Excellence in Action
NATIONAL SUMMIT ON EDUCATION REFORM 2012

STUDENT-DRIVEN EDUCATION
Achieving Success with Students: Belief in Families

*Louisiana Believes* builds on the idea that all students can learn with the belief that those closest to students – their parents – make the best decisions about their education.
Scholarships:

• Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence (Louisiana Scholarship Program) (2008, 2012)

• Scholarship Donation Rebates (2012)

• School Choice Pilot Program for Students with Exceptionalities (2010)

Courses:

• Course Choice (2012)
Student Eligibility:

- Below 250% of the federal poverty line
  - $57,625 for a family of four
  - $38,825 for a single-parent household with one child
- Entering kindergarten, enrolled in a “C”, “D” or “F” school last year

School Eligibility:

- A and B Public Schools
- Private Schools approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (potential 376 schools)
Students:

• More than 10,000 students applied for a scholarship

• 4944 scholarships awarded (statewide expansion grew the number of scholarships by more than 3000)

• 91% Minority

• Students previously enrolled in a public school:
  • C: 14%
  • D: 69%
  • F: 17%
Participating Schools:

• 1 Public School

• 117 Private Schools (one-third of eligible schools)
  • 86% teaching for more than 10 years
  • 73% teaching for more than 25 years
  • 47% teaching for more than 50 years
Scholarship Amount:

• Tuition up to per pupil funding in school district where the student lives (Minimum Foundation Program)

• State pays the cost of the scholarship, no local funding is spent

Savings:

• $8,500: Average MFP funding

• $5,300: Average scholarship (savings up to $3,200 per student)
Tax Rebate Scholarship

Tax credits for companies and individuals for students to attend non-public schools:

Student Eligibility:
Same as for Scholarship Program

School Eligibility:
Same as for Scholarship Program
Scholarship Amount:

Tuition:

• Up to 80% of per pupil funding for elementary and middle school students

• Up to 90% of per pupil funding for high school students

• Privately-funded, donations are tax deductible in the year following the scholarship award
Scholarships for Students with Exceptionalities

Pilot Program for Special Education Students:

Student Eligibility:
• Must have an Individual Education Plan (IEP)
• Must have eligible disability under the law
• Must live in one of six participating parishes (population of 190,000 or more)

School Eligibility (16 participating schools):
• Private Schools approved by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in the six participating parishes

Scholarship Amount:
• Tuition up to $3000 (families pay the difference)
Online Learning Program:

- Students may enroll in the individual course(s) of their choice
- Courses include college-preparatory courses, internships, and apprenticeships
- Courses have different costs – may not exceed MFP per pupil funding amount
Course Choice

Student Eligibility:

• State pays for students who are enrolled in a “C”, “D” or “F” school

• Families pay for students enrolled in “A” or “B” school

Providers:

• Approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education

• Applicants include trade associations, school districts, universities, and virtual schools
Course Choice

Features:

• Students may enroll in up to five courses of their choice including courses that will prepare them for college and careers

• Student tuition paid by District in which student resides

• Students must enroll in at least one course in district school
Questions
and
Discussion