



2012 Regular Session
of the Louisiana Legislature

PK-12 Public Education in Louisiana

March 2012



**The Scott S. Cowen Institute
for Public Education Initiatives
at Tulane University**

The Cowen Institute is an action-oriented think tank that informs and advances solutions – through policies, programs, and partnerships – to eliminate the challenges impeding the success of K-12 education in New Orleans and beyond. It also serves as a clearinghouse for K-12 public schools in New Orleans to directly access the myriad of experts and resources available at Tulane University. Our work is in the following key areas:



Applied Research



Public Policy



Civic Engagement



College Readiness Programs

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Louisiana PK-12 Education: Governance, Demographics, and Enrollment

Local & State Governance Organization Chart

Basic Facts About Louisiana Public Schools, 2011-12

- Student Enrollment: 709,471
- Number of Schools: 1,467
- Grades Served: PK-12
- Percent Receiving Free or Reduced Price Lunch: 67%
- Charter School Enrollment: 44,391

Louisiana Legislature

- Drafts and passes laws related to public education in the areas of accountability, curriculum, and school district employment requirements
- Gives corporate power to local school boards and grants them the right to levy taxes
- Appropriates money for the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) to fund K-12 public education across the state

State Board of Elementary & Secondary Education (BESE)

- Established by the Louisiana Legislature at the Constitutional Convention of 1973
- Acts as administrative policy-making body for elementary and secondary public schools
- Comprised of eleven members, eight elected from single-member districts and three appointed by the Governor
- Responsible for preparing the MFP, approving teacher certification, adopting policies for student assessment, and adopting operating standards for schools
- Has authority to grant charters to schools throughout the state

Local School Boards

- Created by the Louisiana Legislature pursuant to the Louisiana Constitution
- Able to levy local taxes to fund schools
- Bound by policies set by BESE, including mandatory participation in the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP)
- Elected by citizens of the district
- Has authority to grant charters to school operators in their district
- Acts as administrative policy-making body for elementary and secondary public schools in their district

State Superintendent of Education

- Appointed by BESE
- Mission is to recommend and implement policy in accordance with applicable legislation, the Louisiana Constitution, and the policy set forth by BESE
- Responsible for directing and overseeing the Louisiana Department of Education

Local School District Superintendents

- Hired by local school boards to oversee the administration and operation of districts
- Responsible for implementing the policy set by the board(s)
- Subject to qualifications set by BESE

Louisiana Department of Education

- Manages, budgets, and allocates funds from federal appropriation and the MFP to districts and programs
- Provides ancillary educational services, such as those related to nutrition, drug-free schools, transportation, and adult education
- Establishes a statewide curriculum and standards and administers the student assessment and school accountability system
- Administers the Recovery School District (RSD)

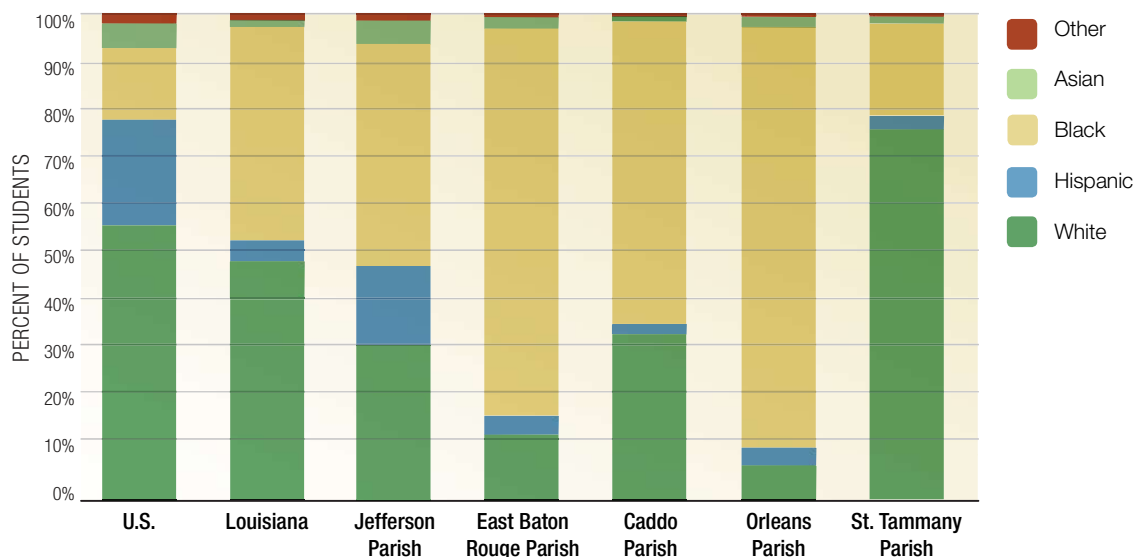


2011-12 Student Demographics

Percentage of Students by Ethnicity

Ethnic minorities make up 53% of public school students in Louisiana, higher than the national average (42%).

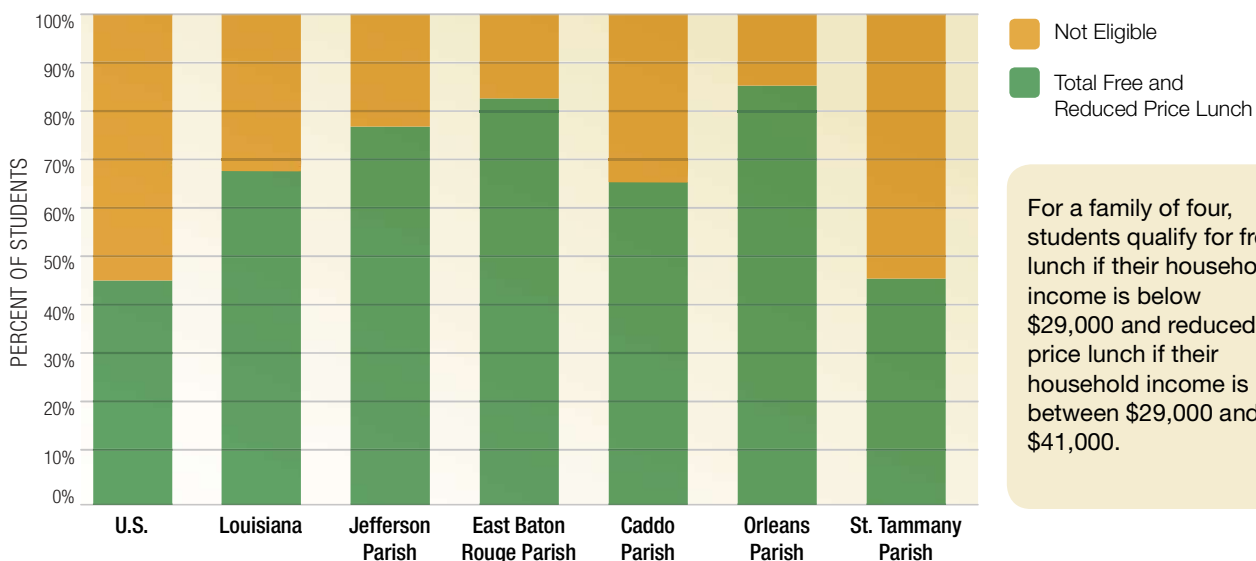
Data on Louisiana students taken from the October 2011 student enrollment count. National data from the 2009-10 school year are from the National Center for Education Statistics. Data for East Baton Rouge, Caddo, and Orleans Parishes include Recovery School District direct-run and charter schools.



Percentage of Students by Free and Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility

Nationally, 47% of public school students are eligible for free and reduced price lunch. Across Louisiana and most of the state's largest school districts, this percentage is considerably higher.

Data on Louisiana students taken from the October 2011 student enrollment count. National data from the 2009-10 school year are from the National Center for Education Statistics. Data for East Baton Rouge, Caddo, and Orleans Parishes include Recovery School District direct-run and charter schools.



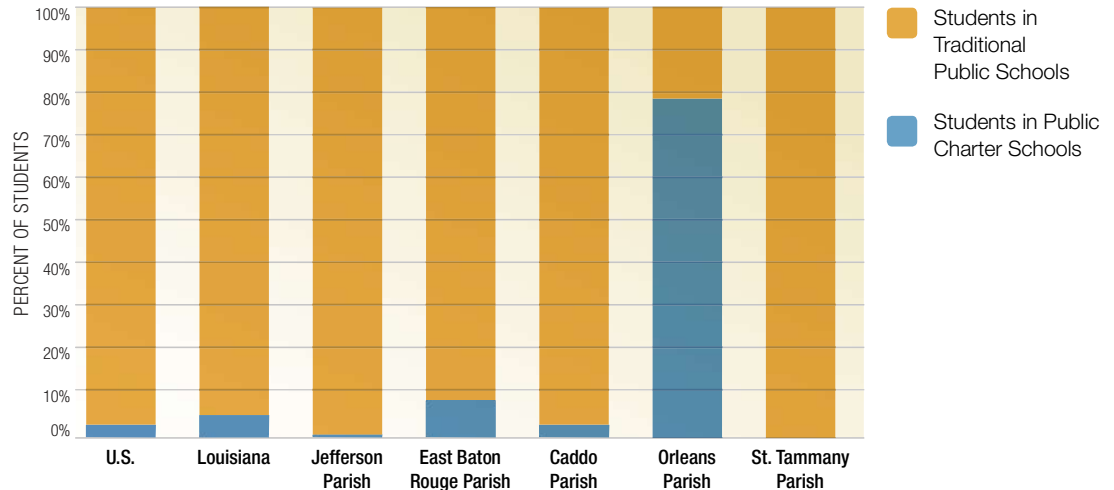
2011-12 Student Enrollment

Charter School Enrollment

Percentage of Public School Students Enrolled in Charter Schools Versus Traditional Public Schools

Nationally and statewide only a small percentage of public school students attend charter schools. However, Orleans Parish has the highest rate of charter attendance of any district in the nation at 77%.

Data on Louisiana students taken from the October 2011 student enrollment count. National data are from the National Association of Public Charter Schools for the 2010-11 school year. Data for East Baton Rouge, Caddo, and Orleans Parishes include Recovery School District direct-run and charter schools.



Districts with the Largest Proportion of Public School Students Enrolled in Charter Schools

1. New Orleans, LA	77%	3. Detroit, MI	37%	5. Flint City, MI	32%
2. Washington, DC	39%	4. Kansas City, MO	35%	6. Gary, IN	30%

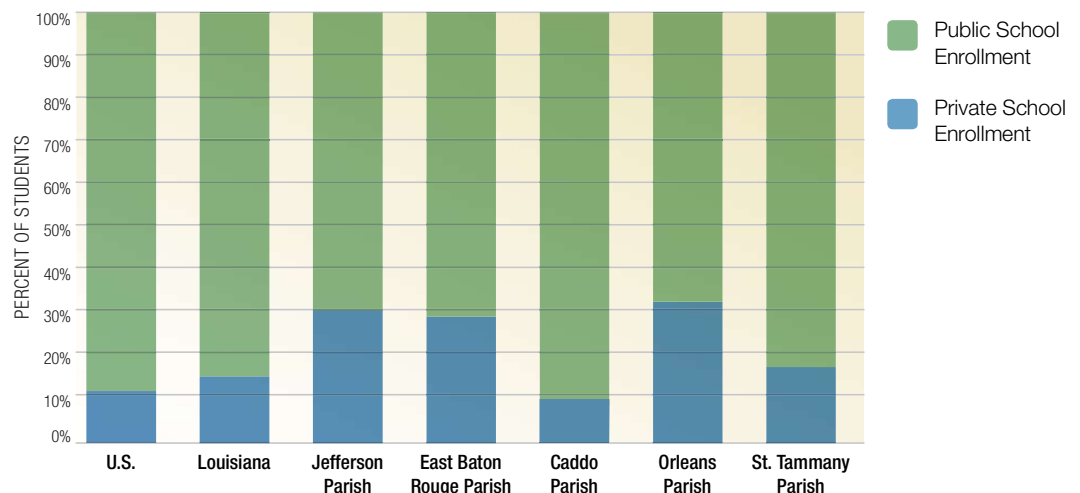
New Orleans data from the Louisiana Department of Education, 2011. National data from the National Association of Public Charter Schools, 2010-11.

Private and Parochial School Enrollment

Private and Parochial School Enrollment as a Percentage of Total K-12 Enrollment

Nationwide, private school enrollment is approximately 11% of total K-12 enrollment, while in Louisiana it is nearly 15%. In East Baton Rouge, Orleans and Jefferson Parishes, more than 27% of students are enrolled in private schools.

Data on Louisiana students taken from the October 2011 student enrollment count. National data are from the National Association of Public Charter Schools for the 2010-11 school year. Data for East Baton Rouge, Caddo, and Orleans Parishes include Recovery School District direct-run and charter schools.



Public Education Governance in Orleans Parish

2011-12 Governance Structure

Total: 88 Schools & 41,779 Students

