

# Louisiana Scholarship Program Annual Report 2013-2014



Focused on Choice. Committed to Excellence.

# Message from Superintendent White

Dear Citizen,

Louisiana Believes – our comprehensive plan to ensure every student is on track to a professional career or a college degree – is rooted in the ideas that all students can achieve high expectations and that Louisiana’s families are best able to make decisions regarding their child’s education.

In the 2013–14 school year, the Louisiana Scholarship Program allowed nearly 7,000 of our state’s most at-risk students to attend the school of their choice. Eight–nine percent of Scholarship Program participants are minority students and nearly 3,000, or 43.2 percent, received Scholarships for the first time. Of students entering the Scholarship Program from public school for the first time, 70.7 percent previously attended a D or F public school.

Students participating in the Louisiana Scholarship Program are required to take the same assessments as Louisiana public school students. Participating schools are held accountable for Scholarship student academic performance. This year’s report shows that the percentage of Scholarship students scoring Basic or above on the LEAP and iLEAP rose 2.4 percentage points, from 41.6 percent in 2012–2013 to 44 percent in 2013–2014. This progress continues a long–term trend of improvement. Between 2010 and 2014, the percentage of students in the program scoring Basic or above has improved from 31 percent to 44 percent.

Schools that do not meet expectations are not permitted to accept new Scholarship students until their results align with program requirements. We believe that the growth of our overall student performance on increasingly rigorous assessments is a result of our commitment to strong accountability standards.

To our Scholarship school leaders, and to all of the educators across Louisiana – thank you for all that you do for our children.

Sincerely yours,



John C. White  
State Superintendent of Education

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## Introduction

***Armed with school performance information and financial resources, more Louisiana families than ever before have the power to choose their child’s path to success.***

### Choice

Parents know their children best. Louisiana Believes, the Department of Education’s comprehensive plan to ensure every one of Louisiana’s children is on track to a college degree or professional career, is based on the premise that families should be allowed to choose the school that is best for their child. This fact is not contingent upon a family’s income. The Louisiana Scholarship Program – formally known as the Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence Program – provides thousands of low–income families who would otherwise attend C, D, and F rated public schools with the financial resources to do just that: send their child to the participating school of their choice.

### Excellence

Louisiana students and families deserve excellent school choices. Scholarship schools are held accountable for academic outcomes and financial management. Scholarship students take the same, increasingly rigorous state tests as public school students. Results of these tests are reported publicly. Student achievement on these tests is used to determine the status of a school’s continued participation in the Scholarship Program. In addition, schools participating in the Scholarship Program submit to a rigorous annual financial audit to ensure proper financial management of taxpayer dollars.

## Louisiana Scholarship Program Basics

### Students: Who can get a Scholarship?

- ✓ Louisiana resident
- ✓ Household income does not exceed 250% of the federal poverty line
- ✓ Either entering kindergarten or enrolled in a public school with a C, D, F, or T letter grade in the previous school year
- ✓ Or, a continuing Scholarship student

### Schools: Which can participate in the program?

#### Public Schools

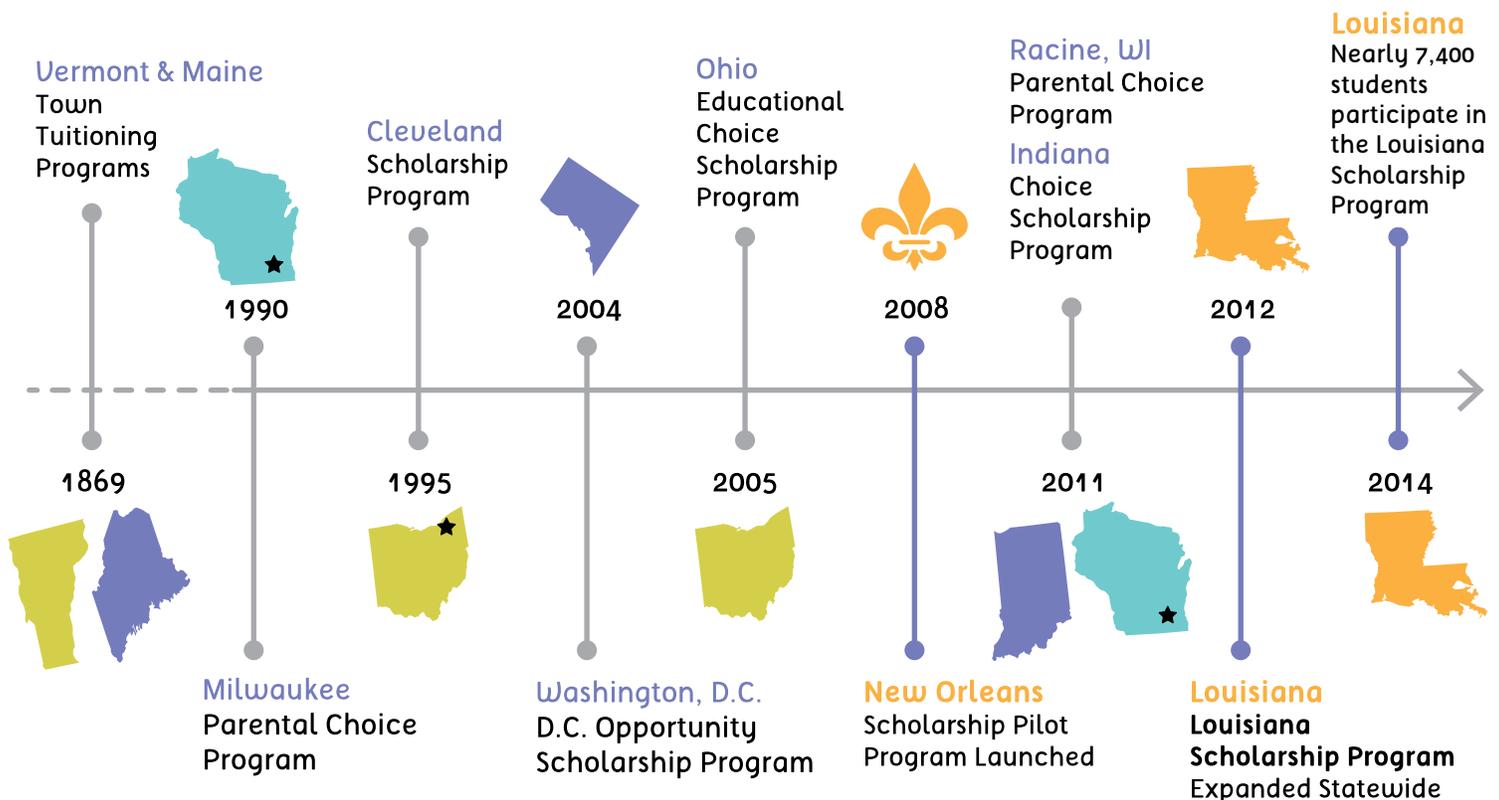
- ✓ Public school with A or B letter grade & local superintendent approval

#### Nonpublic Schools

- ✓ Board of Elementary and Secondary Education approved nonpublic school Brumfield v. Dodd certified & compliant
- ✓ Must continuously meet standards for academic, financial, and health & safety regulations, among other criteria

## Scholarship Programs in the United States

Scholarship programs have a long history in the United States and continue to grow nationwide. In the 2013-14 school year, there were 21 Scholarship programs serving students across the United States. Louisiana stands out among other Scholarship programs by **disallowing selective admissions criteria** for Scholarship schools and by **holding schools accountable** to a high academic bar. These measures help to ensure equity for Louisiana students and families.

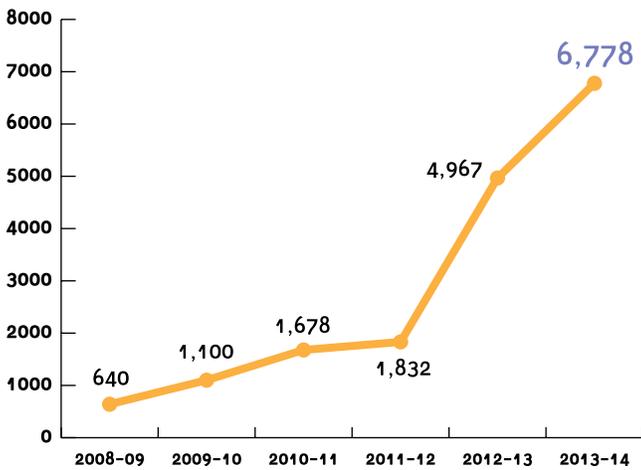


# Focused on Choice

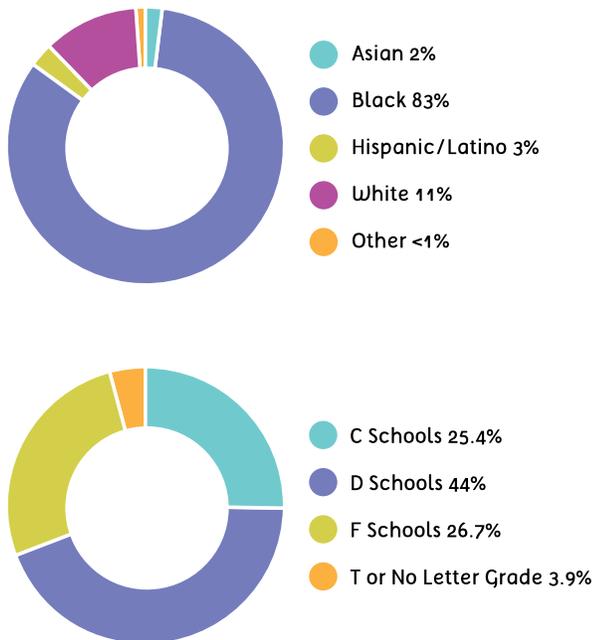
*It is our fundamental belief that Louisiana families, especially those whose children attend academically struggling schools, should be able to choose the school that is right for them.*

## Enrollment

Since the pilot program launched in New Orleans in 2008, the number of Scholarships awarded each year has grown greatly. In the 2013–2014 school year, 11,916 students applied for Scholarships and 8,515 students, or 71.5%, received awards.



6,778 students accepted a Scholarship and enrolled in a Scholarship school in 2013–2014. 89% of these students were minorities. Of these, 2,927 or 43.2% received Scholarships for the first time.

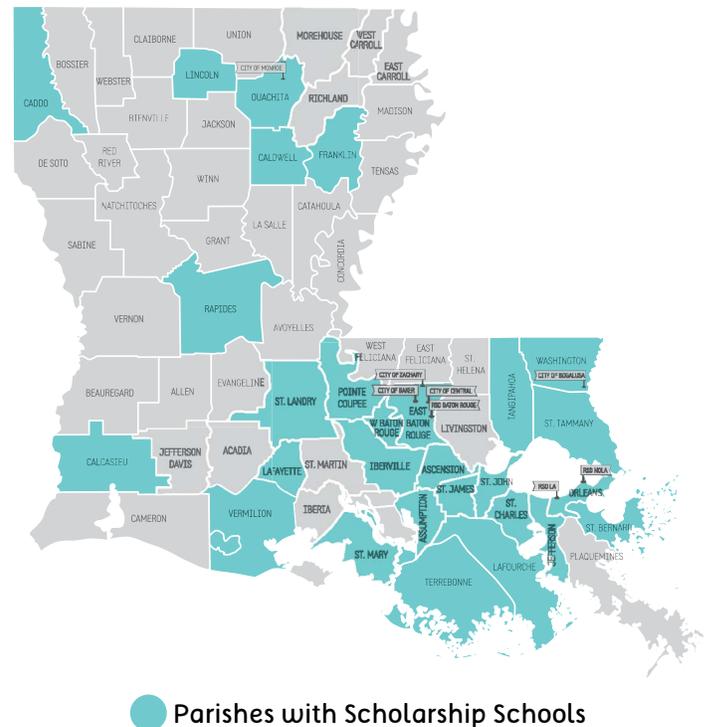


Of students entering the Scholarship program for the first time from public school in 2013–2014, 70.7% previously attended D or F rated public schools, 92.6% qualified for federal free and reduced-price lunch, and 5.2% had an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Scholarship enrollment by grade:

Grade	Students Enrolled	% of Enrollment
K	1308	19.3%
1	1173	17.3%
2	805	11.9%
3	696	10.3%
4	635	9.4%
5	522	7.7%
6	471	6.9%
7	447	6.6%
8	338	5.0%
9	186	2.7%
10	115	1.7%
11	55	0.8%
12	27	0.4%

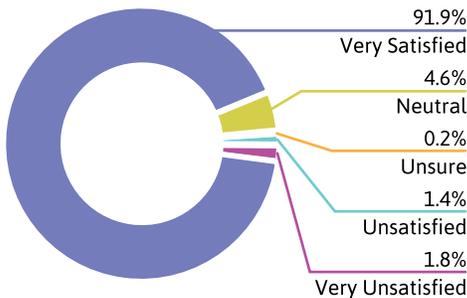
In 2013–14, 126 schools participated in the Scholarship Program, an increase of 8 schools since the program was expanded statewide in 2012. Increasing school participation gives more low-income Louisiana families the power of choice.



## Parent Satisfaction

**“The Scholarship Program has given my children the opportunity to receive an excellent education from a great school. Thanks to the program, my children have a great starting point for success. The program has truly given me the option to choose.”** –Tikisha Kelly, Parent, St. Benedict the Moor School

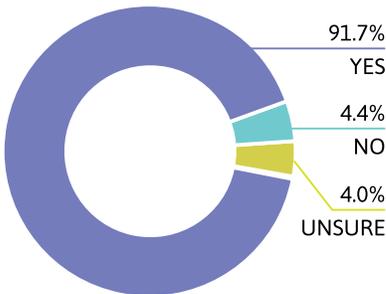
Families participating in the Scholarship Program continue to report overwhelming satisfaction with their schools and the quality of education their children are receiving. In April 2014, the Black Alliance for Educational Options and the Louisiana Federation for Children conducted a direct mail survey to evaluate parent satisfaction with the Scholarship Program. The survey included 1,779 families representing 112 of the 126 participating schools. Forty-two percent of the surveys received were from parents of first-time Scholarship students, with the remaining 58 percent representing parents of continuing students.



### PARENTAL SATISFACTION:

“Overall, how satisfied are you with your child’s current school?”

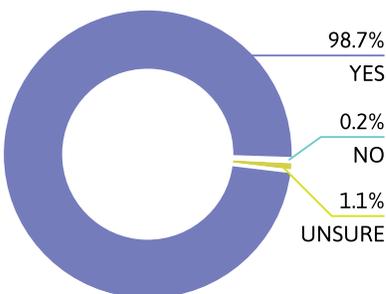
**91.9%**  
are happy with their child’s current school.



### ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE:

“Are you happy with your child’s academic progress at his/her school?”

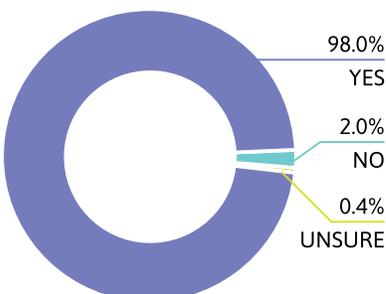
**91.7%**  
are happy with progress.



### STUDENT SAFETY:

“Does your child feel safe in his/her Scholarship school?”

**98.7%**  
feel safe at school.



### SCHOOL HOSPITALITY:

“Do you and your child feel welcome at your child’s Scholarship school?”

**98.0%**  
feel welcome at school.

# Committed to Excellence

The 2014 state assessments were aligned with new academic expectations that demand higher levels of critical thinking for our students. In this year of increased standards, the state of Louisiana's academic performance held steady while the Scholarship Program boosted performance on LEAP and iLEAP.

## Academic Performance & Accountability

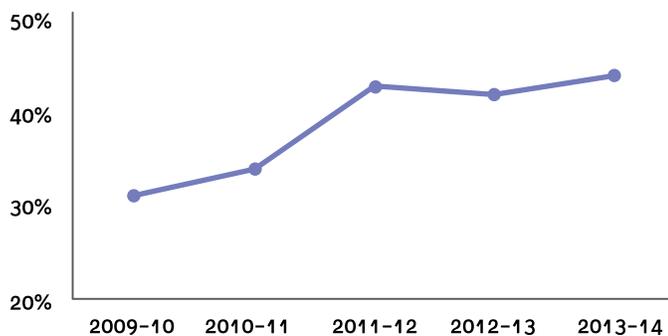
### Assessment

Students in the Louisiana Scholarship Program take the same state assessments as students in public schools, including:

- LEAP: Grades 4 and 8
- iLEAP: Grades 3, 5, 6, and 7
- End of Course (EOC) exams: Grades 9–12
- ACT Series: Grades 9–12

Student achievement on these assessments is used to determine the status of a school's continued participation in the program. Combined Scholarship school proficiency on all tests was 43.2% in 2013–14, up from 42.9% in 2012–13. LEAP and iLEAP proficiency grew from 41.6% in 2012–2013 to 44% in 2013–14.

### Percent of Scholarship Students Scoring Basic and Above: LEAP/iLEAP (All Subjects)



Since 2010, the percent of all Scholarship students scoring basic or above on iLEAP and LEAP has increased by 13 percentage points.

In Quarter 3 of 2013–2014, when testing takes place, 3,151 Scholarship students, or 46% of all participating students, were enrolled in tested grades and took the LEAP, iLEAP, or EOC assessments. Thirty-four percent of students in tested grades were first-time Scholarship students.

### Scholarship Cohort Index

Scholarship schools with an average of 10 or more Scholarship students per grade served or a total of at least forty students enrolled in tested grades receive a Scholarship Cohort Index (SCI). In 2013–14, 28 Scholarship schools served enough students in tested grades to receive an SCI. In 2014–15, an estimated 42 schools will receive an SCI.

The SCI is calculated in a similar manner to the School Performance Score (SPS) calculated annually for public schools. However, it is important to note that the SCI is based solely on the performance of students participating in the Scholarship Program rather than the school's entire student population. Participating nonpublic schools seldom utilize the same assessments for their non-Scholarship students.

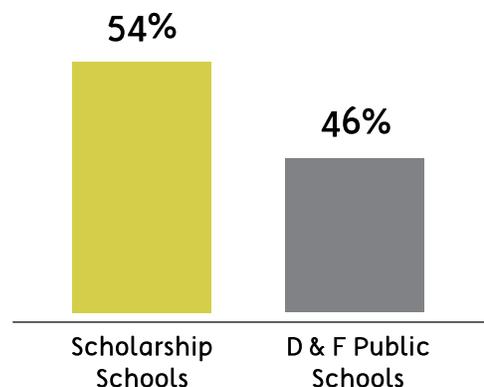
Like public schools, Scholarship schools that demonstrate progress with students who are below grade level may earn up to ten Progress Points. This measure rewards schools for making progress with their students who are the furthest behind.

Of schools that received an SCI, 54% of Scholarship schools received Progress Points in 2013–14, a 15% increase from 2012–2013. This shows that more Scholarship schools are making progress with their most at-risk students.

Per BESE Bulletin 133, if a school receives an SCI below 50 in their second year of participation or any year thereafter, the school shall not enroll additional Scholarship recipients for the following school year. Based on 2013–2014 results, 15 schools did not reach the minimum expectation and will not be permitted to enroll new Scholarship students for the 2015–2016 school year. In addition, schools which have participated in the program for at least two years, have at least ten tested students (and a minimum of 40 tested units), and achieve less than a 25% proficiency rate on state assessments are not permitted to enroll additional Scholarship students for the next year. Based on 2013–2014 results, eight schools did not reach this expectation and will not be permitted to enroll new Scholarship students for the 2015–2016 school year.

These accountability measures, combined with the increasingly rigorous expectations on state assessments, will help to ensure that the quality of the Scholarship Program continues to grow each year.

### Progress Points: Meeting the Needs of All Students



## 2013-2014 Scholarship Cohort Index

Site Code	School	2014 SCI
719001	Evangel Christian Academy	41.1
579001	Family Community Christian School	60.8
506157	Good Shepherd Nativity Mission School	73.4
504007	Holy Family Catholic School	38.5
506020	Holy Ghost Elementary School**	18.5
702001	Hosanna Christian Academy	49.8
989001	Light City Christian Academy	52.2
506038	Our Lady of Grace School**	22.7
506041	Our Lady of Perpetual Help School	43.3
506044	Our Lady of Prompt Succor School	36.1
502041	Redemptorist Diocesan Regional Junior HS	26.3
502021	Redemptorist Elementary School	46.1
506048	Resurrection of Our Lord School	53.7
652001	Riverside Academy*	46.9
506054	St. Agnes School**	45.3
506055	St. Alphonsus School	56.1
506059	St. Anthony School	43.4
506129	St. Augustine Jr. High School	46.9
506159	St. Benedict the Moor	100.4
502019	St. Francis Xavier School	52.3
506079	St. Joan of Arc School	70.1
626001	St. John Lutheran School	58.8
506087	St. Leo the Great School	69.7
502031	St. Louis King of France School	53.3
506095	St. Mary's Academy	55.9
506105	St. Peter Claver School	43.4
506111	St. Rita School	44.9
506116	St. Stephen School	43.2

\*First Year in Program

\*\*School closing after 2014-15 school year

### SCI Quick Facts

- 22% of participating schools received an SCI in 2013-2014
- 65% of Scholarship students were enrolled in schools which received an SCI in 2013-2014
- 4% more schools reached an SCI of 50 or greater in 2013-2014 than in 2012-2013



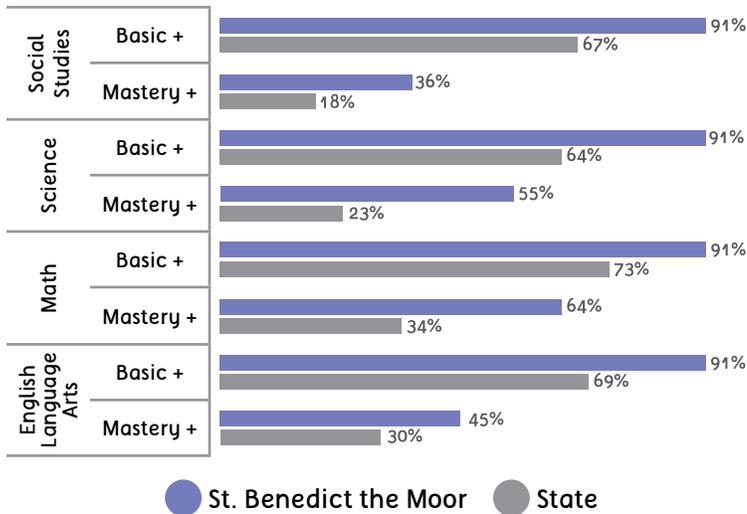
# Spotlight on Excellence:

## St. Benedict the Moor School

**Years in Scholarship Program: 5**  
**2013-14 Scholarship Students: 63**  
**Free/Reduced Lunch: 97%**  
**LEAP/iLEAP Proficiency Rate: 82%**  
**Mastery & Advanced Rate: 36%**  
**2013-14 SCI: 100.4**

“It is a truly wonderful feeling to see students **achieve success** when parents have a **choice** in their education. I believe the **opportunity** to choose encourages parent involvement in the learning process.”  
 - **Drue Dumas, Principal**  
**St. Benedict the Moor School**

In 2013-14, third graders at St. Benedict the Moor **outperformed** the state of Louisiana average on every iLEAP subject at both the **Basic and Mastery level**.



## Lutheran High School

**Years in Scholarship Program: 2**  
**2013-14 Scholarship Students: 36**  
**Free/Reduced Lunch: 84.6%**  
**EOC Proficiency Rate: 63%**

### End of Course Test Proficiency Rates



In 2014, Scholarship student **Ashlee White** graduated as **salutatorian** of Lutheran High School. After graduation, Ashlee enrolled at **Xavier University of New Orleans** to study chemistry and pre-pharmacy.

“I think the Scholarship gave me a **great opportunity**. Without it, I probably wouldn’t be headed to a **great university** as **salutatorian**.”  
 - **Ashlee White, Graduate**  
**Lutheran High School**

## Financial Accountability

The Scholarship Program has strong policies in place to ensure the proper use of public funds. Payment to Louisiana Scholarship schools is variable and is based on the tuition and fees charged to each non-Scholarship student at a given school. Scholarship awards do not exceed the per pupil Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) amount for the student's home parish, ensuring that payments do not exceed the cost to send a child to public school. Schools with tuition and fees at or above two-thirds of the per pupil MFP for the district in which the school is located are only allowed to receive a five percent annual increase in payment. The average Scholarship award in 2013-2014 was \$5,311.

Average Cost to send a Scholarship student to C, D, or F Public school	\$8,605
Average Cost to send a Scholarship student to a Scholarship school	\$5,311
<b>Average Cost savings per student to Louisiana Taxpayers</b>	<b>\$3,294</b>

**2013-2014 TOTAL SAVINGS: \$21,654,756**

All nonpublic schools participating in the Scholarship Program receive a rigorous annual independent audit to ensure compliance with the guidelines established by the Louisiana legislature and BESE. In the 2013-2014 school year, all 126 participating schools were audited and all were found to be compliant with Bulletin 133. Nineteen percent of Scholarship schools required an audit adjustment as compared to 22% of all public LEAs across the state.

## Conclusion

We are focused on choice and committed to excellence. We believe that the power to choose a child's education belongs in the hands of his or her family. And we will strive to continue to increase the number of excellent Scholarship options available to Louisiana's students while holding schools accountable to ever-increasing standards.



## Click to See Appendix

- » [2013-2014 Scholarship Program Enrollment](#)
- » [Spring 2014 Scholarship Student Proficiency Rates](#)
- » [Retention Rates for Quarter 1 2013 to Quarter 1 2014](#)
- » [C, D, F, and T Public Schools 2012-2013 School Year](#)