

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. memo	Cheron Brylski to Bridget Leininger (2 pages)	09/16/1999	Personal Misfile
002. email	John Buxton to Andy Rotherham re: contact numbers Nawlins school (partial) (1 page)	09/24/1999	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Andrew Rotherham (Events)
OA/Box Number: 17351

FOLDER TITLE:

New Orleans Event

2011-0103-S

rc163

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

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← ERATE

→ GOALS

— CURS-SIE POWERING

① ~~RESEARCH~~

②③ — OZAS BONES

Ca (Auric) 5743
504-365-8743

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(New Orleans, Louisiana)

For Immediate Release

September 27, 1999

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT EDUCATION EVENT

Sophie B. Wright Junior High School
New Orleans, Louisiana

11:45 A.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you so very much. My good friend, Congressman Jefferson -- I want to say more about him in a minute. And to his wonderful wife, Dr. Andrea Jefferson. Senator Landrieu, thank you for your friendship and support. Mayor Morial, you were very kind to talk about the role that we play in helping to lower the crime rate in New Orleans, but it never could have happened if we hadn't had a visionary mayor down here who made the most of the policies that were there. (Applause.)

Colonel Davis, thank you for taking on the challenge of educating the children of this parish. (Applause.) To Gail Galapion, thank you very much for what you said. And Scott Shea, thank you. And Brenda Mitchell, the leader of our teachers; and especially to our principal, Charlotte Matthew, thank you for leading this school and for making me feel so welcome here. (Applause.)

And I want to say a special word of thanks to all the people of Louisiana. As Congressman Jefferson said, in 1992 and 1996, you gave your electoral votes to Bill Clinton and Al Gore, and we are profoundly grateful and we've tried to be worthy of them. (Applause.)

I also want to thank the McDonough High School Band. (Applause.) I want to thank them for being here. The rest of you are hot -- they're in those band uniforms. I used to be in one and I know how hot they are. And I want to thank them for being here. (Applause.)

One other thing I'd like to say about this school -- I want to compliment this school on your school uniforms. I like them and I'm glad so many schools in this parish have them. I've been trying to promote them all across America for years now, and I thank you for that. (Applause.)

You know, folks, I may have visited more schools than any President in history. I've certainly tried to. And I have never met a child that couldn't learn or a school that couldn't do better and be turned around. There is a student standing behind me, and I don't want to embarrass her, but I want her to raise her hand -- named Nonya Grove, who scored at the 95th percentile on the science portion of the Iowa Basic Skills Test. (Applause.) Good for you.

Let me tell you, too, I have been in schools in all kinds of places -- I've been in schools -- I went to a junior high school in Chicago in a neighborhood with the highest murder rate in the city, which was, therefore, the highest murder rate in the state. But there was no violence in the school, there were no weapons, there were no problems. Hundreds of parents came to the school every week, and there

were no dropouts, and almost all the kids went on to college. Why? Because they had a good plan and they worked it hard, and they believe that all kids could learn.

Now, the federal government does have an obligation to help you. And I want to thank Senator Landrieu and Congressman Jefferson and Senator Breaux and the others in your delegation and our party who have supported what we have tried to do to help the states -- to help the states adopt higher academic standards in the Goals 2000 program; to help them crack down on drugs and gangs and violence. And last fall we fought to get a down payment on 100,000 new highly-trained teachers to lower those class sizes in the early grades, as Congressman Jefferson wants the do. (Applause.)

Already 108 more teachers have been hired in this parish. And your parish got \$12 million under the e-rate program that the Vice President developed -- have cut the cost of hooking up every classroom in America to the Internet by the year 2000. (Applause.)

Now, what we've done in education is a part of an overall strategy to bring America back: We balance the federal budget and have a surplus of \$115 billion this year.

When I took office, we were deep in debt seven years ago and we had high unemployment rates, high welfare rates and high crime rates. We were committed to economic reform, welfare reform, reform of the criminal justice system and education reform. Now we've got the longest peacetime expansion in history, over 19 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rate in 26 years -- (applause) -- the first time we've had two budget surpluses in a row in 42 years, when I was young enough to be in this school. (Applause.)

The question is, what are we going to do with our prosperity? You know we've got a lot of challenges out there. And you know as well as I do that the modern economy requires more education from all people. We've got the largest student population in the history of our country and we will never do what America ought to do until every child in America can live up to his or her God-given potential. (Applause.)

Last week, the congressional majority in the other party in the House unveiled an education budget that was \$3 billion below what I asked for -- no money to finish hiring the 100,000 teachers; no money to help modernize or build 6,000 schools -- I know you need that now. We need -- it can be hot out here, but every school ought to be air-conditioned in Louisiana and I know they're not. (Applause.) It would deny access to hundreds of thousands of children to after-school programs, so important to improving learning and keeping that juvenile crime rate down -- keep kids in school, off the street and out of trouble. That's very important. And many other programs.

Now, Congressman Jefferson had it right. We have to demand more of our schools and invest more in them. Our balanced budget calls for spending \$200 million to help schools turn around if they're not performing well, or shut them down and let parents choose other public schools if they don't turn around. But it is wrong to blame the kid and it's wrong not to give the schools a chance. And we know these schools can be turned around if they have the resources and a good plan and they work the plan. (Applause.)

We've got to do better in Washington, and that's my job. But I was 12 years governor of your neighboring state of Arkansas. And I know -- I know -- how important education is. You know, as President, the future of our children is the most important thing of all. But I have to pursue it in many ways. I have to preserve the national

security. I have to work on making sure that we have Social Security and Medicare in a solid way, so that when the baby boomers retire, it doesn't bankrupt our kids and their ability to raise our grandkids. But if you're the governor, the most important thing you ever have to do is see to the education of our children. (Applause.)

Now, here's why I know Bill Jefferson cares about that. He was too modest to say this, but he was born very poor in a small town, and his parents and his teachers and his school helped him work his way all the way to Harvard University. (Applause.) Then he married a wonderful woman who is even smarter than he is. (Laughter.) And they have had five magnificent daughters who have all had brilliant academic careers -- four of them already gone through Harvard. Why? Because they had a good plan. They believed in education. They had parents and teachers and schools and students and they worked at it steadily. (Applause.)

So, no matter what I do as your President, you still need in Louisiana a governor you know will fight for more teachers, for better teacher training, for better pay, for smaller classes, and for modern school buildings, for high standards and strong support.

I can tell you, he's fought with me every step of the way in Washington. When we had to vote in 1993 to bring down the deficit and increase spending in education, and I said we had to balance the budget, but we weren't going to cut education, we were going to do more, all the members of the other party were against me. The bill carried by one vote. To a major extent, the economic prosperity America enjoys today belongs to one vote -- and it carried in one vote. If Bill Jefferson hadn't been in Congress and voted the right way, we might not be standing here today. (Applause.)

So let me say, I don't want him to leave, especially while I'm still in Washington. (Laughter.) But he really can do even more good in Baton Rouge. And, remember, twice he was voted the Outstanding State Legislator in the Louisiana legislature. He's fought for you in Washington; he'll fight for you and our children's education in Baton Rouge. And I am honored to be here with him today at this wonderful school.

Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

END

11:55 A.M. CDT

Draft 9/24/99 5:55 p.m.
Glastris

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS AT SOPHIE WRIGHT MIDDLE SCHOOL
NEW ORLEAN, LOUISIANA
September 27, 1999

Acknowledgments: Rep. Jefferson; Senators Landrieu and Breaux; New Orleans Mayor Marc Morial; Superintendent Col. Alfonse Davis; Principal Charlotte Mathew; 7th grader Nonya Grove.

The Founders of our nation believed two things that were quite radical at the time. They believed democracy could be made to work, and they believed all citizens could and should be educated. In fact, their faith in the former rested on their faith in the latter. "Educate and inform the whole mass of the people," Thomas Jefferson said, because "an enlightened citizenry is indispensable for the proper functioning of a republic." The longer I live, the more I've come to realize just how smart the Founders were--about a lot of things, including education. I've probably visited more schools than any President in history. Never have I met a student who couldn't learn--and learn at quite a high level.

Coming here to Sophie Wright Middle School only strengthens my faith that all students can learn. If you want proof that this school is capable of high academic achievement, just look at students like Nonya Grove, who scored at the 95 percentile on the science portion of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Everything I have heard about your plans for change convinces me that you will turn this school around. I have seen other schools in other cities dramatically improve themselves by doing precisely what you are doing: raising standards, focusing on the basics, holding students, teachers, and principals accountable, and giving them the tools they need to succeed, from tutoring to staff development to after-school programs to computers.

I believe the federal government has an obligation to help provide the tools you need to strengthen accountability and improve learning. And for six-and-a-half years my administration has worked hard to fulfill that obligation, along with Con. Jefferson and, Sen. Breaux, and Sen. Landrieu. Together, we have helped every state, including Louisiana, adopt tougher academic standards with our Goals 2000 program. We've helped hundreds of school districts crack down on drugs, gangs, and violence. We've encouraged school uniforms--and I am delighted to see that Sophie Wright Middle School has, too. We've begun to organize an army of tutors to help elementary school children learn to read and middle school and high school students to prepare for college--and those tutors are coming to Orleans Parish schools. Last fall, we fought for and won from Congress a down payment on 100,000 new highly trained teachers to reduce class sizes in the early grades. That has meant 108 more teachers for Orleans Parish schools. I'm also delighted that the Orleans Parish has received \$12 million from our federal E-rate program, spearheaded by VP Gore, to help connect your classrooms to the Internet.

We have made education a new and urgent priority for our national government, even as we've worked hard to bring fiscal discipline to Washington. Over the past six-and-a-half years, we have shrunk government, balanced the budget, and turned a federal budget deficit of \$290 billion into a budget surplus of \$99 billion this year, with growing surpluses projected for years to come. At the same time we have nearly doubled our investment in education and training.

There can be little doubt today that this strategy, of fiscal discipline plus greater investment in priorities like education, has worked. Reading and math test scores that are rising across the country, with some of the biggest gains in urban areas. And we are enjoying the longest peacetime expansion in our history, with 19.4 million new jobs; rising wages; the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years; the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years; the lowest crime rates in 26 years; and the highest rate of home ownership on record.

Now the big debate in Washington is what are we going to do with our prosperity. I believe this is a special moment in history, and that we have a rare opportunity—and a profound responsibility—to use our prosperity to meet America's long-term challenges—three challenges in particular.

First, if we want to keep this economic prosperity going and spread it to the people in the communities that have still not felt its full effects, we must use the surplus to pay down the debt for the first time since 1835. That would mean lower interest rates, more investment, and higher incomes and more jobs for all our people. And we must also give Americans the same tax incentives to in the poorest neighborhoods in America, that we give them to invest developing markets overseas.

Second, if my generation, the Baby Boom, is serious about making sure our retirement does not impose a huge burden on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren, then we must secure Social Security and Medicare and modernize Medicare by adding prescription drug coverage.

Third, if we want our children's generation—an even bigger generation than the baby boom, and a far more diverse one—to have the future that they deserve, we must provide them with world-class education.

We can meet these long-term challenges, and still have tax cuts we can afford. I made this clear last week when I vetoed the tax bill the majority in Congress sent me—because their tax bill was wrong for Medicare, wrong for Social Security, wrong for the economy, and wrong for education.

If want to work with Congress to meet these fundamental obligations. Then we can talk about having affordable tax relief that both parties can agree on. In my balanced budget, I called for tax cuts to help school districts build, renovate, or expand 6000 schools. The majority's tax plan would have funded only one-tenth as much school

construction. That's not good enough. There are simply too many schools in America like Sophie Wright, with leaky roofs, termites in the walls, and not enough classrooms.

Last week, the House leaders unveiled an education budget that is nearly \$3 billion below what I called for in my balanced budget. It eliminates our effort to hire 100,000 new, highly-trained teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. It denies hundreds of thousands of young people access to after-school programs. It fails to improve and expand Head Start. It cuts our successful America Reads program to provide reading tutors for children who need them. It eliminates the GEAR UP program, which helps young people prepare early for success in college.

The majority not only refuses to invest more in education. They refuse even to demand better results from education. Back in May, I sent Congress my Education Accountability Act. It would require every state and school district receiving federal help to take the steps you have taken here in New Orleans—from ending social promotion to empowering parents by giving them report cards on their schools. It's been four months, and Congress has yet to act on my accountability agenda.

Now, as Con. Jefferson says, we must demand more of our schools and invest more in them. That's why my balanced budget calls for spending \$200 million to help schools turn around low-performing schools, or shut them down and let parents choose to send their children to other public schools. This is a strategy that has raised student test scores substantially—and often dramatically—in Chicago, Houston, Dade County, Florida, and in North Carolina. It is the strategy you are employing here in Orleans Parish and across Louisiana. Yet the majority in Congress has offered not one penny for this purpose. Not one penny.

We need more accountability—not just from schools and students, but from Congress. The majority in Congress should understand that if they try to pass an irresponsible education budget and go home, they will be held accountable.

If the congressional majority truly believes, as I do, that all students can meet high standards, including students in low-income neighborhoods, why then do they refuse to invest in accountability measures that are proven effective in helping students meet high standards? Are they more persuaded by their ideology than the facts? Are they more interested in scoring partisan political points than in truly helping students in low-income neighborhoods learn? In their hearts, do they really believe that students at schools like Sophie Wright can meet high standards?

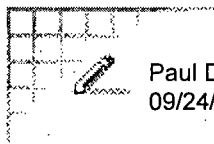
I know I believe you can meet high standards. I know you believe it. I know your parents, your teachers, your administrators believe it. And I know Con. Jefferson believes it. That's why he's been fighting for more teachers, better training, smaller classes, and for modern school buildings. He's fought hard for these things in Washington. Let's help him take that fight to Baton Rouge.

Thank you and God bless you.

You CAN DO BOOT

POCKET AND

SPEECHWRITING



Paul D. Glastris
09/24/99 06:06:59 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: latest draft of mon. new orleans remarks

Please send comments back ASAP, thanks. Paul (65716)

Draft 9/24/99 5:55 p.m.

Glastris

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Second, if my generation, the Baby Boom, is serious about making sure our retirement does not impose a huge burden on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren, then we must secure Social Security and Medicare and modernize Medicare by adding prescription drug coverage.

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with world-class education.

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If the congressional majority truly believes, as I do, that all students can meet high standards, including students in low-income neighborhoods, why then do they refuse to invest in accountability measures that are proven effective in helping students meet high standards?

Are they more persuaded by their ideology than the facts? Are they more interested in scoring partisan political points than in truly helping students in low-income neighborhoods learn? In their hearts, do they really believe that students at schools like Sophie Wright can meet high standards?

I know I believe you can meet high standards. I know you believe it. I know your parents, your teachers, your administrators believe it. And I know Con. Jefferson believes it. That's why he's been fighting for more teachers, better training, smaller classes, and for modern school buildings. He's fought hard for these things in Washington. Let's help him take that fight to Baton Rouge.

Thank you and God bless you.

Message Sent To:

Terry Edmonds/WHO/EOP@EOP
Joshua S. Gottheimer/WHO/EOP@EOP
Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP@EOP
Cathy R. Mays/OPD/EOP@EOP
Andy Rotherham/OPD/EOP@EOP
Bethany Little/OPD/EOP@EOP
John B. Buxton/OPD/EOP@EOP
Loretta M. Ucelli/WHO/EOP@EOP
Joel Johnson/WHO/EOP@EOP
Linda Ricci/OMB/EOP@EOP
Michele Ballantyne/WHO/EOP@EOP
Melissa G. Green/OPD/EOP@EOP
Jason Furman/OPD/EOP@EOP
Patrick M. Dorton/OPD/EOP@EOP
Carolyn T. Wu/WHO/EOP@EOP
Linda L. Moore/WHO/EOP@EOP
Karen Tramontano/WHO/EOP@EOP
Bridget T. Leininger/WHO/EOP@EOP

HEADLINE: Orleans has most of the worst public schools, report card says

BYLINE: By GUY COATES, Associated Press Writer

DATELINE: BATON ROUGE, La.

BODY:

Of Louisiana's 1,188 elementary and middle schools, 57 have been judged as such bad schools that must be improved in the next few years or face closure. Fifty of them are in New Orleans.

Another 497 were labeled as below average in the assessment done by the state Department of Education and released Thursday.

The schools were scored on how students fared on two different tests and on such items as attendance and dropout rates.

The testing is part of Louisiana's new school-accountability system. In addition to school performance, the system also is to grade student performance. This school year, 4th and 8th grade students will be tested. Those failing will not be advanced to higher grade unless they attend and pass summer school courses.

"We've got a long way to go but you can't fix something unless you know where it is," Gov. Mike Foster said at a news conference as the scores were released. "Now, we know where the problems are.

"I said when I took office that we had to do something different or we would not recognize public education in a few years. But, this will work because we've brought everybody to the table, the Legislature, the education board, teachers. Everyone has bought into accountability."

The schools that score as unacceptable get first attention, followed by those that are below average.

Teams of educators are sent to the schools to find the problems and work up game plans for improvement. The teachers may go through a training course.

If a bad school does not improve within two years, parents will be able to send their children to another public school. Eventually, such actions could shut down an unacceptable school that does not improve.

The announcement brought immediate reaction from state Sen. Tom Greene, whose campaign for governor includes a proposal to give students scholarships to attend any school. Greene said that would make parents responsible for their children's education.

"You have to address the individual needs," Greene said. "The system can't do that as well as the parents. The accountability has to be with the parents."

The scores also came up at a news conference in suburban New Orleans, where the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, a teacher union, endorsed U.S. Rep. William Jefferson for governor.

LFT spokesman Fred Skelton said the test results "shouldn't come as any surprise."

He noted that many of the schools are in areas of high poverty, unemployment and undereducated parents who cannot help their children with

school work.

"We can go around and play the old Louisiana tradition of the blame game: The teachers don't work hard enough. The parents don't do enough. We can now make a decision to give students what they need to succeed."

Jefferson then outlined his plan to improve schools, including \$ 160 million in teacher pay raises, an increase in teachers in the early grades so that there would be no more than 17 students per teacher in grades K-3 and repairs and remodeling of crumbling schools around the state.

How to pay for it? Jefferson had two specific proposals to pay for at least some of it. He would do away with a \$ 130 million inventory tax exemption that he said has failed to draw wholesale businesses. He also said \$ 100 million of \$ 200 million in bond-financed construction projects for the state last year actually went to local projects with the blessings of the governor, who wanted to curry favor with lawmakers. He said he would end bond financing of local projects, except for schools.

Jefferson rejected the idea of vouchers, and he made a fleeting reference to the oil refinery tax being pushed by Democrat Phil Preis, who also is challenging Foster. "I'm not talking about a tax that has been rejected before," Jefferson said of the refinery tax, which has been repeatedly rejected by the Legislature.

In New Orleans, school officials said the bad showing was expected, so efforts are already under way to involve parents and improve scores.

A.G. Davis, chief of the New Orleans schools, said principals and teachers will be given information about the tests so students can be instructed in those areas covered by the questions. In addition, he said, they will be given things like additional textbooks.

The biggest punishment is a loss of self esteem by the faculty and principal, said Leslie Jacobs, one of the governor's two appointees on the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The embarrassment of being labeled unacceptable is usually enough to bring about improvement, said Jacobs, adding that such is the case in other states with similar accountability programs.

All of the schools must improve, even the only school in the state to be labeled as a School of Academic Excellence, South Highlands Elementary in Caddo Parish. That school scored 155.7 out of a possible 200 points.

Poverty is part of the reason why some of the schools scored low, said Jacobs, noting that most of the Orleans schools are in poor neighborhoods.

But low funding and poverty cannot be used as an excuse for poor performing schools, she said.

Four of the poorest schools in the state in terms of children in poverty had relatively high scores, she said: Hillcrest in Lincoln, Slocum in Rapides, Collingston in Morehouse and Fenton in Jeff Davis Parish.

The Legislature must not stray away from the accountability program, she

said. "This is a beginning."

What happens politically when parents start getting word this school year that their kids are not going to be promoted?

"Some of us just have to have intestinal fortitude," she said. "I think they will. They know it's not doing the students any good to move along when they haven't mastered basic skills."



September 24, 1999

EDUCATION EVENT AT SOPHIE B. WRIGHT MIDDLE SCHOOL

DATE: September 27, 1999
LOCATION: Courtyard, Sophie B. Wright Middle School
New Orleans, Louisiana
EVENT TIME: 11:05am – 12:20pm
FROM: Bruce Reed

I. PURPOSE

To address the need for both investment and accountability in public schools, and to urge Congress to send you a bipartisan Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill which makes investments to reduce class size, improve teacher quality, expand after-school programs, modernize schools, and turn around failing schools in order to increase accountability and ensure that all students receive a world class education.

II. BACKGROUND

You will speak in an outdoor courtyard, and will address an audience of approximately 2,000 people, including Sophie B. Wright Middle School students, teachers, parents, and members of the New Orleans community. The Sophie B. Wright Middle School is a grade 6-8 middle school with 564 students. 88 percent of the students come from impoverished backgrounds, and 98 percent are African-American, 1 percent are Hispanic and 1 percent are white. The students come from seven neighborhoods in the downtown area. The school has been a low-performing school for some time and was officially put in corrective action last Thursday. As a result, a team from the school district will work with the school to identify problems and develop a school improvement plan. It is worth noting that the students at Sophie B. Wright wear uniforms.

Overall, the New Orleans school system is in distress. Earlier this year a retired Marine officer, Colonel Alfonse Davis was hired to run the school system. The Orleans Parish, where this school is located, has 103 schools, 91 of which were rated as "academically below average" or "academically unacceptable" schools. Statewide 47 percent of schools earned these ratings. No school in the parish achieved either of the highest two ratings on the Louisiana school accountability system although statewide only 1 percent of schools did. Louisiana has put into place a reform package that includes raising content standards, a long-range accountability plan for school performance, and investments in teacher pay and training. The accountability plan holds schools accountable based on

state tests in grades 4 and 8 (and eventually in high school) in math and reading. "Academically unacceptable" schools are placed in corrective action and are assigned assistance teams, and parents in chronically underperforming schools are given the option to transfer to another public school. The state also offers report cards, available on the Internet, on state, district and school performance. In recent years, the state has raised teacher pay and invested in technology and staff development for reading. The Governor also tried unsuccessfully to push through a tuition voucher plan last year which would have given disadvantaged parents the option of sending their children to private or parochial schools.

At Sophie B. Wright you will speak about the need for both investment and accountability in public schools and you will point out that higher standards, accountability, and investment have worked to improve schools elsewhere and will work in Louisiana. You will highlight your accountability plan, which calls for turning around low-performing schools, improving teacher quality, ending social promotion, instituting discipline policies, and issuing school report cards. You will also highlight the investments that your balanced budget provides to ensure that students and schools meet high standards including support for after-and-summer school programs, reducing class size in the early grades, your America Reads program and Head Start. You will point out that the House Republican Labor/HHS/ Education Appropriations bill undermines your class size reduction proposal, fails to invest in after-school programs, threatens efforts to improve teacher quality, does not fund your proposal to help states and school districts turn around failing schools and represents a step backwards in efforts to improve public schools. Your proposals continue to invest in what works while demanding greater accountability, Republican proposals do neither.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Stage Participants:

Senator John Breaux

Senator Mary Landrieu

Scott Shea, Vice President, Orleans Parish School Board

Colonel Alfonse Davis, Superintendent, Orleans Parish

40 Sophie B. Wright Middle School students

Program Participants:

YOU

Representative William Jefferson

Mayor Marc Morial

Gail Galapion, President, Orleans Parish School Board

Charlotte Matthew, Principal, Sophie B. Wright Middle School

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open Press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- **YOU** will arrive at Sophie B. Wright Middle School, and will be greeted by Gail Galapion, Orleans Parish School Board President, Scott Shea, Orleans Parish School Board Vice President, Colonel Alfonse Davis, Orleans Parish Superintendent, and Charlotte Matthew, Sophie B. Wright Middle School principal.
- Senator John Breaux, Senator Mary Landrieu, Scott Shea, and Colonel Alfonse Davis will be announced onto the stage.
- **YOU** will be announced, accompanied by Rep. William Jefferson, Mayor Marc Morial, Gail Galapion, and Charlotte Matthew, onto the stage.
- Charlotte Matthew, principal, will make welcoming remarks and introduce Gail Galapion.
- Gail Galapion, Orleans Parish School Board President, will make brief remarks and introduce Mayor Marc Morial.
- Mayor Marc Morial will make brief remarks and introduce Rep. William Jefferson.
- Rep. William Jefferson will make remarks and introduce **YOU**.
- **YOU** will make remarks, work a ropeline, and depart.

VI. REMARKS

To be provided by speechwriting.



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AUGUST 4, 1999

EDUCATION WEEK on the WEB

EDUCATION WEEK

IN CONTEXT

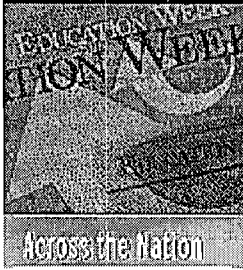
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Summer School in New Orleans: Serious Business in the Big Easy

By Kerry A. White

New Orleans

Throughout the long, hot summer days here, children ride their bikes, cool off with a swim in nearby lakes and pools, or play Nintendo.

Most children, that is. But for a dozen students in a muggy classroom at Sophie B. Wright Middle School, and thousands of others throughout the city, that yearned-for freedom is a long way off.

These soon-to-be 4th and 8th graders have put seasonal pastimes aside for some serious business: a new, high-stakes state test that most of them are at risk of failing when they take it next spring.

Nearly half the nation's big-city school districts have summer school programs in place this year, products of the push for accountability and renewed demands to end the practice of promoting students who aren't academically ready. But New Orleans' approach differs from most of these districts'.

Pushing students through drills and exercises geared explicitly toward better scores on the Louisiana assessment isn't the primary focus of the city's Extended Learning, or "Ex-L," program. District leaders believe that a broader curriculum of creative lessons offered in a relaxed environment with small classes will lead in the long run to better test scores.

"We wanted something proactive rather than reactive, and came up with a program that's not remedial and not mandatory," said Calvin P. Casmier, who oversaw the development of the program as interim superintendent before taking a medical leave of absence last month.

And in another significant difference, the program is not just for the lowest-performing students. The district encourages, but does not require, students from all academic levels to participate.

Five-Week Program

At Wright Middle School, the change from the normal routines of the school year is immediately evident, and there is little of the relentless test-taking focus that is the mainstay of other summer programs.

The students have abandoned the uniforms they wear during the regular school year for shorts, T-shirts, and sandals.

On a sweltering day last month, Gwendolyn Ridgley is busy

Read our story,
"Programs That
Promote Summer
Learning Gain
Popularity," June
23, 1999.

"Chicago Centers
Target 8th Graders
in Transition,"
April 21, 1999.

"Crew Announces
Summer School
Plan for N.Y.C.,"
March 3, 1999.

incorporating her class' soda-drinking habits into a math lesson on ratios.

"How many sodas do you drink in a week?" booms Ms. Ridgley, who like other teachers in the program earns extra pay for summer duty.

"We need to find the range, the median, and the mean," the teacher adds as she moves around the classroom. "And then we're going to move on."

About 120 students between the 7th and 8th grades fill out the classrooms in this once grand but now aged middle school in the uptown section the city. In this first year of the Ex-L program, about 7,400 rising 4th and 8th graders in the 82,000-student district are participating. The free, five-week summer program runs from 8 a.m. to noon and includes both breakfast and lunch.

No grades are awarded. To gauge progress, students are given a diagnostic test at the beginning and the end of the summer session.

Of course, the underlying goal of the summer program is to make sure New Orleans students are ready for the state test, the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program.

The test, known as LEAP, takes on new importance in the coming year. For the first time, students who fail either the mathematics or reading portion of the test will face mandatory summer school and could be held back a grade.

High Failure Rate Expected

According to Mr. Casmier, the state has predicted that as many as 80 percent of New Orleans students who take it could fail. That could lead the city to turn to a more test-oriented summer school program.

"We started asking early in the school year what could we do to prepare for LEAP," said Mr. Casmier, a 40-year veteran of the district. He served as the interim superintendent until a retired U.S. Marine colonel, Alphonse Davis, took up the permanent post last month.

Wright Middle School, like many of the city's aging and rundown school buildings, seems a gloomy setting for learning, especially with the city's swamplike summer climate.

Elaborate moldings and wooden pillars have been ravaged by termites, roof leaks have left rotted walls and floors, and rusted, sealed-up lockers line the hallways.

But like most of the summer school sites, Wright has air conditioning, and the students seem engaged.

"I like coming," said Frederick McFarlane, a studious-looking 13-year-old in round glasses and a buttoned-down shirt. Frederick, who said he gets decent grades, opted to come to the program because he wants to improve.

Even when pressed, he didn't mention any specific anxiety over the upcoming state test. "It's better than regular school because you get to do fun stuff," he said, such as hands-on and group projects. "And you get to

wear regular clothes."

The small class sizes in the program have made it a lot easier for teachers to do their jobs well and to be creative with lessons, said Charlotte L. Matthew, Wright Middle School's principal. The Ex-L program requires fewer than 15 students per class, while classes during the regular year can be as large as 35 student, she said.

As a result, Ms. Matthew said, "scores are going up, and students and teachers are having fun."

Benefits for Poor Students

Though the school sits amid gentrified homes a few blocks west of the city's famous Garden District, many of its students are bused in from housing projects nearby. Poverty is a reality for most of the district's students: About 83 percent qualify for free or reduced-priced lunches.

Summer school can be especially beneficial for poor students, experts say. When school is out, children from poor families often do not have access to the learning opportunities enjoyed by their middle-class peers: books, camps, travel, and recreation.

During the summer, low-income students "don't get the same kind of day-to-day cognitive enrichment as upper-income students," said Karl Alexander, a sociologist at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore who is conducting a long-term study on the progress of students in that city.

"The achievement gap widens over the summer," he added, but summer school can help reduce it.

In New Orleans, organizers have made an effort to differentiate the summer program from the rest of the school year.

"The climate is different. The atmosphere is light but effective, and kids are responding to that," said Gertrude A. Ivory, the interim director of the program. Though achievement statistics aren't yet available, she believes the program is having a strong effect.

'It's Been Great'

Teachers in the program agree that Ex-L seems to be working.

Across the city, at Martin Behrman Elementary School, an old building surrounded by oil refineries, public housing, and a charming historic neighborhood, Lillian Gibbs and her students seem to be enjoying themselves.

All eyes follow the veteran teacher as she saunters around the classroom, patting heads and answering questions.

She moves smoothly from biology--a lesson on the esophagus--to long division to a small writing project.

When she begins a math problem on the board and calls for volunteers, nearly every hand in the room reaches for the sky.

"I'm so excited about your interest," she says, smiling. "I enjoy every day you all are like this."

Later, she tells a visitor that she wishes the regular school year were as rewarding.

"Because of the small class size, I can really pay attention to every student's needs," she said. "It's been great. They work hard every day and have learned a lot in a short time. It makes us all happy to be here."

PHOTO: Lillian Gibbs, a teacher at Martin Behrman Elementary School in New Orleans, says the small classes and relaxed atmosphere of the summer Extended Learning program are paying off with her students.

Jabari Powell, who will be a 4th grader this fall at Behrman Elementary, works on a math problem in Ms. Gibbs' class. --Benjamin Tice Smith

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Vol. 18, number 43, page 6-7



Bethany Little
09/24/99 03:58:04 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Andy Rotherham/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc: John B. Buxton/OPD/EOP@EOP

Subject: Re: \$

All three New Orleans parishes combined received about \$7.6 million in Class Size Reduction funds(this is given out by county or parish), and Louisiana got about \$15 million in Reading Excellence Act grants.

Deaf

- Career Parent Mentors
- Parent Substitute Teachers
- Quarterly Grade Level Parent Meetings
- Field trip chaperones
- Fundraising
- Phone Banks
- Beautification projects
- Phone Master two-way communications

Discipline

- **CEO Discipline Program Levels I,II,III**
- **Peer Mediation/Conflict Resolution Intervention Room**
- **Title IV Drug Free Schools**
- **Alternative School Affiliation**
- **School Assistance Team**
- **Full Time Social Worker**
- **Individual and Group Counseling**
- **Disciplinarian**
- **Teacher /Student Advocates**

Professional Development

- Site based staff development
- Staff development teachers in Math/Technology and Reading
- Peer coaching and study groups
- Team approach to interdisciplinary teaching
- Standards based structure for content, instruction and assessment
- LEAP and ITBS correlation in instruction in all subject areas
- Physical education reading and math integration
- Weekly team meetings monitoring teaching and learning
- Monthly subject area departmental meetings
- Demonstration lessons
- Research based models for instruction multiple intelligences, rubrics,

metacognitive strategies, graphic organizers, standards for lesson plans, alternative assessment,

Attendance and Drop Out Prevention

- **Teen Outreach Program**
- **Social worker early detection and prevention activities**
- **Individual and group counseling**
- **Phone Master information system to alert parents**
- **Awards program for good attendance**
- **ESTAS program for at risk, over age students**
- **Extracurricular programs for incentives: 8 Hour Day, Teen Outreach**

Achievement

LEAP CRT - Eighth Grade
Mathematics: Advanced – 0; Proficient – 0; Basic – 6; Approaching Basic – 12; Unsatisfactory – 82
Language Arts: Advanced – 0; Proficient – 1; Basic – 10; Approaching Basic – 32; Unsatisfactory – 56

ITBS NRT

Sixth Grade Composite Score 21
Seventh Grade Composite Score 18

Average diagnostic scores in reading and mathematics when students enter the school are at the fourth grade level as determined by the Gates Macginitie Reading Test and the Brigance Test in Mathematics.

Awards

- Louisiana Engineers Advancement Program
- Exemplary Program for 8 Hour Day
- Exemplary Reading Plan
- Math 24 Competition

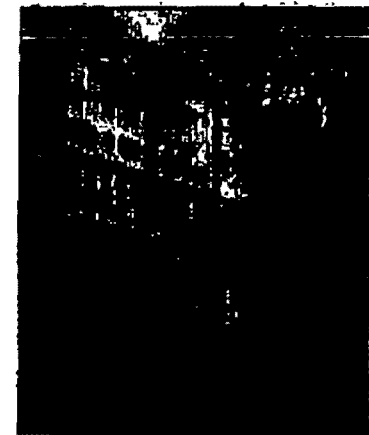
- **Winners in Boys and Girls Flag Football**
- **Competition Citywide**

Student 19

364 students grades 6,7,8
25 regular education classes
10 special education classes
88% poverty level, 98% African
American, 1% Hispanic, 1% White
Derived from seven neighborhoods in the
uptown area

Staff

- Teaching staff of 35
- Paraeducators: 6
- Support Personnel: Full time Counselor, Social Worker, Security Guard, Disciplinarian, Part time Nurse, Speech Therapist, Gifted Language Teacher, Gifted Art



For more information contact
Charlotte L. Matthew, Principal
896-4094

John B. Buxton

09/23/99 08:28:12 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Paul D. Glastris/WHO/EOP

cc: Bethany Little/OPD/EOP@EOP, Andy Rotherham/OPD/EOP@EOP

Subject: corrective action in LA

Paul,

Sophie B Wright will be in Level I Corrective Action. See below.

Corrective Actions

Corrective Actions are intended to provide schools with additional tools and resources to help them improve student achievement. There is also an expectation that extensive efforts will be made by students, parents, teachers, principals, administrators, and the school board to improve student achievement at the school. There are three levels of Corrective Actions. The intensity of each level increases if a school fails to show adequate growth.

Level I: Working with District Assistance Teams, schools will utilize a state diagnostic process to identify needs, redevelop school improvement plans, and examine use of school resources. BESE has also recommended the legislature create a School Improvement Fund to assist these schools.

Level II: A highly trained Distinguished Educator (DE) will be assigned to schools by the state. These DEs will work in an advisory capacity to help the school improve student achievement. The DE will make a public report to the school board on his/her recommendations for school improvement. Districts must then publicly respond to these recommendations. For any Academically Unacceptable Schools within Level II, parents will have a right to transfer their child to a higher performing public school (see the student transfer section pp. 5-6 for more details).

Level III: The Distinguished Educator will continue to serve in an advisory capacity. All parents of schools in Level III now have the right to transfer their child to a higher performing public school. Districts must develop a Reconstitution Plan (see page 6 for more details) by Spring of the first year in this level, and submit the plan to BESE for approval. A Level III school must demonstrate growth equaling at least 40% of its Growth Target or 5 points, whichever is greater, during its first year in this level. If such growth is not achieved, the school must be reconstituted prior to the beginning of the next year (if BESE has approved the Reconstitution Plan). If not, the school will lose its state approval and state funding.

Schools with an initial School Performance Score of 30 or less will immediately receive Level I Corrective Actions (Fall 1999 for some K-8 schools; Fall 2001 for

some 9-12 schools).

9/22/99

We are very pleased to announce
that one of our seventh grade girls,
Nanya Grove, scored in the 95th percentile
in science on last year's ITBS test.
This qualifies her to participate in the
Duke University Talent Identification
Program.

Congratulations Nanya!

DATE: _____ ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: _____
 FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION: _____
 FOR YOUR INFORMATION: _____

FROM: LINDA MOORE, DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
 AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS
 ROOM 114, EXT. 6-5247

SUBJECT: LA.

COMMENTS: fiji - election is Oct 23. last I heard,
this mty event was designated "political"
since it will involve Jefferson w/ a speaking role.

Andy R #218 we are doing 2 fundraisers for
Jefferson. That's how the trip

__ Brian Alcorn	185.5 OEOB	__ Ansley Jones	282 OEOB
__ Kris Balderston	160 OEOB	__ Ron Klain	276 OEOB
__ Doug Band	185.5 OEOB	__ Lisa Levin	160 OEOB
__ Lisa Berg	285 OEOB	__ Ann Lewis	GFL WW
__ Lisa Brown	266 OEOB	__ Tanya Lombard	115 OEOB
__ Jocelyn Bucaro	2 FL WW	__ Jennifer Luray	15 OEOB
__ Dan Burkhardt	94 OEOB	__ Thurgood Marshall	160 OEOB
__ Kay Casstevens	S-212 Capitol	__ Andrew Mayock	115 OEOB
__ Mary Beth Cahill	122 OEOB	__ Minyon Moore	2 FL WW
__ Dawn Chirwa	130 OEOB	__ Aviva Steinberg	184 OEOB
__ Lynn Cutler	106 OEOB	__ Anne McGuire	160 OEOB
__ Maurice Daniel	273.5 OEOB	__ Jennifer Palmieri	1 FL WW
__ Monica Dixon	280 OEOB	__ Mona Pasquil	115 OEOB
__ Denise Dorio	185.5 OEOB	__ Chip Payson	2 FL WW
__ Jay Dunn	116 OEOB	__ Skye Philbrick	149 OEOB
__ Fred Duval	106 OEOB	__ Orson Porter	115 OEOB
__ Julie Eddy	184 OEOB	__ Bruce Reed	2 FL WW
__ Mike Feldman	282 OEOB	__ Dan Rosenthal	185.5 OEOB
__ Laura Graham	184 OEOB	__ Evan Ryan	185.5 OEOB
__ Julie Green	170 OEOB	__ Marsha Scott	166 OEOB
__ Wendy Hartman	283 OEOB	__ Patti Solis-Doyle	185.5 OEO
__ Audrey Haynes	200 OEOB	__ Stephanie Streett	GFL WW
__ Nancy Herrreich	1 FL WW	__ Dave Thomas	S-212 Capitol
__ Craig Hughes	115 OEOB	__ Karen Tramantano	176 OEOB
__ Mickey Ibarra	2 FL WW	__ Loretta Ucelli	GFL WW
__ Tom Janenda	197 OEOB	__ Moe Vela	265 OEOB
__ Cynthia Jasso-Rotunno	115 OEOB	__ Cecily Williams	184 OEOB

got
put on
the
schedule.
Ln

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. memo	Cheron Brylski to Bridget Leininger (2 pages)	09/16/1999	Personal Misfile

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Andrew Rotherham (Events)
OA/Box Number: 17351

FOLDER TITLE:

New Orleans Event

2011-0103-S

rc163

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]
- C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.
- PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).
- RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]



Education Woes, Democrats on Target, Congress Misses the Boat

By Congressman William Jefferson



Eight months ago, on a chilly, rainy night in January, President Clinton issued a challenge to the U.S. Congress to embark on a program to provide every single child in America with the opportunity to receive a world class education.

The President outlined a Democratic plan to extend our country's world-wide reputation for providing the world's highest quality college education to our elementary and secondary schools.

Last month in New Orleans the President reiterated his challenge at the convention of the American Federation of Teachers.

"If you do not want our country to continue to be divided along the lines of income, to continue to grow more unequal, if you don't want the 21st Century to be an America where there are fabulously wealthy, successful people living alongside breathtakingly poor people, isolated in areas where opportunity never reaches — we have to realize that if this is an Information Age and if the economy is growing by ideas, then it is more important than ever before that educational excellence be universal," the President said.

The challenge Congress must tackle is simple, yet important.

- **Reduce class size.** Help local schools hire 100,000 new, well-trained teachers for grades 1-3. It is important to reduce class size from the national average of one teacher for 22 students and an Orleans/Jefferson Parish average of one teacher for 28 students to an average of 18 students per teacher. This will allow more personal attention for each pupil as they learn important skills.
- **School construction.** Provide \$5 billion worth of tax breaks over the next five years to help local communities build or modernize 5,000 schools and connect every school to the Internet. This is really important for older school systems like our public schools in New Orleans, where some "temporary classrooms" are over 40 years old.
- **Education Opportunity Zones.** Invest in 50 high-poverty urban and rural school districts to help them implement standards-based, district-wide reforms, such as ending "social promotion of low-achieving students, maintaining high academic standards and developing strategies to keep students from falling behind their peers.

- **Encourage college attendance.** Initiate intensive outreach programs for students and families in high-poverty areas to encourage everyone to seek the social and economic rewards available to college graduates in America.
- **Expand Access to After-School Learning.** Increase the 21st Century Community Learning Program by \$1 billion over five years to provide start-up funds for school-community partnerships to establish or expand before- or after-school programs for school-age "latch key" students.

Unfortunately, the 105th Congress has not yet addressed the question of quality education seriously. Admittedly, there has been an effort to provide "choice in education," a legislative initiative that begs the question of providing quality education to every child through America's public schools.

Proponents of choice simplistically argue that a quality education can be obtained by allowing parents to utilize a "voucher" to seek quality education for their children at a public or private school of their choice.

Anyone familiar with the state of education in New Orleans public and private schools can see the folly of this initiative by raising this question: "What happens when our best public

and private schools reach capacity?"

Clearly, the opportunity for quality education through vouchers and parental school choice is limited by the space available at top quality elementary and secondary schools.

Thus, the promise of quality education through vouchers and parental choice rings hollow.

Congress must come to grips with the reality of the task it faces. America and its Congress can not, and must not abandon its obligation to provide the opportunity of quality education through a system of public schools that addresses the need to develop the academic skills of each and every student, where no one school is favored over another, no matter where the school is located, nor where the parent lives.

This will be no easy task, and it is not a task that we can afford to sidestep with easy promises, and smoke and mirrors. The President has proposed a starting point — more qualified teachers, smaller class size, federal help for school repairs and construction and increased funding for before- and after-school programs. It is time for the Congress to move forward.



WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON
SECOND DISTRICT, LOUISIANA

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-1802

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POLICY COMMITTEE
WHIP AT-LARGE

TO: WJJ, Monique Frazier
FROM: Jean LaPlace
DATE: October 14, 1998
RE: Orleans Parish Public School Construction Needs

I have a phone call into Ken Ducote at OPSB to get up to date statistics.

Here are the notes I took earlier this year, but those were before the school board tax election. I am not sure whether the constructions were addressed or if the proposals passed.

— \$537 million of construction needed to bring schools up to 1991 standards.

— Millage election called for 3.5 mills that would only address \$175 million of construction needs, including \$10 million for energy efficiency projects.

— \$25 million for asbestos removal over next ten years.

— More than 400 portable classrooms over 40 years old.

All renovation problems in New Orleans are compounded by the fact that more than half of the school buildings were built between 1852 and 1939. Renovation work required meeting Americans With Disabilities Act requirements, asbestos removal, insulation problems related to installation of air conditioning (if not properly insulated, humidity aggravates mildew and mold problems) plus proper sealing for air conditioning triggers requirement to meet national air quality standards, state of the art fire code regulations must be met; sewer and water renovations (new water pipes/proper grease traps for school kitchens); wiring for computers and addition of computers adds additional cooling requirements and the cost of equipment necessitates tighter nighttime security.

This should give you an idea of the brick and mortar construction problems faced in New Orleans and other major urban (and even rural) school systems.

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
002. email	John Buxton to Andy Rotherham re: contact numbers Nawlins school (partial) (1 page)	09/24/1999	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Andrew Rotherham (Events)
OA/Box Number: 17351

FOLDER TITLE:

New Orleans Event

2011-0103-S

rc163

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

John B. Buxton

09/24/99 11:10:48 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Andy Rotherham/OPD/EOP@EOP, Bethany Little/OPD/EOP@EOP, Karin Kullman/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: contact numbers Nawlins school

Here are some contact numbers for Charlotte Matthews the principal at Sophie B Wright Middle:

School number (she'll be there off and on this weekend): 504 896 4093

Pager Number:

Home Number:

P6(b)(6)

[000]

JB

FAX to Andy 202-456-5551
from Charlotte
202-456-7028
Deaft

Sophie B. Wright Middle School opened in 1912. It is a three-story masonry building with auditorium, cafeteria and blacktop play area. We serve over 560 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students who reside primarily in single and double family dwellings in both the immediate uptown neighborhood between Napoleon and Louisiana Avenues in the expanded Carrollton section of the city. Because of this large attendance district, over 75% of our students take public transportation to school.

At Sophie B. Wright Middle School:
We strive to maintain an environment in which students:

- are empowered to achieve their individual goals and visions;
- are secure and important because their opinions are valued;
- are continually challenged; and
- are recognized for accomplishments and a job well done.

We are successful by design.

Our job is to:

- reach all students
- exceed benchmarks
- meet our high expectations

Success powers our endeavors.

In order to provide an environment that encourages open communication we will:

- attentively listen to all concerns;
- address concerns and exceed expectations;
- treat all persons with dignity and respect; and
- maintain loyalty to the students and staff.

In all things we choose to do the Wright thing.

*"Working Together:
We Can, We Must,
We Will Succeed!"*

Sophie B. Wright Middle School
1426 Napoleon Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana 70115
504-896-4093

Teaching Program

Organized by three member interdisciplinary teams, instruction begins with diagnostic reading and mathematics surveys. Additional support for reading and mathematics is provided by in school labs and after school tutorials. A vision for student centered instructional delivery was developed in 1996 and guides our planning and implementation of the standards based curriculum. Technology is integrated into student activities and research projects. Students come to us with an average of fourth grade skills in reading and mathematics. Well versed in our district's accountability program, teachers have high expectations and work to provide rigorous academics and support to help students meet those expectations.

Grants and Programs

- CEO Reading Program
- Intervention Program
- Career Education Program
- LEARN - Professional Development to Implement Standards Based Instruction
- CBTF - Classroom Based Technology Fund
- Louisiana Dept. of Health and Human Resources - 8th Period After School Program
- Ford Foundation Planning Grant - Collaborative Initiative
- Coca Cola Foundation - Middle School Math Scholars
- Reading Through Technology - Sixth Grade Tutorial Reading Program

- Delta Academy - Mentoring and Tutoring Program for girls 11 - 14
- Tulane CAPS - Mentoring Program - Positive Talk
- Title II and VI - Staff Development - Math, Science, Technology
- For the Children - Wordly Wise
- Accelerated Reader
- Automated over 10,000 volume library
- SEPUP Exemplary Science Program
- LEAP Science Club
- Connected Math
- Ex-L After School Program
- Great Books
- Quarterly Parent Meetings by Grade Level
- Xavier Saturday Science Academy
- Lesson Plans Correlated to Standards
- True Team Design
- School wide Diagnostic reading and math program

Community Partners

- Copelands, Inc.
- U.S. Navy
- Mo Donalds # 69
- Watson Memorial Teaching Ministries

Parent Involvement

- Progress Report Conferences
- Parent Compacts
- Parent Advisory Council
- Parents Teaching in Eight Hour Day Program
- VIBE - Volunteers Involved in Better Education
- Full Time Parent Advocate
- Nationally affiliated Parent Teacher Student Association
- Homeroom Parent Representation
- Parent Patrol
- Hall and Cafeteria Monitors

Draft

- Career Parent Mentors
- Parent Substitute Teachers
- Quarterly Grade Level Parent Meetings
- Field trip chaperones
- Fundraising
- Phone Banks
- Beautification projects
- Phone Master two-way communications

Discipline

- CEO Discipline Program Levels I, II, III
- Peer Mediation/Conflict Resolution Intervention Room
- Title IV Drug Free Schools
- Alternative School Affiliation
- School Assistance Team
- Full Time Social Worker
- Individual and Group Counseling
- Disciplinarian
- Teacher /Student Advocates

Professional Development

- Site based staff development
- Staff development teachers in Math/Technology and Reading
- Peer coaching and study groups
- Team approach to interdisciplinary teaching
- Standards based structure for content, instruction and assessment
- LEAP and ITBS correlation in instruction in all subject areas
- Physical education reading and math integration
- Weekly team meetings monitoring teaching and learning
- Monthly subject area departmental meetings
- Demonstration lessons
- Research based models for instruction: multiple intelligences, rubrics,

metacognitive strategies, graphic organizers, standards for lesson plans, alternative assessment,

Attendance and Drop Out Prevention

- Teen Outreach Program
- Social worker early detection and prevention activities
- Individual and group counseling
- Phone Master information system to alert parents
- Awards program for good attendance
- ESTAS program for at risk, over age students
- Extracurricular programs for incentives: 8 Hour Day, Teen Outreach

Achievement

LEAP CRT - Eighth Grade

Mathematics: Advanced - 0; Proficient - 0; Basic - 6; Approaching Basic - 12; Unsatisfactory - 82

Language Arts: Advanced - 0; Proficient - 1; Basic - 10; Approaching Basic - 32; Unsatisfactory - 56

ITBS NRT

Sixth Grade Composite Score 21

Seventh Grade Composite Score 18

Average diagnostic scores in reading and mathematics when students enter the school are at the fourth grade level as determined by the Gates Maginette Reading Test and the Brigance Test in Mathematics.

Awards

- Louisiana Engineers Advancement Program Exemplary Program for 8 Hour Day
- Exemplary Reading Plan
- Math 24 Competition

- Winners in Boys and Girls Flag Football
- Competition Citywide

Students

564 students grades 6,7,8

25 regular education classes

10 special education classes

88% poverty level, 98% African American, 1% Hispanic, 1% White

Derived from seven neighborhoods in the uptown area

Staff

- Teaching staff of 35
- Paraeducators: 6
- Support Personnel: Full time Counselor, Social Worker, Security Guard, Disciplinarian, Part time Nurse, Speech Therapist, Gifted Language Teacher, Gifted Art



For more information contact
Charlotte L. Matthew, Principal
896-4094

SPS Components and Weighting

The School Performance Score (SPS) is used to measure each school's progress toward meeting the state goal. The table below shows the components of the SPS that apply to your school and the weight of each component. The goal is to achieve an index of at least 100 in each area.

School Accountability Index Scores

Indicators	Index	x Weight	= Index Score
LEAP 21	20.3	60%	12.2
Iowa Test	23.5	30%	7.1
Dropout	115.0	5%	5.8
Attendance	0.0	5%	0.0
SPS			25.1

Student Population Identified for the LEAP 21 and Iowa Tests

	Regular Ed.		Special Ed.	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Eligible	528 ¹	79.2%	81 ²	12.1%
Exempted ³	51	7.6%	7	1.0%
Total	579	86.8%	88	13.2%

The percentages of regular education and special education students are used in the calculation of your school's growth target.

1. Reflects all students eligible for assessment including gifted, talented, 504 students, Limited English Proficient (LEP), and speech or language impaired students.
2. Reflects eligible special education students not included with regular education students for Accountability.
3. Reflects students exempted from assessment.

Note: #1 and #2 reflect those students who completed tests, students who did not complete tests, and students who did not take tests and had not been exempted.

1998-99 Iowa Test Takers and Index Results

Grades	Iowa Test Grades		
	6	7	Overall
Total Number Tested			
Completed Test	79	254	333
Did Not Complete Test*	6	20	26
Total Number Not Tested			
Not Exempted ²	0	2	2
Exempted	13	25	38
Total (Tested and Not Tested)	98	301	399
Index Results	29.1	21.8	23.5

* These students received zero scores.

1998-99 LEAP 21 Test Takers and Index Results

The LEAP 21 Tests given in grades 4 and 8 measure the performance of students at your school on content required by the state. Starting in 1999-2000, students in 4th and 8th grades whose scores are unsatisfactory will not be promoted. Summer school and an opportunity to retake the test(s) will be provided for these students.

Grades	LEAP 21 Test Grades and Subject Areas					
	English Language Arts		Mathematics		Both Subjects	
	04	08	04	08	04	08 Overall
Total Number Tested						
Completed Test		247		248		495
Total Number Not Tested						
Not Exempted ²		1		0		1
Exempted		20		20		40
Total (Tested and Not Tested)		268		268		536
Index Results		28.4		12.1		20.3

* These students received zero scores.

1998-99 LEAP 21 Performance by Achievement Level

Proficiency Level	Grade 8			
	English Language Arts		Mathematics	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Advanced	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Proficient	3	1.2%	0	0.0%
Basic	26	10.5%	15	6.0%
Approaching Basic	80	32.3%	30	12.1%
Unsatisfactory*	139	56.0%	203	81.9%
Total	248	100%	248	100%

* This category includes those students who received zero scores.

1997-98 Attendance & Dropout Rates and Index Results

	Index	Rates		
		Your School	Your District	State
Attendance (K-8)	0.0	88.6%	92.2%	94.5%
Dropout (7-8)	115.0	3.4%	6.7%	4.2%

The attendance rate shows the percent of students who are present on any given day, all year.

Louisiana Department of Education

Post Office Box 94064 | Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9064
(225) 342-4411 | Fax: (225) 342-0193

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 23, 1999

Contact: Doug Myers, (225) 342-3600, Fax: (225) 342-0193

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SCORES RELEASED TODAY

Go to the School Performance Score Website.

BATON ROUGE, La. - Making history, the state today released "performance scores" on its 1,188 K-8 public schools, rating them based on student scores on state and national tests, attendance and dropout rates.

The school scores are part of the state's new School and District Accountability System.

"This is a historic day because this has never been done before in Louisiana," Gov. Mike Foster said. "For the first time, we are judging our schools' performance and giving them scores based on specific criteria. This means we will be able to help schools that have problems and reward schools that are succeeding."

"Parents should be excited about this because, for the first time, they can see how well their child's school is performing," Foster said.

Foster said Louisiana is joining other states - such as Texas and North Carolina - where "accountability" programs have been successful in improving student performance.

"And I expect that we will see the same, positive results here," Foster said.

Louisiana's public K-8 public schools receive "School Performance Scores" this year. Public high schools will receive state scores in 2001. Private and parochial schools are not judged by the program.

The system is the result of more than three years of work, first by a 27-member commission that included parents, lawmakers, business leaders, and educators, and then carried forward by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Under the system, schools are scored based on how their students fare on two tests -- the state LEAP tests (60 percent) and the national Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (30 percent) -- plus attendance and dropout rates. Attendance accounts for 10 percent of the score in K-6 and 5 percent of the score in grades 7 and 8. Dropout rates make up the remaining 5 percent of the score for grades 7 and 8.

Using the scores, schools are given one of six labels - "unacceptable," below average," "above average," "school of academic achievement," "school of distinction," and "school of academic excellence."

Statewide:

- 1 school received a "school of academic excellence" label, scoring above 150 on a scale of zero (being the worst) to about 200 (being the best).
- 14 schools received "school of academic distinction" labels, scoring between 125 and 149.9.
- 95 schools received "school of academic achievement" labels, scoring between 100 and 124.9.
- 524 schools received "above average" labels, scoring above the state's average score of 69.4 and 99.9.
- 497 schools received "below average" labels, scoring between 30.1 and the state's average score of 69.3.
- 57 schools received "unacceptable" labels, scoring between zero and 30. >

The state's 10-year goal is for all K-8 public schools to score at least 100; and 110 schools met that standard, including 92 elementary schools, 12 middle schools, 3 high schools and 3 "combination" schools. Louisiana's 20-year goal is for all K-8 public schools to score at least 150.

In addition to receiving scores, schools are receiving "growth targets." Schools scoring below 100 will get 10 years, broken into five two-year intervals, to reach a score of 100. Schools will have to meet the first of their "growth targets" by Fall 2001. Schools have until 2009 to meet the state's 10-year goal.

State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education President Glenny Lee Buquet called on parents, grandparents, business and community members to join their schools as they work toward their "growth targets."

"Many of our schools have problems, but, working together, we can improve education for our children," Buquet said.

Because the purpose of the accountability system is to encourage schools and districts to improve, the focus is on growth. Schools that meet or exceed their "growth targets" will get rewards. Those that fail to meet their "growth targets" will go into "corrective actions" and receive assistance to help them increase student performance.

"The release of the School Performance Scores is the culmination of three years of hard work by a lot of people," BESE member Leslie Jacobs said. "While the focus now is on these performance scores and labels, the real goal of accountability is to improve student achievement. We're going to get there by improving every year and putting one foot in front of the other."

"All of our schools must improve for our children to be able to effectively compete for jobs in the next millenium," State Superintendent of Education Cecil J. Picard said. "But we believe that, with accountability, we can make a difference. Student scores will improve. Attendance rates will increase. Dropout rates will decrease. This will mean fewer people going to prison, fewer people on welfare and better-paying jobs for our children. This is the dawn of a new era for education in Louisiana."

Of the 1,188 K-8 public schools rated by the state, 817 were elementary schools, 242 were middle schools, 46 were high schools that included some middle school grades and 83 were "combination" schools that include elementary and middle school students.

"Poverty definitely stands out as a major factor impacting school performance in Louisiana," Picard said. "We can't use poverty as an excuse, but we can't ignore it either. We must come up with more innovative strategies to teacher our poor children, including a statewide preschool program to reach them earlier, and we must provide more resources to schools with large numbers of high poverty children."

"We also plan to study schools with a high poverty population that are scoring well in our state and elsewhere, and find out what they are doing that is working," Picard said. "Then we can share these strategies with our low-performing schools."

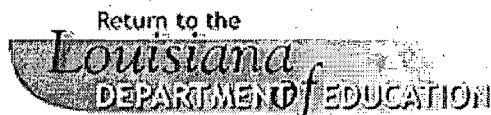
Picard said the state will use "school assistance" teams to come up with ways to improve all schools and is piloting a program to send "distinguished educators" into the lowest-performing schools.

Louisiana is joining 19 states that publicly rate the performance of their schools. *Education Week*, a publication covering American schools, judged Louisiana's program to be among the "most comprehensive in the nation."

To help parents, educators and others understand the program, the state has produced newsletters and videos. It has also instituted a toll-free hotline to answer questions about the program at (877) 453-2721. Information and results can also be received at the department's website at <http://www.doe.state.la.us>.

-end-

[more Press Releases...](#)



 Karin Kullman

09/22/99 02:13:39 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Andy Rotherham/OPD/EOP@EOP, Bethany Little/OPD/EOP@EOP, John B. Buxton/OPD/EOP@EOP
cc:
Subject: RE: New Orleans School

----- Forwarded by Karin Kullman/OPD/EOP on 09/22/99 02:13 PM -----



Kris M Balderston

09/22/99 11:49:17 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Loretta M. Ucelli/WHO/EOP@EOP, Karin Kullman/OPD/EOP@EOP, Julie D. Eddy/WHO/EOP@EOP
cc:
Subject: RE: New Orleans School

FYI

----- Forwarded by Kris M Balderston/WHO/EOP on 09/22/99 11:48 AM -----



"Thornton, Leslie" <Leslie_Thornton@ed.gov>

09/22/99 11:41:02 AM

Record Type: Record

To: "Tucker, Ben" <Ben_Tucker@ed.gov>, Kris M Balderston/WHO/EOP
cc:
Subject: RE: New Orleans School

Kris --

FYI -- this issue has gotten some press. It probably shouldn't affect a decision to go to a particular school but you all should know about it.

Leslie

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Tucker, Ben

> Sent: Wednesday, September 22, 1999 11:36 AM

> To: Kris Balderston (E-mail)

> Cc: Thornton, Leslie

> Subject: New Orleans School

>

> Kris-

>

> So far, I am not aware of any DoED concerns with the Sophie Wright Middle

> School in New Orleans. Here is one issue to be aware of, and then grant

> info on Louisiana and New Orleans.

>

> Issue:

>

> In Mitchell v. Helms, the Department is involved in a case before

> the Supreme Court involving services under Title VI of the Elementary and

> Secondary Education Act for private school children in New Orleans

> (Jefferson Parish School District). The Solicitor General has filed a

> brief on behalf of the Secretary of Education arguing that the loaning of

> educational or instructional materials (other than textbooks) and

> equipment for sectarian school students in their own schools under Title

> VI is constitutional under the Establishment Clause of the First

> Amendment. The Solicitor General therefore is requesting the Court to

> reverse the portion of the Fifth Circuit's decision in this case that held

> these services unconstitutional. The Supreme Court is expected to hear

> oral argument in December and a decision is expected by June 2000.

>

> Grants:

>

> 1) No Teacher Quality grants going to New Orleans or Louisiana.

>

> 2) Drug & Violence Prevention Coordinators for Middle Schools: \$543,740

> awarded for FY 2000/2001 to New Orleans Public Schools. (This has not been

> announced and notification has not taken place.)

>

> 3) Grants to Orleans Parish for Goals 2000 and Technology Literacy

> Challenge Fund:

>

> Orleans Parish

>

> Goals 2000:

> FY1998:

> (1) \$389,204 awarded to complete the reform of the district's

> curricula and to provide students with instruction that enables them to

> make the transition from school to work.

> (2) \$300,000 awarded to a consortium which includes Orleans Parish

> to improve pre-service education by changing the nature of methods courses

> through which preservice teachers are prepared.

>

> TLCF (Technology Literacy Challenge Fund):

> FY1997: \$527,760 awarded

> FY1998: \$1,168,784 awarded

>

A fax from The Brylski Company

3418 Coliseum Street, New Orleans, LA 70118

(504) 897-6110 or (504) 897-6150

FAX: (504) 897-0778

To: Andy

Company: _____

Fax#: _____

Number of Pages: _____

(including cover page)

Sender: _____

Message: re visit to N.O.

Grade 4 English Skills					
Louisiana	1	15	39	24	21
Orleans	1	7	25	25	44
Grade 4 Math Skills					
Louisiana	2	8	32	24	35
Orleans	1	3	15	19	63
Grade 8 English Skills					
Louisiana	1	11	31	36	21
Orleans	1	5	17	32	45
Grade 8 Math Skills					
Louisiana	1	4	33	21	40
Orleans	1	2	14	15	70

Iowa Test of Basic Skills (Norm Referenced Test)*
(composite national percentile rank of the average standard score)

Grade Level	3	5	6	7	9
Louisiana	45	44	45	44	44
Orleans	23	23	26	24	28

Louisiana Graduate Exit Examination*
(total population percent passing)

	Grade 10 only			Grade 11 only	
	English	Math	Composition	Science	Social Studies
Louisiana	85	74	93	80	88
Orleans	69	53	84	64	75

REGARDING INFORMATION ON EDUCATION IN LOUISIANA

- 56 % The number of Louisiana 4th graders who were below basic proficiency in mathematics in 1996
- 60 % The number of Louisiana 8th graders who were below basic proficiency in science in 1996
- 40 % The number of Louisiana high school freshmen who will never graduate
- 50th Where Louisiana 4th graders ranked in the 1994 national reading assessment
- 46th Where scores by Louisiana students taking the ACT ranked in 1997

Louisiana: Poor Social Conditions = Low Academic Achievement

Louisiana ranks at the bottom of social conditions affecting children:

50th	percent of children living in poverty
50th	percent of children in single-parent families
49th	percent of low-birth weight babies
46th	percent of births to single teens
42th	percent of violent juvenile crime arrests

41 percent of our 2nd and 3rd graders were not reading on grade level.

22,000 at-risk four-year-olds are not being served in Louisiana by pre-K, Headstart programs. The benefits of pre-school are an immediate improvement in intellectual performance, fewer referrals to special education, fewer retentions, and higher graduation rates

Right now, Louisiana is last in computer-pupil ration. Georgia has been spending \$150 million a year since 1994 in installing computers in classrooms. Louisiana started last year. In 1997, the student: computer ratio in Louisiana was 88 students to every one computer. Today, the ratio is 27 students to every one computer, according to the Governor's Office.

The better trained the teacher, the better the results in the classroom. There have been three pay raises over the past three years. The Louisiana average teacher salary is approximately \$29,000, compared to \$33,000 for the southern region and \$39,000 for the nation.

MORNING ADVOCATE In a special "back to school" report released in mid-August, the U.S. Department of Education predicted the number of teens graduating from Louisiana high schools will drop by nearly 7 percent in the decade ahead.

JEFF ON VOUCHERS By Carl Redman, Advocate U.S. Rep. William Jefferson, D-New Orleans, said he supports charter schools -- that is, schools that are free of much state control but still receive state funding. "But I'm not for vouchers because they are built on a false assumption," Jefferson said. "The assumption is that a parent can go out there and find a better school for their kids, enough of them so they can make a difference to every family. "We know there are

some schools that everybody is going to want to rush to and try to get their kids into. The rest of them (parents) are going to be relegated to deal with schools that are inferior to those." So the voucher system doesn't change anything except a few folks can shop better than others and maybe do better." Jefferson said the only way to improve poorly performing schools is to change things such as class sizes and teacher quality.

LOUISIANA IN GENERAL

SLIPPING AWAY, The Times-Picayune, Aug. 9: Underneath the bubble of the boom '90s is one startling fact: People and jobs are not coming here. Despite the booming economy, Louisiana is not keeping pace with the rest of the South, latest estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau show. In a decade when the South as a region gained 5 million residents, Louisiana is the only Southern state with more people leaving than moving in. Since 1990, 92,000 more people have moved out of the state than have come here.

FROM MORNING ADVOCATE To get an idea of how Louisiana stacks up against other states in the South in terms of spending per college student, consider some numbers published in the 1998/1999 Fact Book on Higher Education produced by the Southern Regional Education Board.

- The SREB says the 1997-1998 regional average for state and local general operating appropriations per full-time-equivalent student at all four-year public colleges and universities was \$5,356. For two-year colleges, the SREB says the figure was \$3,684.
- The SREB's corresponding figures for Louisiana are \$3,411 for four-year colleges and universities and \$2,630 for two-year colleges.
- In Florida the numbers are \$6,838 for four-year schools and \$3,174 for two-year schools; in Mississippi the corresponding figures are \$5,065 and \$4,060. Louisiana should bring its spending per college student up to a level more in line with the Southern regional average.

TECHNOLOGY According to a study by the Progressive Policy Institute, Louisiana is a stodgy state where corporations and state government have failed to use computers, the Internet and other high-tech tools to boost the economy. The result is that Louisiana ranks 47th of 50 states in preparing its economy for the next century.

The state has several times in the past planned a transition to a new knowledge-based economy, but the state hasn't consistently invested in it. The top two states are Massachusetts and California. Louisiana finished ahead of only West Virginia, Arkansas and Mississippi.

Using 17 economic indicators ranging from the number of high-tech jobs to the number of adults with Internet access, the Washington, D.C., think

tank gauged how well states have mastered what it calls the "New Economy." The study describes the "New Economy" as fast-growing, flexible, innovative, global and highly competitive. It says economic success in the next century will be based on how well states improve education, invest in worker training and encourage entrepreneurship. Louisiana scores below the national average -- often in the bottom five states -- on 16 of 17 statistical categories. Here are some examples:

- Only one in five adults here has access to the Internet, which ranks the state 47th nationally.
- Less than 3 percent of the state's work force is employed by foreign companies, according to 1996-97 data, which the study says shows a lack of integration into the global economy.
- Louisiana ranks 46th in educational attainment, a category that generally measures the percentage of workers with college degrees or at least some college course work.
- Few private firms have ".com" Internet domain names. The state ranks 44th in commercial Internet sites per company. The vast majority of firms in the state are not on the Worldwide Web at all.
- Only 1.5 percent of the state's work force is employed in high-tech electronics, computers, software or telecommunications. That puts Louisiana 48th.
- Private companies in the state rank low for investing in research and development. Louisiana finished 49th in that category, ahead of only Hawaii.
- The state still ranks low in terms of the number of U.S. patents granted. Companies in the state have only secured 0.21 patents for every 1,000 employees. That ranks 38th in the nation.

"My company's motto is: The Future is Now," he said. "Louisiana's motto is: The Future Isn't Yet," said one business owner.

TIMES PICAYUNE State and local data indicate as many as 13,000 Louisiana children experience homelessness at some point in the year, and it's getting worse. Homeless children are the nation's new outcasts, according to a recent study by the Better Homes Fund, and Louisiana children are at higher risk for homelessness than any in the nation based on the state's high poverty rate, the large number of children in foster care, the large number of female headed households, the large number of children registered in public school as homeless, and the decrease in the number of persons receiving federal assistance due to welfare reform. Louisiana has one of the highest poverty rates in the country. In Orleans Parish, 86 percent of the 81,000 public schoolchildren are poor enough to qualify for the free lunch program.

LAST PLACE TO RAISE A CHILD A recent report of the Children's Rights Council says Louisiana is the worst place in the nation to raise children. In 1995, when Foster was elected, we were 48th.

The Governor and his spin doctors would like you to believe that this last-place rating does not adequately reflect his Administration's attention to children, that its research is inadequate or out-dated or insufficient.

So let's do some of our own research.

Louisiana has the highest percentage of children living in poverty in the nation, a ranking which used to be held by Mississippi.

Congress allocates welfare-assistance money to every state in the union to help poor children and their parents. There is still \$130 million in these dedicated federal dollars for Louisiana which the Governor is unwilling to spend on this state's poorest, non-working families.

In fact, he has offered to return nearly half of it to the federal government. It's moves like this which will become part of the Republican-backed tax break being offered to America's wealthiest residents.

The Foster Administration has failed to put meaningful job training programs in place. No TANFF funds were targeted for quality day care for parents in job training.

These are facts no report could fail to notice.

Congress also made it possible for every state in the union to start a health insurance program for the children of working and poor families. There are more than 200,000 needy, eligible children in Louisiana.

In two years, Foster's commitment to LaCHIP lags behind all other states, including Mississippi. Less than 40,000 children are registered even though we have one of the lowest eligibility requirements in the nation.

Clearly, a change is needed.

FAX

A fax from the Brylski Company
3418 COLISEUM STREET, NEW ORLEANS, LA, 70115
Phone: (504) 897-6110
Fax: (504) 897-0778

TO: Kathleen Mulvihill
Education Foundation

FROM: Heather Harper

RE: Numbers you requested

DATE: Sept. 4, 1998

The minimum salary for a teacher with a Bachelor's Degree and no experience is \$25,100. The maximum salary for a teacher with 25 years experience in the system and a PhD is \$42, 526.

This year's number of certified/non-certified teachers is not ready yet, but here are last year's numbers:

There were a total of 4,700 teachers in the NOPS system. Of these, 306 are totally non-certified (labeled circular 665).

274 are considered TTAOs (temporary teaching assignment only), which means that they have passed all four parts of the teacher exam, but don't hold an educational degree.

So there are a total of 580 teachers out of 4,700 who are not certified.

Source: Judy Gahr, Dir. of Personnel, 365-8644.

Thanks, if you have any questions, please call me at 897-6110.

**Comparison of teacher pay:
Beginning and top salary, New Orleans 98-99 to other cities 97-98**

City	Beginning salary	Top salary*	Years to top
New Orleans 1998-99 (added \$339 March 99)	25100	42626	26

Other Major Southern Cities

(Note that these are salaries from two school years ago; some have increased substantially)

City	Beginning salary	Top salary*	Years to top
Atlanta 1997-98	31080	53844	11
Alexandria, VA 1997-98	30000	63069	15
Memphis 1997-98	29919	48448	19
Miami 1997-98	28650	57500	20
Fort Worth 1997-98	28200	48224	31
Houston 1997-98	27700	46153	24
San Antonio 1997-98	27096	47458	32
Dallas 1997-98	27000	46720	26
Birmingham 1997-98	26235	42301	12
Austin 1997-98	25840	40580	23
Mobile 1997-98	25722	38763	17
Huntsville, AL 1997-98	25236	46875	27
Chattanooga 1997-98	24705	43974	16
El Paso 1997-98	24633	42628	28
Jackson 1997-98	22249	41592	23
Little Rock 1997-98	21020	42560	20

Other cities

Yonkers 1997-98	33259	74854	8
Pittsburgh 1997-98	32300	62200	10
Boston 1997-98	30770	55332	8

New Orleans beginning teacher pay is less attractive than other large cities. Pay becomes even less attractive with more experience, e.g., a beginning teacher makes \$4980 more in Atlanta, an 11th year teacher makes \$17,817 more.

(11th year teacher in Atlanta makes the top salary of \$53,844. An 11th year teacher in New Orleans makes \$36,657.)

* Ph. D. unless noted otherwise

TABLE I-1

AVERAGE TEACHER SALARY IN 1997-98
STATE RANKINGS

Rank	State	Average Salary	Percent of U.S. Average
1	Connecticut	\$51,727	131.5%
2	New Jersey	50,284	127.8%
3	New York	48,712 o	123.8%
4	Michigan	48,361 b	122.9%
5	Alaska	48,275	122.7%
6	Pennsylvania	47,542	120.8%
7	D.C.	44,746 b	113.7%
8	California	44,585	113.3%
9	Rhode Island	44,506 b	113.1%
10	Massachusetts	44,285 b	112.5%
11	Illinois	43,707 a	111.1%
12	Delaware	42,439	107.9%
13	Oregon	42,301 e	107.5%
14	Maryland	41,404 f	105.2%
15	Nevada	40,572 e	103.1%
16	Indiana	39,752	101.0%
17	Minnesota	39,104 b	99.4%
18	Ohio	39,099	99.4%
19	Washington	38,755 a	98.5%
20	Wisconsin	38,179 f	97.0%
21	Georgia	37,412	95.1%
22	Colorado	37,240	94.6%
23	Virginia	37,024 f	94.1%
24	New Hampshire	36,863	93.2%
25	Hawaii	36,688 b	93.0%
26	Vermont	36,299	92.3%
27	Tennessee	34,584 f	87.9%
28	Florida	34,473	87.6%
29	Kentucky	34,453 f	87.6%
30	Maine	34,349	87.3%
31	Iowa	34,084	86.8%
32	Arizona	34,071 b	86.8%
33	Missouri	34,001 a,f	86.4%
34	Kansas	33,800 d	85.9%
35	South Carolina	33,808	85.4%
36	Texas	33,537	85.2%
37	West Virginia	33,398 f	84.9%
38	North Carolina	33,123	84.2%
39	Utah	32,981 a	83.6%
40	Idaho	32,834	83.4%
41	Alabama	32,799	83.4%
42	Nebraska	32,668	83.0%
43	Arkansas	32,119 a,f	81.6%
44	Wyoming	32,022	81.4%
45	Oklahoma	30,940	79.6%
46	Montana	30,617	77.8%
47	New Mexico	30,309 b	77.0%
48	Louisiana	30,090	76.5%
49	Mississippi	28,691	72.9%
50	North Dakota	28,231	71.7%
51	South Dakota	27,839	70.8%
U.S. Average		\$39,347	100.0%
Guam		\$27,827 e,f	70.7%
Puerto Rico		\$24,000	61.0%
Virgin Islands		\$33,311	84.7%

a=estimate or preliminary; b=AFT estimate; o=median; d=estimated to exclude fringe benefits at 8%; e=includes employer pick-up of employee pension contribution, where applicable; f=includes extra duty pay. Source: American Federation of Teachers, annual survey of state departments of education.

Comments

1997-98

School Report Card

WRIGHT, SOPHIE B., MIDDLE SCHOOL

1426 NAPOLEON AVENUE

NEW ORLEANS, LA 70115-0000

(504) 896-4093

The *School Report Card* gives important information about your child's school. Remember every school is different, with its own special strengths and needs; therefore, the *School Report Card* cannot tell you everything. It can, however, show you several things happening at school that affect your child's education. We urge you to find out more about your school from its teachers and principal, and to stay actively involved in your child's education.

In the class size, student attendance, and students suspended and expelled tables, the district and state averages are for schools that are similar to your school. In other words, if your school is an elementary school, the district and state averages are also for elementary schools.

School Characteristics

Your School	
Grades	Students
6-8	644

Faculty with a Master's Degree or Higher		
Your School	Your District	State
36%	41%	40%

The Faculty

There were 42 faculty members at your school in 1997-98. The table above and to the right shows the percent of faculty in your school with advanced degrees. Obtaining such degrees is one way teachers are able to gain expertise and become more prepared for their students. The faculty includes all teachers, principals, librarians, and counselors.

How Large are the Classes?

Small classes allow teachers more time with each student. Students who attend schools with smaller classes generally score higher on state tests. In 1997-98, 6 classes at your school (5%) had 1-20 students, 12 classes (9%) had 21-26 students, and 114 classes (86%) had 27 or more. Classes such as band, choir, and P.E. are excluded. The district and state averages are for schools similar to your school.

Class Size			
Students Per Class	Your School	Your District	State
1-20	5%	8%	27%
21-26	9%	16%	40%
27 +	86%	77%	33%

State School Code: 036131

Produced by the Louisiana Department of Education- March 1999

Student Participation

Information on attendance, suspensions, expulsions, and dropouts tells us how much time students spend in school. This information also tells us how difficult it is for some students to finish school. This report includes information on all students.

Is Attending School Important to My Child's Education?

Students who attend school every day are more likely to do better in school and are less likely to drop out. If a school had 90% attendance, then 90 out of 100 students would be present every day. The district and state averages are for schools similar to yours.

Student Attendance		
Your School	Your District	State
89%	88%	93%

How Many Students are Suspended or Expelled?

The number of students suspended or expelled is one way of looking at discipline. Some students who are disciplined attend in-school suspension or expulsion programs. Other students are removed from the school (out-of-school suspension or expulsion). If a school had 4% in-school and 3% out-of-school suspensions, then 4 out of every 100 students would have been placed in the in-school suspension program while 3 out of every 100 students would have been removed from the school.

Students Suspended and Expelled			
	Your School		Your District
	Number	Percent	
Suspended			
in school	1	0.2%	3.5%
out of school	107	15.6%	22.0%
Expelled			
in school	0	0.0%	0.0%
out of school	3	0.4%	1.6%

How Many Students Dropped Out?

It is important for students to finish high school. Students who do not complete school have a harder time getting good jobs. If a school had 4% student dropouts, then 4 out of every 100 students would have dropped out.

Student Dropouts				
Grade Level	Your School		Your District	State
	Number	Percent		
7	9	3.0%	6.6%	3.4%
8	10	3.8%	6.5%	4.5%

THIS IS GOOD - UNIFORMS

State School Code: 036131

Testing

To measure student learning, the state mandates three types of tests. The Reading Level is assessed at grades 2 and 3. The Iowa Tests for grades 4,6,8,9,10, and 11 compare Louisiana students to students nationwide. The LEAP tests (those given in grades 3, 5, and 7 and the Graduation Exit Exam given in grades 10 and 11) measure what the state expects students to learn. This report includes information on all students tested.

How Do Our Students Compare Nationally?

The Iowa Tests are given to students to test their knowledge in several different subjects. These scores are compared with scores in the district, state, and nation.

Percentile Rank - The Iowa Tests				
Grade Level	Your School	Your District	State	Nation
6	19	25	44	50
8	16	25	44	50

HOW TO READ THE LEAP RESULTS

The striped bar in each graph shows the percent of students at your school who passed the test in 1997-98. The white bar is for your district and the shaded bar is for the state.

How Many Fifth Graders at Your School Passed the LEAP Tests?

Grade 5 LEAP results are not reported for your school.

Grade 5 LEAP - Percent Passing

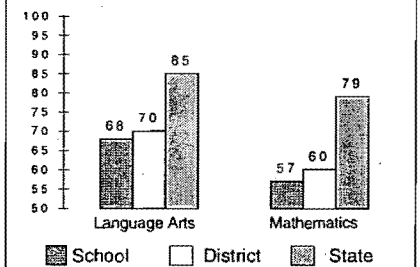
Does Not Apply to Your School

Language Arts Mathematics
 School District State

How Many Seventh Graders at Your School Passed the LEAP Tests?

In Language Arts, 68% (68 out of every 100 students) passed.
 In Math, 57% (57 out of every 100 students) passed.

Grade 7 LEAP - Percent Passing



John B. Buxton

09/21/99 05:46:37 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Karin Kullman/OPD/EOP@EOP
cc: bethany little/opd/eop@eop, andy rotherham/opd/eop@eop
bcc:
Subject: Sophie B Wright Middle 

here's Sophie B Wright Middle's school report card

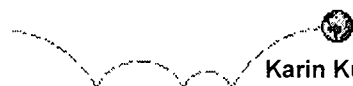
<http://www.doe.state.la.us/DOE/omf/DSRC9798/036131m.pdf>

A few highlights:

- * 33% of Louisiana classes have 27+ students; 86% of Wright Middle have that many.
- * Scores on the Iowa Tests are way below state and national scores (19 for the school v 44 for state v 50 for nation in percentile rank)
- * But, attendance, suspensions and dropout rates are better than state average

JB

Karin Kullman

 Karin Kullman

09/21/99 04:03:42 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bethany Little/OPD/EOP@EOP
cc: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
Subject: Re: New Orleans School 

Thank you Bethany!!! That's a couple of things Kris doesn't need to check out!

Message Copied To:

kris m balderston/who/eop@eop
julie d. eddy/who/eop@eop
andy rotherham/opd/eop@eop
john b. buxton/opd/eop@eop
linda l. moore/who/eop@eop
brian v. kennedy/opd/eop@eop

Karin Kullman

09/21/99 05:21:14 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Andy Rotherham/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: New Orleans School

here's the list of stuff education doesn't do.

----- Forwarded by Karin Kullman/OPD/EOP on 09/21/99 05:20 PM -----



Kris M Balderston

09/21/99 04:53:14 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Karin Kullman/OPD/EOP@EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: New Orleans School

this is our answer

----- Forwarded by Kris M Balderston/WHO/EOP on 09/21/99 04:53 PM -----



Leslie_Thornton@ed.gov

09/21/99 04:07:00 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Kris M Balderston@EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: New Orleans School

Ben, Kris --

We can do a general vet and find out the info about the grants. The following questions the WH needs to go directly to the school for:

- demographics of student population
- ~~school performance~~
- ~~do they have an after-school and/or summer school program?~~
- ~~what are the sizes of their classes?~~
- ~~we have heard that the students wear uniforms - can this be confirmed?~~
- any recent school violence incidents?

99 E. official American

8th
Hug →

Historic era
120

Sh ~~over~~ ~~over~~ ~~over~~
1912
89%
UNIFORMS

To: Andy Rotherham
From: JB Buxton
Re: Background on Louisiana
Date: September 21, 1999

Here are 3 pages on Louisiana and some suggestions on the event and a stand-alone page on their accountability plan. I am still playing phone tag with a school reform guy in New Orleans who knows these issues cold.

General Background

Louisiana has long been recognized as having some of the—if not the—lowest performing public schools in the nation. The state has consistently scored near or at the bottom of states participating in the NAEP tests. Recently, Louisiana has embarked on an aggressive attempt to improve its schools. Under the leadership of Gov. Mike Foster, the state has put into place a reform package that includes higher standards, a long-range accountability plan for school performance, and investments in teacher pay and training. The Governor also tried unsuccessfully to push through a tuition voucher plan last year which would have given disadvantaged parents the option of sending their children to private or parochial schools.

Notable in Louisiana's education effort have been the following:

School and District Accountability Plan. The accountability plan calls for schools to be held accountable for their performance on new state tests and the Iowa tests of Basic Skills, as well as their attendance and dropout rates. Schools will have target goals and will be rewarded if they reach them. Schools that fail to reach their goals fall into corrective action. Corrective action initially includes the assignment of district assistance teams or distinguished educators. For schools that continue to fail, parents are given the choice of transferring to other public schools and the schools are reconstituted or subject to loss of state funding.

State spending on education. In addition to the accountability plan, the Governor and legislature have increased state spending on education by \$200 million over the past year. The Governor's latest state budget spends \$600 million more for elementary and secondary education than the 1995-96 budget. The additional spending includes \$105 million to make school funding more equitable, \$50 million for a reading and math professional development initiative, \$25 million for a technology initiative, \$12 million for teacher classroom supplies, and money for teacher salary increases and increasing the school day by 30 minutes, the latter four at Foster's urging.

Raising Teacher Pay. The state has put money into raising teacher salaries and the Governor has articulated the goal of reaching the average of Southeastern (SREB states). He stopped taking his salary as governor in early 1998 because he had not delivered on a 1995 campaign promise to get public-school teacher pay to the Southeastern average. Foster is using that money to fund education grants.

Report Cards. Parents and citizens have access to report cards on state, district and school performance. The school report cards include information on how a school is performing in the areas of student achievement; teacher quality; class size; attendance and dropout rates; and suspensions/expulsions. Each area includes comparisons with the district, state and nation as appropriate.

Social Promotion. Beginning in 2000, the state's LEAP 21 tests will be used to assess student readiness to be promoted to the next grade. Students who do not score at the "approaching basic" level will be offered summer school and must pass a retest before they move on to the next grade.

Extended Learning. 18 districts determined to be at risk of failing the accountability tests were given grants of between \$20,000 and \$200,000 to operate summer and fall programs to help students improve their scores.

Other education efforts include helping charter schools to open their doors through \$1.3 million in state loans and the Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) which allows qualifying students to attend state college or university for free for two years or \$5000 to attend a private institution in the state.

Reaction to Louisiana's Efforts and Unaddressed Needs

Observers of the education landscape in Louisiana believe that the state's accountability program is a strong one and an important first step. They say that Louisiana has yet to make the investments that are needed to support school and district efforts to achieve goal under the accountability plan, but that the understanding of the need to commit to those investments seems to be there in the legislature, State Board, and Governor's office.

That said, observers point to *class size reduction*, *school facility construction and renovation*, *teacher professional development* and *attention to miserable high schools* as the chief needs for school improvement and the ones that are not being fully addressed. The state AFT affiliate has not been an outspoken opponent of the accountability plan, but they have states that they believe that the lack of attention to class size, in particular, is a major flaw.

The Gubernatorial Campaign

Governor Foster (R) is currently running for reelection against 3 candidates, Congressman William Jefferson (D-New Orleans), attorney Phil Preis (D), and Sen. Tom Greene (R-Maringouin). Education is a central issue in the campaign and there is not much that separates the candidates.

- Gov. Foster wants to get teacher pay to the Southern average and give new school and student accountability programs time to work.
- Rep. Jefferson wants to increase teacher pay, reduce class sizes and pump more state money into helping local school districts take care of dilapidated schools.
- Preis wants to provide massive state assistance for school renovations through a new tax on oil and natural gas processed in Louisiana.
- Sen. Greene wants to fight federal courts over public school desegregation mandates and to put in a school choice plan.

Jefferson's Education Platform

- Raising teacher pay to the Southern average.

- Reducing class sizes to no more than 15 students kindergarten through fourth grade, no more than 18 in fifth grade to high school and no more than 20 students in high school.
- Requiring every third-grader to pass a statewide reading exam to advance to the fourth grade.
- Assisting local districts with renovations, including air conditioning for school buildings.
- Requiring public schools to hire only certified teachers in the first through third grades.
- Encouraging parents to be more involved in their children's education.

Possible Event Messages for the President

- **Louisiana is moving in the right direction by raising standards for all students and putting into place an accountability plan for schools.** The state's plan looks very much like what the President is proposing in the ESEA reauthorization. It includes testing in grades 4 and 8, performance targets for schools, rewards and sanctions for performance, and a plan for turning around failing schools. The state is also taking action to stop the practice of social promotion, to raise teacher salaries, and provide report cards on school, district and state performance.
- **The state must now act to provide the investments needed so that all schools and all students can meet higher standards.** While the state has been moving to raise teacher salaries and provide more professional development opportunities for teachers, it is not going far enough down that road. They need to focus on such investments as improving teacher preparation, induction, and professional development; reducing class size; and extending learning opportunities through after and summer school programs.
- **If teachers and students are to reach higher standards they can't do it in overflowing classes and dilapidated school buildings. My administration seeks to support state efforts to offer students the schools they deserve; Louisiana must not dodge its responsibility for providing schools that are safe and conducive to learning.** In Louisiana, locals have responsibility for school construction and renovation. There is a major call for the state to do more to help out locals, but the state has yet to act. On the class size front, Orleans parish has high students per class numbers (need to find exact figures). These are both major planks in Jefferson's campaign.

Event Location

I think we need to hold this thing in a school with overflowing classrooms or leaking roofs. Or you could hold it in a place with an after-school program or a summer school component—many schools in the Orleans Parish district have “Ex-L” programs which are summer sessions to help kids improve on state tests. Or, we could hold it in a school with a disproportionate number of new teachers and highlight the need to invest in them.

If we hold it in a “good” school or “high-performing school” it needs to be one that can attribute its high performance to some of these “investment” issues like teacher quality, school modernization, extended learning, a specific strategy to turn around failure or class size reduction.

Louisiana's School and District Accountability Program

The state has borrowed heavily from accountability plans in North Carolina and Texas—recognized by Ed Week as having the two most comprehensive accountability systems in the country.

The Louisiana program will hold schools and students accountable for their performance on state tests in the fourth and eighth grades in math and English/LA (LEAP 21) and the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, and for their attendance and dropout rates.¹ The LEAP 21 tests measure how well a student has mastered the new state content standards. Once fully implemented, LEAP 21 will be given at grades 4, 8, 10, and 11. The Iowa Tests comprise the state's norm-referenced testing (NRT) program. These tests compare the performance of Louisiana's students to the performance of students nationally. The Iowa Tests are given at grade 3, 5, 6, 7, and 9.

School Performance Scores will be calculated with test and attendance/dropout data and schools will be accountable for reaching target goals over a two-year period. Schools are compared to themselves for the purpose of performance targets. Schools with an initial School Performance Score of 30 or less will immediately enter Corrective Action. The state has designated three levels of corrective action:

- Level I: Schools work with District Assistance Teams
- Level II: A highly trained Distinguished Educator (DE) will be assigned to schools by the state. For any Academically Unacceptable Schools within Level II, parents will have a right to transfer their child to a higher performing public school.
- Level III: The Distinguished Educator will continue to serve in an advisory capacity. All parents of schools in Level III now have the right to transfer their child to a higher performing public school. Districts must develop a Reconstitution Plan by spring of the first year in this level, and submit the plan to BESE for approval. If a school does not meet performance goals during its first year in this level, the school must be reconstituted prior to the beginning of the next year. If not, the school will lose its state approval and state funding.

In addition to holding schools accountable, beginning in 2000, the state's LEAP 21 tests will be used to assess student readiness to be promoted to the next grade. Students who do not score at the "approaching basic" level will be offered summer school and must pass a retest before they move on to the next grade.

To receive a high school diploma, students are required to pass the state's Graduate Exit Examination, which tests competency in math, science, social studies and English.

¹ For K-6 schools, the LEAP 21 tests will count 60%, the Iowa Tests 30%, and attendance rates 10%. In 7-12 schools, LEAP 21 tests count 60%, Iowa Tests 30%, attendance 5%, and the dropout rate 5%.



Louisiana: A First Step

by Kathleen Kennedy Manzo

For years, the public has been frustrated by a lack of adequate attention to education in Louisiana. But this year, the state is moving forward with the first stage of a long-range accountability plan designed to improve low-achieving schools.

Efforts to raise standards, improve teacher pay, and hold schools and districts more accountable for student achievement were fortified with nearly \$200 million in additional funding in the \$2.2 billion state education budget the legislature passed last year.

"We are hopeful that there are a number of factors that will allow this program to continue and to allow Louisiana to show gains in student achievement," says Leslie R. Jacobs, the state board member who headed the state's accountability commission. "National trends [in setting standards and designing accountability measures] create the right climate for this set of reforms to be successful."

The first round of testing under the new system will begin this spring when 4th and 8th graders take tests linked to the state's new content standards in English/language arts and mathematics. In the fall, the state's 1,100 elementary and middle schools will be scored on how they compare with state benchmarks on those tests.

Hopes are high as Louisiana sets its long-range accountability plan in motion.

The plan offers monetary rewards for schools that exceed expectations and "corrective action," from the assignment of district-assistance teams to the reconstitution of school staffs, for low-achieving schools.

In spring 2000, students will be tested in science and social studies. Tests in those subjects for 10th and 11th graders will be phased in in subsequent years.

Students took the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills for the first time last year. State officials said the results--students averaged at or just below the 45th percentile, with 50 being the national average--were promising, considering that it was the first year they administered the norm-referenced test. When fully implemented, the state and Iowa

Vital Statistics

66	Public school districts
1,475	Public schools
781,000	K-12 enrollment
49.4%	Minority students
35%	Children in poverty
11.1%	Students with disabilities
\$3.6 billion	Annual K-12 expenditures (all revenue sources)

- QUALITY COUNTS
- Introduction
- HOLDING SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABLE
- Challenges
- Indicators
- FOCUS GROUPS
- On School Report Cards
- STATE OF THE STATES
- Report Cards
- Policy Updates
- Indicators
- Contents
- How To Order

Go to Louisiana's report card.

test results will be the primary factors in determining a school's performance score.

Student attendance and graduation rates will also be considered.

"It is important to remember that we are in the early stages of our reform initiatives," state schools Superintendent Cecil J. Picard said in announcing the test results. "I believe [the reform initiatives] will result in higher performance in the coming years."

The state has been last, or nearly last, among the states on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a federal project that tests a sampling of students in core subjects.

The rigor of the standards and the tests alone will not result in change, some observers argue, unless the state school board is willing to set the bar high.

"Most reforms in Louisiana have fallen down in the implementation phase ... not in the first year, but there was a gradual erosion," says Jackie Ducote, the president of the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, an independent watchdog group based in Baton Rouge.

"Where the board sets the performance levels will be key. [The plan] can fall apart if they don't raise the level of expectation high enough," Ducote says.

Other educators and policymakers share Ducote's concern but believe that the state board will find the appropriate standard for schools to meet.

"We are going to set a bar and an expectation and not falter from it," vows James V. Soileau, the executive director of the Louisiana School Boards Association.

Already the state board has rejected districts' efforts to lower the standard for some schools when it denied requests to provide a "handicap," or adjustment to the performance scores, for the districts that have more minority, limited-English-proficient, and poor students.

Officials hope a reading and math initiative, which has received \$50 million from the legislature over the past two years, will help raise student performance on state and standardized tests.

The program provides up to 30 hours of teacher training in reading and math instruction. A 30-minute increase in the school day will be dedicated to core subjects, particularly math and reading in the early grades. Part of a \$25 million technology initiative will also go toward professional development.

Although the Louisiana teachers' unions did not wholly support the longer day, the legislature is compensating teachers for the additional time with an annual salary increase of \$800 to \$1,500 each. The money was included in the state's "minimum foundation program," or

per-pupil financial distribution to districts.

The state pumped an additional \$105 million into the \$2.2 billion program last year in its continuing attempt to establish a more equitable funding system for districts by next school year.

And teachers won't have to dig as deep into their own pockets to pay for more classroom supplies. For the second year in a row, they will get a break from a \$12 million pot of state money for that purpose, or about \$200 each.

The state is continuing its tuition-exemption program for teachers who wish to take additional courses at state universities to improve knowledge of their subject areas or teaching methods.

The state board was set to decide last fall whether to require prospective teachers to take the PRAXIS examination, which, unlike the purely multiple-choice National Teacher Examinations that are used now, requires test-takers to write essays and analyses and to respond to pedagogical questions about the fields in which they hope to teach.

The attention to improving the quality of the teaching corps in the state has not eased teachers' apprehension about the accountability program.

"We are concerned that school boards may try to put the entire responsibility for improving test scores on teachers, with very little recourse on the teachers' part to dispute such an evaluation," says Bob Crowley, the executive director of the Louisiana Federation of Teachers, an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers.

Despite all the supplementary money for schools, the lack of attention to reducing class sizes is a flaw in the plan, Crowley argues.

Ten charter schools opened their doors last fall with the help of \$1.3 million in loans from the state.

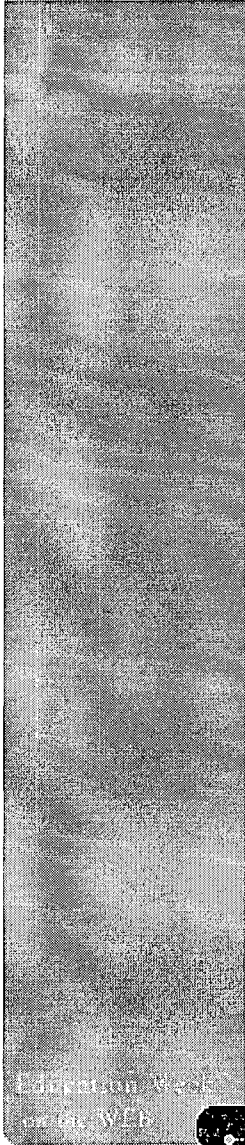
A 1997 law limits the number of such schools, which receive public support but are free of most state regulations, to 42.

The legislature is expected to revisit the law this spring.

State education leaders won a round in court last year when a state court of appeals dismissed a lawsuit claiming that the state's school funding is inequitable and inadequate. The court, sitting in Baton Rouge, ruled that the state constitution requires only "minimum," not "adequate," state aid to public schools.

An attempt to finance tuition vouchers also failed last year when the legislature rejected Republican Gov. Mike Foster's plan to give parents of disadvantaged children the option of sending them to private or parochial schools.

State policymakers are also focusing their energies beyond K-12



education with a scholarship program designed to encourage students to do better in high school and aspire to higher learning.

The Tuition Opportunity Program for Students, or TOPS, allows any qualifying student to attend a state college or university, or an approved occupational program, free for two years. It will also award up to \$5,000 for students to attend private institutions in the state.

So popular was the higher education program that 4,000 more students than expected for a total of 35,000 took the ACT last year.

Despite the tendency for test scores to go down when the pool of test-takers swells, Louisiana's students improved their average scores on the college-entrance test.

State officials challenged the accuracy of the information submitted by high schools for students who applied for the scholarships. The state contends that officials in at least nine schools may have misinterpreted the instructions for calculating grade point averages or in determining core-curriculum courses. Nevertheless, the legislature approved an additional \$20 million for the program last year to extend the scholarships to all qualified applicants.

It is a sign that the state has reason to hope for a brighter educational future, says Louann A. Bierlein, the education adviser to Foster. The governor has been credited with building the momentum for the reforms.

"We expected to hear more grumbling that this [latest stage of reforms], too, shall pass," Bierlein says. "But I think there is a growing sense of optimism that maybe this time it will happen."

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