

RSD High School Test Results Show Alarming Trend

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In 2005, before the schools were divided between the RSD and the OPSB, approximately 4,200 10th graders took the Graduate Exit Exam (GEE). The schools that were transferred to the RSD received about 3,000 of the testers, while 1,200 remained with the OPSB. Over the years, enrollment declined and is now increasing. But, no matter what the enrollment, one should expect that the RSD would test about 3 times as many 10th graders as does the OPSB.

This is not so. In 2009-10, the RSD and the OPSB each tested approximately 1,200 10th graders. The RSD should have hundreds more 10th grade students to test. There are serious implications in this data. Large numbers of high school-aged students in the RSD did not make it to 10th grade to take the test; and at the same time, crime rates in New Orleans continue to explode. There is a strong relationship between these two factors, and there must be an urgency to address this issue.

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At the end of the 2004-05 school year, before the State Takeover, there were approximately 4,200 Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) 10<sup>th</sup> grade students who took the Graduate Exit Exam (GEE). In the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, they were administered the English and Math sections of the exam. With the State Takeover, the 4,200 students were divided. Approximately 3,000 of them were in schools that were transferred to the Recovery School District (RSD), and approximately 1,200 remained in OPSB schools. In the transfer, the RSD had considerable more test takers than did the OPBS.

Table 1: Total testers in the Spring of 2005 in English GEE and Math GEE. All schools were with the Orleans Parish School Board

|   | <b>Spring 2005 GEE</b>             | Total Testers - English | Total testers- Math |
|---|------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | MARION ABRAMSON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL | 373                     | 370                 |
| 2 | JOSEPH S. CLARK SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL | 138                     | 139                 |
| 3 | WALTER L. COHEN HIGH SCHOOL        | 137                     | 136                 |

|    |                                          |             |             |
|----|------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 4  | WARREN EASTON FUNDAMENTAL SR HIGH SCHOOL | 313         | 315         |
| 5  | ALCEE FORTIER HIGH SCHOOL                | 188         | 190         |
| 6  | BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL     | 225         | 225         |
| 7  | F.W. GREGORY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL          | 88          | 88          |
| 8  | EDNA KARR MAGNET SCHOOL                  | 179         | 178         |
| 9  | JOHN F. KENNEDY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL       | 145         | 154         |
| 10 | L.B. LANDRY HIGH SCHOOL                  | 126         | 129         |
| 11 | LAWLESS HIGH SCHOOL                      | 126         | 129         |
| 12 | MCDONOGH #35 SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL          | 286         | 286         |
| 13 | JOHN MCDONOGH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL         | 211         | 210         |
| 14 | MCMAIN MAGNET SECONDARY SCHOOL           | 193         | 193         |
| 15 | FREDRICK A. DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL         | 178         | 179         |
| 16 | RABOUIN CAREER MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL        | 126         | 129         |
| 17 | URBAN LEAGUE STREET ACADEMY              | 11          | 0           |
| 18 | BOOKER T. WASHINGTON SCHOOL              | 54          | 55          |
|    | YOUTH STUDY CENTER                       | 0           | 0           |
| 19 | EAST NEW ORLEANS EDUCATIONAL CENTER      | 0           | 10          |
| 20 | SARAH TOWLES REED SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL     | 295         | 297         |
|    | JUVENILE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL              | 0           | 0           |
|    | N. O. PUBLIC SCHOOLS ALTERNATIVE HIGH SC | 0           | 0           |
| 21 | G. W. CARVER HIGH SCHOOL                 | 171         | 172         |
| 22 | O. P. WALKER SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL          | 209         | 211         |
| 23 | NEW ORLEANS HIGH SCHOOL SIGNATURE CENTER | 257         | 257         |
|    | <b>Total</b>                             | <b>4029</b> | <b>4052</b> |

Table 2: With the State Takeover, the following schools remained with the OPSB.

|   | <b>Spring 2005 GEE-- Remained with OPSB</b> | Total Testers - English | Total testers- Math |
|---|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | WARREN EASTON FUNDAMENTAL SR HIGH SCHOOL    | 313                     | 315                 |
| 2 | BENJAMIN FRANKLIN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL        | 225                     | 225                 |
| 3 | EDNA KARR MAGNET SCHOOL                     | 179                     | 178                 |
| 4 | MCDONOGH #35 SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL             | 286                     | 286                 |
| 5 | MCMAIN MAGNET SECONDARY SCHOOL              | 193                     | 193                 |
|   | <b>Total</b>                                | <b>1196</b>             | <b>1197</b>         |

Table 3: With the State Takeover, the following schools were transferred to the RSD.

|    | <b>Spring 2005 GEE – Transferred to RSD</b> | Total Testers - English | Total testers- Math |
|----|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1  | MARION ABRAMSON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL          | 373                     | 370                 |
| 2  | JOSEPH S. CLARK SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL          | 138                     | 139                 |
| 3  | WALTER L. COHEN HIGH SCHOOL                 | 137                     | 136                 |
| 4  | ALCEE FORTIER HIGH SCHOOL                   | 188                     | 190                 |
| 5  | F.W. GREGORY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL             | 88                      | 88                  |
| 6  | JOHN F. KENNEDY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL          | 145                     | 154                 |
| 7  | L.B. LANDRY HIGH SCHOOL                     | 126                     | 129                 |
| 8  | LAWLESS HIGH SCHOOL                         | 126                     | 129                 |
| 9  | JOHN MCDONOGH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL            | 211                     | 210                 |
| 10 | FREDRICK A. DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL            | 178                     | 179                 |
| 11 | RABOUIN CAREER MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL           | 126                     | 129                 |
| 12 | URBAN LEAGUE STREET ACADEMY                 | 11                      | 0                   |
| 13 | BOOKER T. WASHINGTON SCHOOL                 | 54                      | 55                  |

|    |                                          |             |             |
|----|------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 14 | EAST NEW ORLEANS EDUCATIONAL CENTER      | 0           | 10          |
| 15 | SARAH TOWLES REED SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL     | 295         | 297         |
| 16 | G. W. CARVER HIGH SCHOOL                 | 171         | 172         |
| 17 | O. P. WALKER SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL          | 209         | 211         |
| 18 | NEW ORLEANS HIGH SCHOOL SIGNATURE CENTER | 257         | 257         |
|    | <b>Total</b>                             | <b>2833</b> | <b>2855</b> |

Student enrollment declined in both the OPBS and RSD schools following Hurricane Katrina. Each year enrollment has grown and the division between the two systems in New Orleans has remained intact.

**Now in 2009-10, five years following the State Takeover, the 2010 Spring test results reveal an alarming trend. With the RSD still in control of the same majority of New Orleans schools, the RSD has almost the same number of 10<sup>th</sup> grade GEE test-takers as does the OPSB.**

Table 4: 2009-10 OPSB Initial GEE test takers

| <b>Orleans Parish School Board 2009-10</b> | Total Testers - English | Total testers- Math |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| WARREN EASTON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL           | 198                     | 199                 |
| BENJAMIN FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL              | 168                     | 168                 |
| EDNA KARR SECONDARY SCHOOL                 | 210                     | 209                 |
| PRIESTLEY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE/CONSTRU   | 78                      | 79                  |
| LUSHER CHARTER SCHOOL                      | 97                      | 97                  |
| MCDONOGH #35 SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL            | 187                     | 187                 |
| ELEANOR MCMAN SECONDARY SCHOOL             | 124                     | 124                 |
| YOUTH STUDY CENTER                         | nr                      | nr                  |
| THE ALTERNATIVE LEARNING INSTITUTE         | nr                      | nr                  |
| NEW ORLEANS CHARTER SCIENCE AND MATHEMAT   | 88                      | 88                  |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>1150</b>             | <b>1151</b>         |

Table 5: 2009-10 RSD Initial GEE Test Takers

| Recovery School District 2009-10         | Total Testers - English | Total testers- Math |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| THURGOOD MARSHALL EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCH | 104                     | 104                 |
| NEW ORLEANS CHARTER SCIENCE AND MATH ACA | 61                      | 60                  |
| SOJOURNER TRUTH ACADEMY                  | 73                      | 73                  |
| MILLER-MCCOY ACADEMY                     | 84                      | 84                  |
| ABRAMSON SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY CHARTER SC | 21                      | 21                  |
| DR. M.L.K. CHARTER SCHOOL FOR SCIENCE &  | 26                      | 26                  |
| O.P. WALKER SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL           | 187                     | 189                 |
| ALGIERS TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY               | 69                      | 69                  |
| JOSEPH S. CLARK SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL       | 47                      | 47                  |
| WALTER L. COHEN HIGH SCHOOL              | 84                      | 84                  |
| FREDRICK A. DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL         | 51                      | 50                  |
| JOHN MCDONOGH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL         | 101                     | 98                  |
| RABOUIN CAREER MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL        | nr                      | nr                  |
| SARAH TOWLES REED SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL     | 123                     | 122                 |
| SCHWARZ ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL               | 14                      | 14                  |
| G.W. CARVER HIGH SCHOOL                  | 81                      | 81                  |

|                                          |             |             |
|------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| EXCEL ACADEMY                            | 21          | 22          |
| GREATER GENTILLY HIGH SCHOOL             | 65          | 65          |
| SOPHIE B. WRIGHT INST.OF ACADEMIC EXCELL | 17          | 17          |
| <b>Total</b>                             | <b>1229</b> | <b>1226</b> |

### **Implications**

The reforms are obviously not reaching those for whom they were intended. Rather than reform the failing students, it appears that the failing students are simply not making it to high school. The RSD inherited three times as many high school students as were left in the OPBS schools. Now both the RSD and OPBS test the about the same number of 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. Why do so few RSD students make it to the 10<sup>th</sup> grade? What is the relationship between this and the horrendous New Orleans crime rate? The more important concern is the moral obligation that our community bears to educate all of its children and youth.

### **End Notes:**

All of the testing data is readily available on the Louisiana Department of Education's website. Test data for 2009-10 was recently released and posted on the website.

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