Louisiana Believes

Transitional 9th Grade: Evaluation of Effectiveness
What Is T9?

As part of its ongoing commitment to ensuring that every child and school has the opportunity to grow and thrive, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) instituted a new policy related to 8th graders who fail to meet promotional standards.

Beginning with 8th grade students enrolled in school year 2013-2014, students not meeting promotional standards for Fall 2014 were eligible to be placed in Transitional 9th grade (T9).

The intention of the Transitional 9th grade (T9) policy is to allow students the opportunity to “catch up” to their peers while attending classes on a high school campus. These students are essentially given 5 years for on-time graduation.
Questions Investigated

- What are T9 enrollment trends?
- What are typical T9 student progression paths?
- Do outcomes differ for students progressing from T9 to 9th grade compared to those progressing from T9 to 10th grade?
- What percentage of T9 students graduate on time? How does this compare to similar performing peers?
Enrollment and Grade Progression
Enrollment Trends

Following a 93% increase from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019, the percentage of T9 students decreased 7% in 2019-2020.
A majority of T9 students progress from grade T9 directly to 10th grade; this rate has increased with each T9 cohort.
On-time Graduation
According to policy, students in grade T9 are considered similar to 8th graders for accountability purposes and are not included in the high school graduation cohort during their first year on the high school campus. Students enter the high school graduation cohort the year following their grade T9 enrollment. These students are essentially given 5 years for on-time graduation.
Overall, 63% of T9 students have graduated on time. On-time graduation rates for T9 students progressing directly to 10th grade were higher as compared to those progressing to 9th grade.
A majority of T9 graduates earned TOPS Tech Jump Start Career Diplomas.

**Pathways to a Louisiana High School Diploma:**

**TOPS University Pathway** - Ensures that students going to four-year colleges have taken a true college preparatory curriculum while in high school and have every chance possible to receive TOPS scholarships (includes TOPS University, Core 4, and Basic Core)

**Jump Start TOPS Tech Pathway** - Students of all interests and capabilities can graduate high school by earning industry credentials that provide new opportunities for a successful adulthood (includes TOPS Tech Jump Start and Career Diploma)
How Do Outcomes for T9 Enrolled Students Compare to 9th Graders Who Were Eligible for Grade T9?
Identification of Similar-performing Peers

The current T9 eligibility policy was applied to 9th grade students in order to identify students who would have qualified for Transitional 9th grade but instead enrolled in grade 9.
On-time graduation rates for T9 enrolled students are comparable to those who would have been eligible but proceeded to 9th grade, which supports the goals of T9 policy implementation.
Takeaways and Future Research

The current analytics, revealing that a majority of T9 students progress directly to 10th grade as well as on-time graduation rates comparable to similar performing peers, are favorable for the current T9 policy.

The LDOE will continue to evaluate this policy annually. Additional analytics will include:

- College enrollment trends
- Credit recovery - The LDOE has proposed a policy regarding the credit recovery course loads and the application of these courses toward graduation. T9 student enrollment and performance in these courses will be investigated.
If you have questions, please contact Laura Boudreaux
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