

Louisiana Believes

2015 ACT Results
July 16, 2015

Greater Opportunity for Louisiana Students

Since 2012, BESE, the Department of Education and schools across the state have embarked on an ambitious expansion of opportunities for high school students including:

- **Changes to High School Accountability:** The state re-made the high school accountability system to incentivize not just high school completion, but also post-secondary achievements like career credentials and Advanced Placement credits.
- **New Diploma Pathways:** Students now achieve TOPS and TOPS Tech scholarships by choosing either the Jump Start Career Diploma or the TOPS University Diploma.
- **Funding to High School Opportunities:** To support these diplomas, Louisiana has created dedicated funding streams in the MFP for career courses, dual enrollment courses, and other course choices.

Louisiana has also expanded these initiatives to increase opportunities for historically underserved students:

- Schools created transitional 9th grade programs to serve students who otherwise would have been held back in 8th grade.
- Act 833 allows diploma pathways for struggling students with disabilities.
- Students with significant disabilities (LAA 1) now can achieve a high school diploma.

Opportunity Increases for Louisiana Students

This package of policy changes resulted in an increase of opportunities for high school students:

- **Record Number of Students Completing High School:** In 2014, the state's four-year high school graduation rate increased for the fourth straight year to a record high of 74.6 percent. Nearly 1,600 more students graduated in 2014 than in 2013.
- **Record Number of Students Achieving Advanced Placement Credit:** Louisiana's high school students led the nation in 2014 with a 24.6 percent increase in the number of college credits earned on Advanced Placement (AP[®]) exams, increasing by more than 1,250 credits over results in 2013 - the greatest increase in state history.
- **Record Number of Students Entering College:** The number of recent high school graduates who enrolled in college has grown significantly, with 22,972 members of the class of 2014 enrolled in college, an increase of 16 percent over the class 2012.

A Fundamental Policy: ACT for All

As a key part of its high school initiatives, BESE approved policy in 2012 to give all high school students the opportunity to take the ACT free of charge. Louisiana became the 10th state in the nation to institute an “ACT for All” policy in 2013.

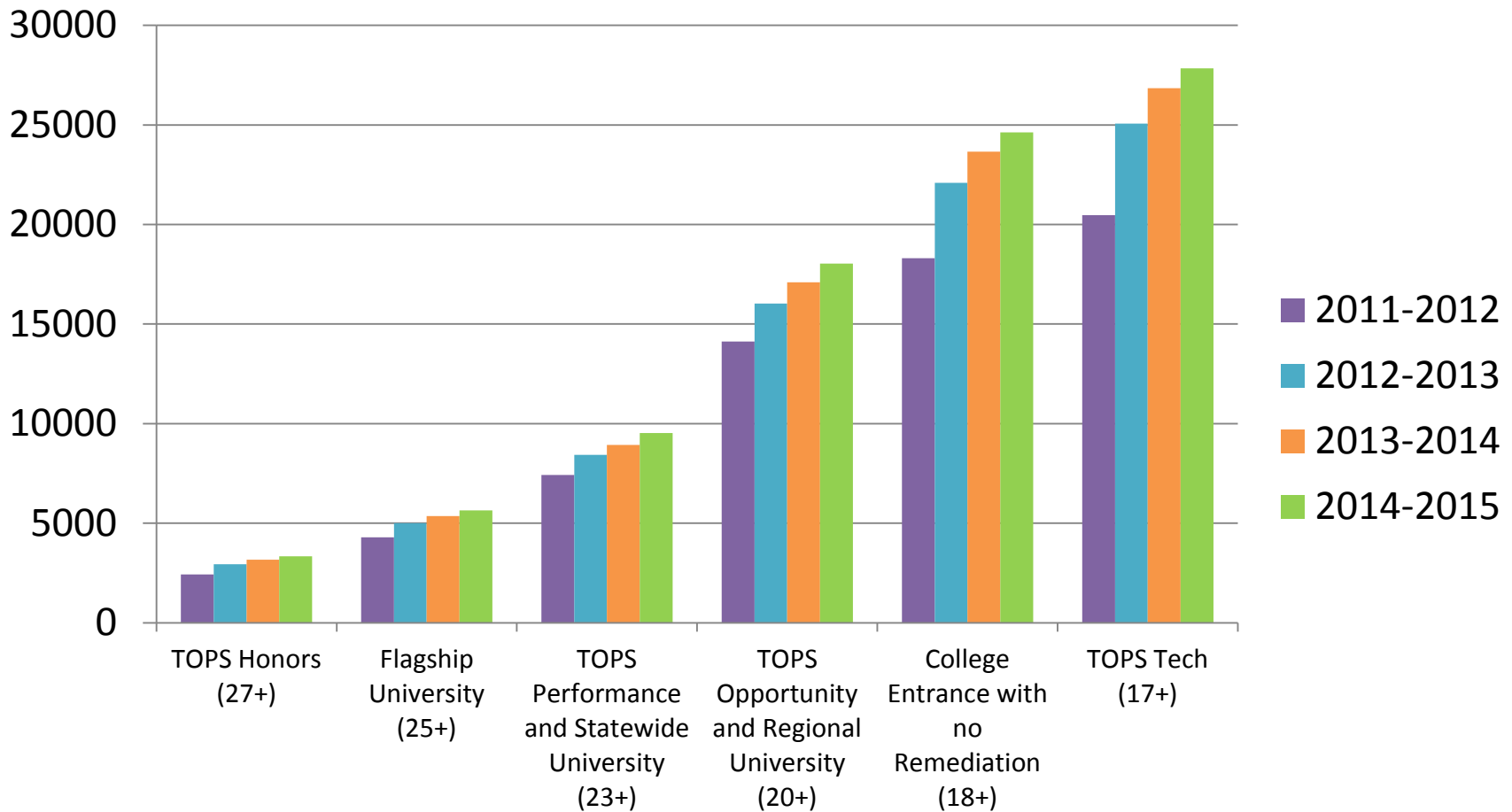
Impact on Students:

- Research from other states indicated that “ACT for All” allows historically overlooked students to succeed on the test.
- ACT tests allow students admission to college and qualification for college scholarships such as TOPS.
- ACT results provide schools, parents and students with college- and career-readiness information, such as Jump Start and Advanced Placement course options based on a student’s ACT score.

How is ACT reported? The state, like TOPS and college admission offices, counts the best score a student achieved on the test, no matter how many times he or she takes the test, when calculating school scores.

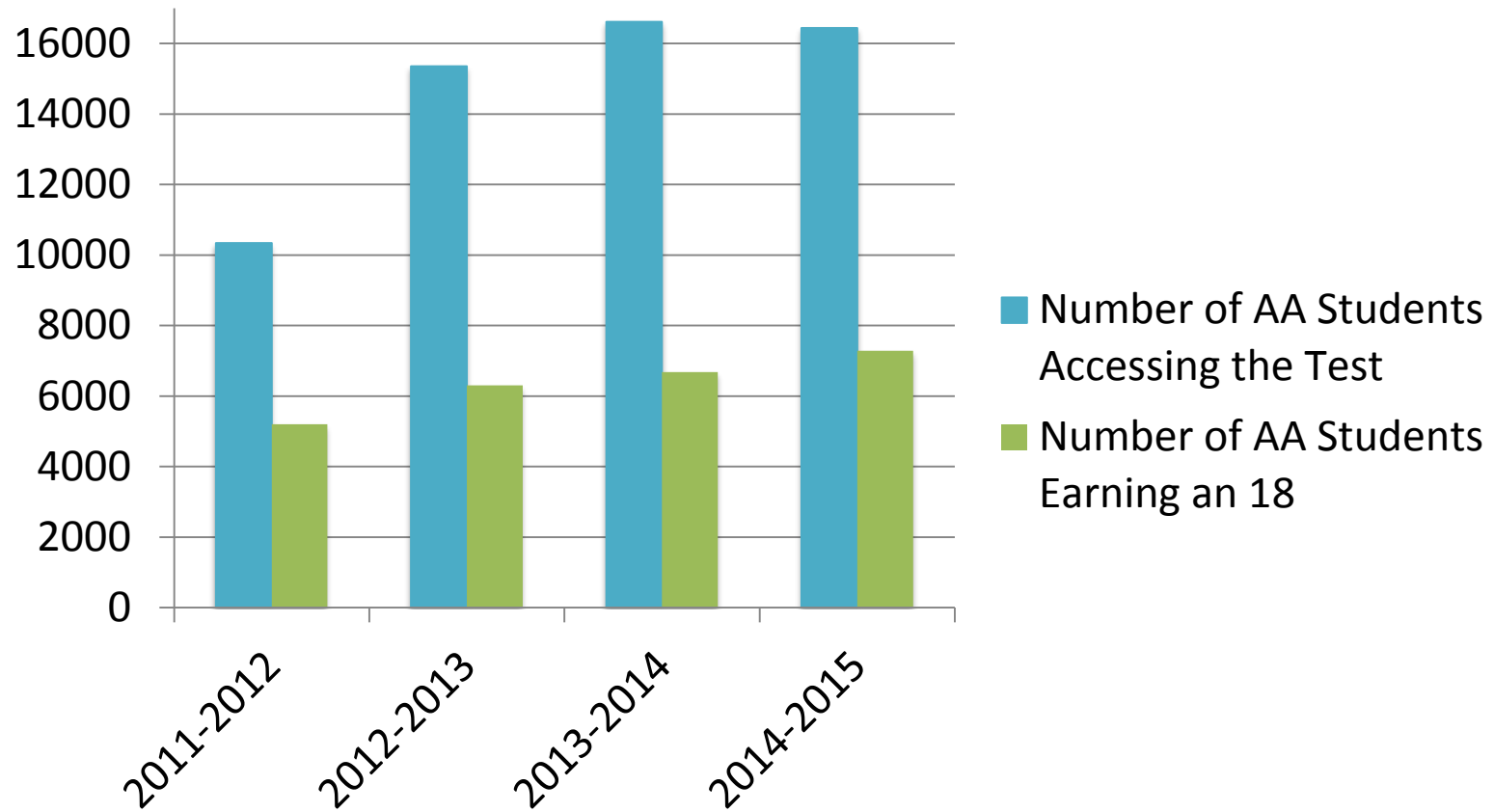
Increased College Access and Scholarships

Number of Students (Statewide) at ACT Levels (2012-2014)



Greater College Opportunities for African American Students

Number of African American Students Accessing and Passing the ACT



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