



## Plaquemines Parish School System Freedom Framework

### The Initiative

The [Freedom Framework](#) represents Louisiana's new K-12 social studies standards, adopted in 2022. The 2023-2024 school year marked the first year of implementation in classrooms across the state. Recognized among the strongest in the nation, these standards capture the full scope of events, ideas, and perspectives that have shaped our country.

Plaquemines Parish School District has served as a model school system for putting these standards into action. Beginning two years ago, the school system's leaders reviewed pupil progression and grading policies to ensure alignment with curriculum expectations and the exclusive use of approved assessments. This foundational work paved the way for strong, consistent implementation of the [Bayou Bridges](#) curriculum across all schools in grades kindergarten through 8, and [Foundations of Freedom Civics](#) in high school. The school system's grading policies now mirror curriculum expectations, and embedded assessments ensure that instruction remains aligned to standards.

### Partnerships

To ensure success, the school system prioritized robust professional learning for teachers, coaches, and administrators. Plaquemines partnered with SchoolKit, A+PEL, and the Core Knowledge Foundation to deliver comprehensive, high-quality professional learning. These partnerships strengthened instructional expertise, deepened understanding of the [Bayou Bridges](#) curriculum, and ensured that staff were fully prepared for implementation of high-quality instructional materials (HQIM).

The district also invested in The DBQ Project and Pelican Ed resources to expand access to additional primary source documents and instructional supports, further enriching the curriculum experience for both teachers and students.

### Structure

Implementation began with curriculum mapping and targeted professional learning. Each grade level unpacked the new standards and participated in intensive training aligned to each module rollout. Teachers engaged in document-based question (DBQ) learning, often taking on the role of learners themselves to better understand the historical thinking process based on claims and evidence.

Professional learning was delivered through a variety of approaches, including teacher-to-teacher collaboration, teacher leader facilitation, and vendor-supported workshops, to meet the needs of educators. Experienced middle school teachers have led much of this work, ensuring strong content expertise and consistency across grade bands. Lead teachers created detailed curriculum maps, while administrators and coaches utilized walkthrough tools to monitor progress and provide feedback.

These efforts were guided by a powerful belief: **social studies teachers are also literacy teachers**. This literacy-based approach has become a defining feature of Plaquemines Parish School’s instructional model.

## Conclusion

In 2025, this high-performing school system achieved a 47% proficiency rate for grades 3–8 on the Social Studies LEAP assessment and recorded the highest Civics scores in the state, with 73% of students demonstrating proficiency. Belle Chasse Middle School showed some of the most significant gains, underscoring the success of the school system’s cohesive and collaborative approach. The school system will continue building on this deliberate work as it prepares for adjusted LEAP assessments and advances its commitment to ensuring every student has access to and achieves grade-level mastery.

Through strong leadership, thoughtful planning, and deep investment in professional learning, the Plaquemines Parish School District has set a high bar for implementing Louisiana’s Freedom Framework. The district’s success demonstrates how clear structures, intentional partnerships, and a literacy-focused mindset can transform social studies instruction and student outcomes statewide.

- To learn more about past Models of Excellence recipients, visit the [School and School Systems Awards](#) page.
- For questions, contact [modelsofexcellence@la.gov](mailto:modelsofexcellence@la.gov).