

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9-12) DROPOUTS

DEFINITION: The number and percentage of 9th-12th grade dropouts, disaggregated by race.

SIGNIFICANCE

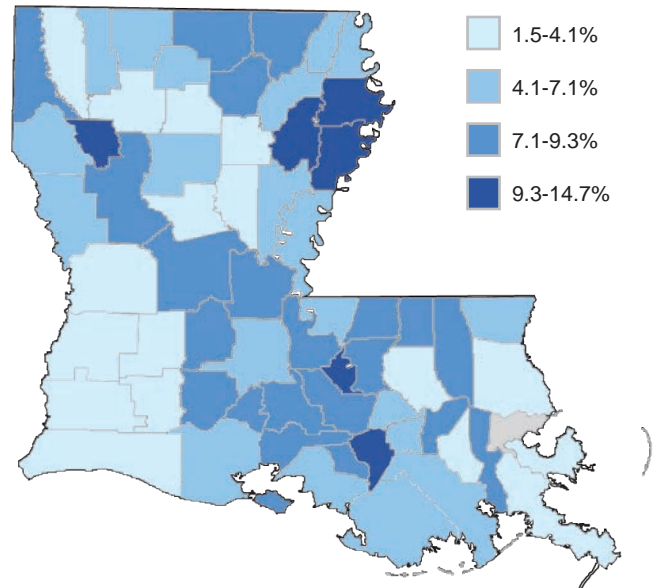
In order to build a strong, successful economy, Louisiana needs a well-educated workforce. Unfortunately, thousands of students leave Louisiana's high schools every year without earning a diploma. By increasing our graduation rate, Louisiana could reap substantial economic benefits through the increased wages of its workforce, as well as an improved ability to attract new businesses to the state. High school graduates, on average, live longer, are more likely to be employed, and are more likely to raise healthier, better educated children.¹ The Alliance for Excellent Education estimates that dropouts from the Class of 2008 alone will cost Louisiana \$6.8 billion in lost earnings over their lifetimes.² Students drop out for many different reasons, including a lack of connection to school, the need to earn income, poor academic performance, and/or teen parenthood.³

The dropout rate presented here, which measures the percentage of all high students who have dropped out in a given school year, is just one of several ways to measure how many students leave school without receiving a diploma or GED in a given year. The National Center for Education Statistics produces an annual estimate of the percentage of public high school students who graduate with a regular diploma four years after starting 9th grade. According to this measure, approximately 64% of Louisiana 9th graders who began high school in 2001 graduated four years later with a standard diploma. This number is significantly below the national average of 75%.⁴

Dropout rates vary widely among parishes. Cameron and Jefferson Davis parishes had dropout rates that were less than 2% in 2005, while the dropout rate in Red River, at 14.7%, was the highest in the state. In the six parishes with the highest dropout rates, more than one out of every ten students dropped out in 2005. By contrast, fewer than one out of every thirty students dropped out in the six parishes with the lowest dropout rates.

RACIAL DISPARITIES

Louisiana's dropout rate for black students is 1.7 times as high as the white rate. Despite the statewide disparity, some parishes had black dropout rates that were lower than the white dropout rates, including Washington, St. John the Baptist, and Iberville parishes. Ten parishes had black dropout rates that were more than twice as high as their white dropout rates.



PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS (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 districts are reflected in East Baton Rouge's data. Data for the City of Monroe district are reflected in Ouachita's data. Data for Lab Schools, Marine Institutes, and all other charter schools are not reflected in any parish's data, but are included in the statewide total.

RATE CALCULATION

$100 * (\text{number of 9-12 grade dropouts} \div \text{number of 9-12 grade students})$

$100 * (\text{number of black 9-12 grade dropouts} \div \text{number of black 9-12 grade students})$

$100 * (\text{number of white 9-12 grade dropouts} \div \text{number of white 9-12 grade students})$

¹ Alliance for Excellent Education, "The High Cost of High School Dropouts: What the Nation Pays for Inadequate High Schools," Alliance for Excellent Education, June 2008, retrieved from <http://www.all4ed.org/files/HighCost.pdf> on 5/1/2009.

² *ibid.*

³ John M. Bridgeland, John J. Dilulio, Jr., and Karen Burke Morison, "The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts," Civic Enterprises, LLC., 2006, retrieved from www.civicerprises.net on 5/1/2009.

⁴ Jennifer Laird, Emily Forrest Cataldi, and Angelina Kewal Ramani, "Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States: 2006," U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, 2008, retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/> on 5/1/2009.

PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9-12) DROPOUTS

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF STUDENTS

SY 2005

	TOTAL		BLACK		WHITE		RACIAL DISPARITY RATIO*
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
LOUISIANA	14,417	6.9	8,443	8.1	5,424	4.8	1.7
Acadia	208	7.5	85	11.5	120	6.0	1.9
Allen	52	4.0	17	5.4	32	3.4	1.6
Ascension	271	4.8	122	7.4	134	3.6	2.1
Assumption	147	10.6	83	13.8	62	8.1	1.7
Avoyelles	185	8.7	94	11.4	86	6.9	1.7
Beauregard	47	2.5	15	4.5	39	2.5	1.8
Bienville	27	3.8	14	3.2	13	4.8	0.7
Bossier	223	3.9	99	5.7	124	3.3	1.7
Caddo	1,107	8.6	855	11.1	239	4.9	2.3
Calcasieu	336	3.3	154	4.5	177	2.8	1.6
Caldwell	12	2.3	<5	LNE	8	2.0	n.a.
Cameron	9	1.5	0	0.0	9	1.6	n.a.
Catahoula	36	6.8	19	9.6	17	5.2	1.9
Claiborne	44	5.3	28	5.3	16	5.6	0.9
Concordia	69	5.9	50	7.5	19	3.9	1.9
De Soto	101	7.0	57	7.8	44	6.3	1.2
East Baton Rouge	1,580	9.3	1,177	9.9	338	7.6	1.3
East Carroll	27	6.2	27	6.7	0	0	n.a.
East Feliciana	61	8.7	49	8.2	12	11.0	0.7
Evangeline	139	8.6	65	11.0	73	7.3	1.5
Franklin	96	10.4	50	12.1	46	9.3	1.3
Grant	45	4.1	7	3.8	38	4.2	0.9
Iberia	306	7.3	154	8.9	142	6.2	1.4
Iberville	128	8.7	89	8.5	39	9.3	0.9
Jackson	21	3.1	7	3.0	14	3.2	0.9
Jefferson	1,224	7.4	698	8.0	388	7.3	1.1
Jefferson Davis	30	1.6	12	2.6	18	1.4	1.9
Lafayette	793	7.8	389	10.6	376	6.2	1.7
Lafourche	314	6.7	124	13.0	169	4.9	2.7
La Salle	26	3.3	5	4.1	20	3.0	1.4
Lincoln	101	5.1	75	6.9	31	2.9	2.4
Livingston	195	3.0	23	5.7	166	2.8	2.1
Madison	80	13.0	77	13.4	<5	LNE	n.a.
Morehouse	123	9.3	81	9.7	42	8.9	1.1
Natchitoches	178	8.6	121	11.0	54	5.8	1.9
Orleans	S	S	S	S	S	S	n.a.
Ouachita	686	8.0	454	10.9	227	5.3	2.1
Plaquemines	49	2.8	18	3.2	28	2.7	1.2
Pointe Coupee	78	9.0	55	9.5	22	7.8	1.2
Rapides	615	8.3	369	11.8	231	5.7	2.1
Red River	77	14.7	50	14.9	26	14.0	1.1
Richland	68	6.8	51	9.3	16	3.7	2.5
Sabine	85	6.4	35	10.7	32	4.5	2.4
St. Bernard	78	3.0	8	2.1	67	3.3	0.6
St. Charles	125	3.9	47	4.5	74	3.6	1.2
St. Helena	41	8.3	40	8.5	<5	LNE	n.a.
St. James	57	4.7	48	6.3	9	2.0	3.1
St. John the Baptist	193	8.6	147	8.6	41	9.4	0.9
St. Landry	292	6.3	172	7.0	111	5.2	1.3
St. Martin	228	8.3	131	10.3	93	6.5	1.6
St. Mary	223	6.5	139	9.1	74	4.4	2.1
St. Tammany	372	3.1	81	4.0	278	2.9	1.4
Tangipahoa	461	7.6	252	10.3	200	5.7	1.8
Tensas	31	11.0	30	10.9	0	0	n.a.
Terrebonne	417	7.1	159	9.9	209	5.7	1.7
Union	92	9.3	46	11.8	41	7.2	1.6
Vermilion	139	5.1	44	7.7	87	4.2	1.8
Vernon	101	3.7	30	4.7	65	3.5	1.4
Washington	127	5.8	48	5.3	73	5.9	0.9
Webster	119	5.3	78	8.3	41	3.2	2.6
West Baton Rouge	126	10.2	84	12.7	41	7.3	1.7
West Carroll	34	4.9	11	8.3	23	4.2	2.0
West Feliciana	48	5.9	24	7.2	24	5.1	1.4
Winn	42	5.3	20	7.2	22	4.4	1.6

*The racial disparity ratio was calculated by dividing the percentage of black dropouts by the percentage of white dropouts. The resulting ratio shows the degree to which the black high school dropout rate is higher or lower than the white rate. A ratio of one shows that there is no difference between white and black dropout rates. Ratios smaller than one indicate that the black rate is lower than the white rate, while ratios greater than one indicate that black rate is higher than the white rate.

LNE [low number of events] is used because the rate or percent may be unreliable.

S indicates that data for Orleans Parish was suppressed because of irregularities in the data that resulted from the closure of most of the parish's schools.