

### Background

The Louisiana Department of Education believes that all students should be held to and are capable of achieving high standards. After years of gradual transition, Louisiana schools are using more rigorous math, reading, and writing standards and assessments to guide student learning. The Department is now shifting its focus to social studies.

Louisiana educators reviewed and adjusted social studies standards in 2011, but the state has yet to align grade 3-8 assessments with the new standards. Doing so requires the development of new test questions. Thus Louisiana social studies assessments for grades 3-8 will be field tested only in 2015-2016 and will be fully operational in 2016-2017.

### Benefits for Teachers and Students

- End the historical practice of testing students in grades 4 and 8 on material learned in other years.
- Align assessments to standards updated and improved by Louisiana educators.
- Allow teachers to have a year of transition to the 2011 standards.

### Timeline

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
<b>Grades 3, 5, 6, and 7</b>	iLEAP test	Field test only	LEAP 2025 social studies
<b>Grades 4 and 8</b>	LEAP test	Field test only	LEAP 2025 social studies
<b>US History</b>	EOC test	EOC test	EOC test

### Maintaining Stability through the Transition

In order to ensure stability in school performance evaluation during the transition to new social studies assessments, the Department is implementing the following policies.

1) School letter grades will continue to be awarded based on a curve in 2015-2016. The curve is determined using the 2012-2013 distribution. For example, if 10 percent of schools earned an "A" in 2012-2013, then at least the top 10 percent of schools would earn an "A" in 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016. The distribution of schools may improve but it may not decline, as compared to 2012-2013.

2) To evaluate school quality during the 2015-2016 transition year, the Department will count schools' 2013-2014 or 2014-2015 social studies assessment index, whichever results in the higher School Performance Score.

- For schools that are new in 2015-2016, social studies will be excluded from the assessment index.
- For schools that were new in 2014-2015, the Department will count schools' 2014-2015 social studies assessment index.

Together, these policies ensure social studies remains a school performance metric while providing stability for schools that may have had a down year in social studies.

### Percent Basic & Above on Social Studies vs. All Subjects

	2013-2014		2014-2015	
	Social Studies	All Subjects	Social Studies	All Subjects
<b>Type 5 Charters</b>	57%	56%	52%	50%
<b>Type 2 Charters</b>	83%	83%	83%	85%

Have questions? Please contact your Manager of School Performance or [Jill.Zimmerman@la.gov](mailto:Jill.Zimmerman@la.gov).