

In the 2004-2005 School Year 14,210 Students in Louisiana Dropped out of High School*

Between 2001-2006 school years 71,922 Louisiana Students Dropped out of High School leaving them and their families at risk of a life of poverty and unemployment*

Roughly 40%-45% of Students Who Dropped Out Had Disabilities**

In January 2007, LaTEACH asked BESE to form a taskforce to look at Diploma Options for all students. BESE did direct the Department of Education to form such a taskforce to recommend alternative pathways to a standard High School diploma. Listed below are those recommendations:

Pathways that lead to a Standard High School Diploma require that the student obtain 24 Carnegie Units of Study

1. **Louisiana Alternative Assessment (LAA2) Pathway**- students who are on LAA 2 through their IEP must score Approaching Basic or higher on the LAA 2 exit exam. According to the Louisiana Department of Education Interpretive Guide for LEAP and LAA 2, spring 2007, "LAA 2 is directly aligned with the Louisiana State Content Standards."
2. **GED Pathway**- If the student has not passed all components of the GEE after the summer retest going into their senior year they will be required to enroll in Pre-GED coursework using remaining electives. They will then take the GED and if they pass the GED they will receive a Standard High School Diploma. A waiver must be obtained from GEDTS to allow Louisiana to give the GED to students enrolled in school. Current GEDTS policy only allows those students who have dropped out of school to take the GED.
3. **Occupational Diploma Pathway**- Students will be in a regular education classroom for all core subjects. The difference will be that students on this path will only be tested on the GLEs (grade level expectations) that have been defined by the Louisiana Department of Education as having an occupational focus. Students on this path must use 2 electives that are Career/Tech focus, 2 that are for coordinated studies and 2 that are transition orientated. Students on this path must take all parts of the GEE but they do not have to pass all or any parts of this exit exam.
4. Louisiana will continue to offer the Certificate of Achievement as is. This **is not** a "Standard High School Diploma" and is offered to students who are on LEAP Alternate Assessment 1 (LAA 1) through their IEP.

Please contact BESE members and ask:

1. that the Occupational Diploma pathway be extended to all students, not just those that receive special education services.
2. that LAA 2 be implemented for the 2008-2009 School year
3. that the GED Pathway continues to be pursued and updates brought back to BESE each month.
4. that the Alternate Diploma Taskforce be made a Standing BESE Committee to ensure that we are consistently looking at new ways to educate our students in Louisiana and give them opportunities to earn a Standard High School Diploma.

While we understand that issues of this magnitude and importance take a considerable amount of time and energy to execute, students of LA continue to have few options for relevant and meaningful ways to obtain a standard high school diploma and as each year passes we deny students the options that will help them become a productive member of their community and Louisiana's workforce.

To contact your BESE member you can email them at SBESE@la.gov. You can also access more contact information by visiting the BESE website at <http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/bese/home.html>



For more information on LaTEACH and how to join please call 1.800.894.6558 or visit our website at www.fhfsvla.org/la-teach.php

*Louisiana Department of Education Website, School & District Dropout Numbers & Percents by grade level

**Louisiana Annual Performance Report-Part B