Data for Orleans parish was suppressed due to irregularities in the data.