

## Beauregard Parish Top Five in State for Highest Graduation Rate



The Louisiana Department of Education has released the 2011 cohort data for graduation rates which shows Beauregard Parish with the fourth highest graduation rate in the state among the 70 school, city, and specialty school districts.

The 2011 graduating class in Beauregard Parish had an 86.2 percent graduation rate, showing an increase from the previous year.

“This is the sixth year that the state has issued graduation rate data,” said Assistant Superintendent Karen Cunningham, “and Beauregard Parish has been among the top five school districts in the state each of the six years.”

Louisiana uses a Cohort Completion Rate analysis which tracks students entering the ninth grade through graduation. This four-year study is the most comprehensive and accurate method of providing information about graduation rates, according to the Department of Education.

For the current standings, information was compiled over a four year period beginning with the 2007-2008 school year and ending in the spring of 2011. Students who entered high school as first-time freshmen in the fall of 2007 were tracked through the time of graduation. A graduate is defined as a student who received a high school diploma in four years.

Under the Department of Education’s new focus “Louisiana’s Nine Critical Goals,” the Office of College and Career Readiness will continue to measure the Cohort Graduation Rate, which is currently 70.9 percent statewide. This sixth “Critical Goal” for Louisiana schools sets the ultimate graduation rate goal at 85 percent with an immediate goal of 80 percent by 2014.

“Currently, Beauregard is one of only twelve school districts to have a graduation rate above 80 percent and one of only five districts to have a graduation rate above 85 percent,” Cunningham explained.

The goal of the Beauregard Parish school system is to provide excellence in education with a mission to graduate students who are prepared to meet the challenges of the future, she continued.

Graduation is also an important part of the Louisiana accountability program in determining school and district performance scores. The federal *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* act also requires states to consider graduation rates when making Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) reports.

“Graduation is the defining accomplishment of our students and the result of tremendous work on the part of teachers, parents, and administrators,” Cunningham concluded. “We will continue to provide every avenue available so that Beauregard Parish students attain their high school diploma.”