

Louisiana

Graduation Exit Examination (GEE)

*This exam is undergoing significant changes. The data here reflect the GEE, which will be phased out starting with freshmen entering in the 2010-11 school year.

Part I: Policy Trends

Type of test	Comprehensive standards-based
Purpose	<p>The purpose of the exam is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide schools with student academic diagnostic information • Determine prospective high school graduates' mastery of the state curriculum • Encourage districts and schools to identify and serve students at risk of academic failure • Provide data to state policymakers on student attainment of state education goals to inform education policy decisions • Increase alignment of local curriculum and programs of instruction with state education standards • Promote equity of opportunity across all student groups • Meet a state mandate
Major changes in exit exam policy since the 2007-08 school year or any pending changes	<p>Beginning with the freshman class in the 2010-11 school year, students will take end-of-course exams instead of the GEE. End-of-course exams will be given in Algebra I, English II, Geometry, Biology, English III, and American History.</p> <p>The GEE was administered in two phases for the first time in the spring of 2010. This allowed for earlier score reporting and more time for preparation for summer remediation. This phase testing will continue for spring 2011.</p> <p>Legislation was passed for the establishment of a new diploma, the Career Diploma. Implemented in the fall of 2009, except in school districts that were granted waivers, the Career Diploma allows for career-focused subjects to take the place of some advanced core classes. Beginning in 2010, all local education agencies must offer the Career Diploma as an option for students. To receive a Career Diploma, students must earn 23 Carnegie credits, which include a career area of concentration. Students must also pass the new end-of-course exams in order to be eligible to receive a Career Diploma.</p>
Status of state's decision regarding the Common Core	The state has adopted the Common Core State Standards in both English language arts and math. In time the state will

State Standards and impact of that decision on exit exam policies	plans to have consortium tests, which measure the common core standards.
Test used by colleges or universities for undergraduate admission?	No
Year first administered	2000-01 (English language arts and mathematics); 2001-02 (science and social studies)
Year diplomas first withheld	2003
Subjects tested	English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies
Types of questions	Multiple-choice, short-answer, writing prompt/essay
Grade first administered	10 th
Grade(s) exam aligned to	Standards for grades 9 th -12 th
Number of retakes allowed before end of grade 12	Six retakes for English language arts and mathematics, three for science and social studies
Retakes after grade 12	After grade 12, retakes are permitted for students who have met other graduation requirements at all regularly scheduled administrations with no age limit and no limit on the number of times the student may take the exam after senior year.
Does the state have reciprocity with other states?	No
Exit exam used for No Child Left Behind?	Since 2002-03, results from the first time a student takes the exit exam have counted for NCLB accountability.
Same cut score for graduation and NCLB?	No. For NCLB proficiency students must achieve at the <i>Basic</i> level, while for graduation purposes students must achieve at the <i>Approaching Basic</i> level or above.
Evaluations of state exit exam	WestEd conducted an evaluation of the state exit exam in September 2003. The state alignment study is available from the state department of education.
State test contractor	Data Recognition Corporation

Does the state provide students with alternate paths to graduation?	Yes. The Career Diploma is an alternate path to graduation. There are currently 2 diploma tracks in the State of Louisiana—The College and Career Diploma and the Career Diploma.
Alternate paths to graduation specifically for English language learners	No
Alternate paths to graduation specifically for students with disabilities	<p>Students with significant cognitive disabilities are eligible for a certificate of achievement instead of a regular diploma. In 2008–09, 674 students with disabilities (9.14% of all students with disabilities exiting services in 2008-09) earned a certificate of achievement.</p> <p>Beginning in the 2009–10 school year, students with disabilities identified under IDEA may substitute an AA-MAS (LAA 2) for the GEE with a passing score of <i>Approaching Basic</i> or above.</p> <p>Test accommodations should not be different from or in addition to the accommodations documented on the student’s individualized education program (IEP) or individualized accommodation plan (IAP) and Data Validation form and provided in regular classroom instruction and assessment.</p> <p>Test accommodations may include Braille, large print, answers recorded, assistive technology, extended time, communication assistance, transferred answers, individual/small group administration, or tests read aloud. For more information on specific accommodations see the test administration manual at http://www.louisianaschools.net/ide/uploads/13012.pdf</p>
Who makes decisions on whether a student is eligible to use alternate paths?	A student’s IEP team makes the decision regarding accommodations and determines which state assessment (GEE and/or LAA 2) a student will participate in during testing.
How are students identified as eligible for alternate paths to graduate?	Student must meet specific participation criteria to be eligible for the AA-MAS (LAA 2) as determined by the IEP team.
When calculating the graduation rate for adequate yearly progress (AYP) purposes, does the state count students taking alternate	No

paths together with graduates who passed the high school exit exams?

How many full-time equivalent staff in the State Department of Education are involved in implementing alternate paths?

None

Types of assistance the state provides for all districts to raise *initial* pass rates for all students on the high school exit exam

The state offers technical assistance to help:

- Teachers administer the exam, which includes train-the-trainer workshops and a toll-free number to call;
- All teachers prepare students for the exam, which includes online assistance and train-the-trainer assessment workshops;
- Teachers become more proficient in their content areas, which includes online assistance and professional development, specialist(s) in the state education agency (elementary and secondary staff), and grants to districts;
- Schools identify and target students for assistance, including online assistance.

The state also provides exam preparation materials for students and teachers and test items from prior years.

Types of assistance or remediation the state provides for all districts to help students who have failed to pass the exit exam

The state requires targeted remediation programs for students who fail to pass the exit exam on their initial attempt.

Does the state provide funding for remediation?

No. Due to state budget cuts, there is no funding for GEE remediation. The state remediation funds have been cut from the department's budget.

Are districts mandated by law to provide remediation?

Yes. R.S. 17:24.4 (G)(4)(a) includes the statement:

Those students who fail to meet required achievement levels on the state-administered criterion-referenced tests of the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program shall be offered education programs designed to accelerate progress that comply with regulations adopted by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. Such programs shall include, at a minimum, the offering of a summer school

remediation program to all students who do not meet the minimum achievement level necessary to be fully promoted to the 5th or 9th grade as established by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education rule.

Are students required to participate in remediation?

Remediation is offered, but student participation not required.

Part II: Student Performance

Initial pass rates, 2008-09

Percentage of Students Passing on the First Try in 10 th grade, 2008-09				
Student Group	English Language Arts	Math	Science	Social Studies
All students	88%	89%	85%	84%
White	93%	95%	94%	92%
African American	82%	82%	73%	73%
Latino	79%	83%	83%	84%
Asian	89%	95%	91%	89%
Native American	90%	91%	86%	85%
English language learners	56%	69%	66%	65%
Students with disabilities	56%	61%	54%	53%
Free or reduced-price lunch eligible	84%	85%	77%	77%
Passing score (scale of 100-500)	270	286	267	275

Note: Students must score at the *Approaching Basic* level or above on three subjects—English language arts, mathematics, and either science or social studies—to be eligible for a high school diploma. The GEE has five achievement levels: *Advanced*, *Mastery*, *Basic*, *Approaching Basic*, and *Unsatisfactory*. The percentages above reflect students scoring at the *Approaching Basic* level or above. Data retrieved from the state department of education Web site at <http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/14359.pdf> on June 10, 2010.

Denominator used when calculating these rates: Total number of initial testers

Initial pass rates, 2009-10

Percentage of Students Passing on the First Try in 10 th grade, 2009-10				
Student Group	English Language Arts	Math	Science	Social Studies
All students	88%	87%	86%	87%
White	93%	93%	94%	94%
African American	83%	79%	76%	79%
Latino	80%	83%	78%	82%
Asian	90%	95%	90%	92%

Native American	91%	89%	90%	91%
English language learners	50%	65%	49%	57%
Students with disabilities	54%	62%	68%	71%
Free or reduced-price lunch eligible	85%	82%	80%	82%
Passing score (scale of 100-500)	270	286	267	275

Note: Students must score at the *Approaching Basic* level or above on three subjects—English language arts, mathematics, and either science or social studies—to be eligible for a high school diploma. The GEE has five achievement levels: *Advanced*, *Mastery*, *Basic*, *Approaching Basic*, and *Unsatisfactory*. The percentages above reflect students scoring at the *Approaching Basic* level or above. Data provided by the state department of education.

Denominator used when calculating these rates: Total number of initial testers

Student Group	State Graduation Rates	
	2008-09	2009-10
All students	66.6%	NA
White		
African American		
Latino		
Asian		
Native American		
English language learners		
Migrant		
Students with disabilities		
Free or reduced-price lunch eligible		

Note: data retrieved from <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/saa/3096.asp>.

Current state graduation rate calculation formula for AYP purposes.

Unable to verify.