star ACADEMY

Louisiana

2022-2023 Year End Report

The Star Academy Program is owned by Nola Education. All data contained in this annual report was released by school districts and the State of Louisiana.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary **3**

Section 1: Star Academy History **4**

Section 2: 2022-2023 Usage Report **6**

A. Districts Implementing Star Academy 6

B. Program Description 7

C. Preparing Students for Louisiana Workforce 9

D. Career Exposure 11

Section 3: Student Success **13**

A. Academic Improvements 13

B. Student and Parent Testimonials 16

Section 4: Educator Support **18**

A. PD Training and Events 18

B. Ongoing Educational Services and Support 19

C. Teacher Networking Resources 19

D. Educator Testimonials 20

Section 5: School and District **21**

A. Curriculum Alignment to State Standards 21

B. Recognition 22

Section 6: National Impact **23**

Section 7: National Summit Recap **26**

Section 8: Upcoming Expansion, Modifications and New Lessons **27**

Executive Summary

The 2022-2023 Year End Report for the State of Louisiana showcases the impact the Star Academy program has had on students, teachers, districts, and communities during the course of this academic school year. The program has helped hundreds of students across the state by improving attendance, behavior, and academic performance.

Designed to re-engage at-risk students who have fallen behind, Star Academy uses a hands-on, STEM-inspired curriculum that is aligned to Louisiana state standards. Instead of a traditional blackboard-and-lecture style of learning, students experience interactive project-based learning in science, math, English language arts, and social studies. Students participate in daily lessons that capture their attention, and are provided opportunities to practice skills in problem-solving and communication.

Star Academy also exposes students to employment possibilities and potential careers, and directly ties what they are learning to 117 specific career tracks. This level of career exposure not only sparks a new interest in learning for students, but it has also caught the attention of state and municipal authorities interested in workforce readiness.

"Our purpose in the school system is to not just graduate our students, but to have them ready for life. We want them to be able to secure high-wage, high-demand jobs past high school. Star Academy is perfectly aligned to what our purpose is - and it's to help them be successful. It is project-based, very hands-on, and it is designed to get the kids caught up and ready for their most critical high school year."

Melissa Stilley

Superintendent, Tangipahoa Parish Schools

Section 01

Star Academy History

Star Academy began in 2004, when a team of educators set out to create an educational program for overage students with the goal of keeping them in school, advancing them to their appropriate grade levels, exposing them to career possibilities, and imparting social skills that would help them throughout their lives.

The first Star Academy sites were rolled out across the state of South Carolina. The program eventually spread to over 100 school systems in 16 states, with new Academies being established each year.

To date, over 20,000 students have passed through Star Academy programs in rural and urban school districts from Maine to California. The mission remains to re-engage students who have lost interest in their education, catch them up, and help get them get back on track with the skills, hope and confidence they need to live successful lives as productive citizens.

There are currently 19 Star Academies in the State of Louisiana. The program was first implemented in the state in 2022, when Governor John Bel Edwards funded six Academies and Jefferson Parish purchased two Academies. Another ten were funded in 2023 by Governor Bel Edwards, and an Academy in Rapides Parish was partially funded by Edwards and partially via a grant sponsored by United States Senator Bill Cassidy.

Partners in Louisiana

2022 Programs

- Jefferson Parish, T.H. Harris Middle School
- Jefferson Parish, Marrero Middle School
- Tangipahoa Parish, Greenville Park Leadership Academy
- Tangipahoa Parish, Amite Westside Middle Magnet
- St. Helena Parish, College & Career Academy 7th
- St. Helena Parish, College & Career Academy 8th
- St. Mary Parish, Franklin Junior High
- Concordia Parish, Ferriday High School

2023 Programs

- St. Mary Parish, Franklin Junior High
- Concordia Parish, Ferriday Jr. High School
- Bogalusa City Schools, Bogalusa High School 6th
- Bogalusa City Schools, Bogalusa High School 7th
- Bogalusa City Schools, Bogalusa High School 8th
- St. Landry Parish, Opelousas Jr. High 7th
- St. Landry Parish, Opelousas Jr High 8th
- Evangeline Parish, Mamou Junior High
- Evangeline Parish, Bayou Chicot Elementary
- Iberia Parish, Anderson Middle
- Rapides Parish, Carter C Raymond Junior High

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Section 02

2022-2023 Usage Report

A. Districts Implementing Star Academy

Many of the districts using Star Academy are found in areas of lower socio-economic status and fall below their peers in state scoring. Re-engaging students in these districts will positively impact the district and the state.

Location	School	School Rating	Performance Score
Concordia Parish	Ferriday Jr. High School	F	42.00%
St. Landry Parish	Opelousas Jr. High School	F	45.00%
Jefferson Parish	TH Harris Middle School	F	46.00%
Tangipahoa Parish	Amite Westside Middle Magnet	F	47.00%
Tangipahoa Parish	Greenville Park Leadership Academy	F	48.00%
St. Helena Parish	St. Helena College & Career Academy	D	52.00%
City of Bogalusa	Bogalusa High School	C	61.00%
St. Mary Parish	Franklin Junior High School	C	62.58%
Rapides Parish	Carter C. Raymond Jr. High School	C	63.00%
Jefferson Parish	Marrero Middle School	C	63.00%
Concordia Parish	Ferriday High School	C	65.00%
Evangeline Parish	Bayou Chicot Elementary	C	70.00%
Evangeline Parish	Mamou Jr. High School	C	72.00%

B. Program Description

Star Academy classroom environments have proven to be inviting for students, to better capture interest and encourage collaboration with peers. The classroom design and Modules make Star Academy classrooms different from traditional ones, where at-risk students often become disengaged and fall behind.

Star Academy Modules are hands-on, engaging lessons with activities that incorporate items used in the real-world workplace, guiding students through multi-curricular coursework. A Module typically spans seven days, with each day of the first six building upon content from the previous day, and on the seventh day a capstone project.

Each Module is designed to enhance student engagement, highlighting the practical applications of the Module's content, while relating the student's learning experience with a career, trade skill, or real-world challenge. Modules include worksheets, teacher tips, vocabulary sheets, pre- and post-tests, knowledge checkpoints and links to career enrichment.

"Learning is not just book and paper with Star Academy. It is a lot of hands-on, so now they have different experiences to be able to say, 'Well, maybe I want to go into Sports Statistics' because they would not have been exposed to it otherwise, without the science and math curriculum of Star Academy.

Lathecia Wiley

Teacher , Franklin Junior High School

LOUISIANA YEAR END REPORT

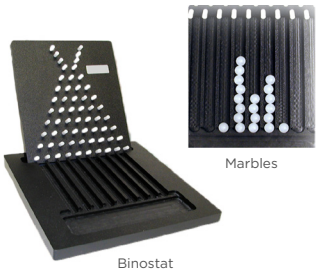
Below are two lessons used in Star Academies, illustrating the hands-on, project-based learning approach. Students collaborate with each other on projects such as these, strengthening their skills in communication and problem-solving.

Statistical Analysis
Binostat

Parts Included:

- Bionstat Boards
  - 60 pegs
  - 100 plastic marble

Students will need a pencil and Binostat WS from SMN to complete activity.



Purpose:

Students will use the Binostat and their statistical analysis skills to calculate the odds of a marble landing in a certain row. Students will first map out the paths the marbles can take using the Binostat Worksheet, to determine how the probabilities change as more rows are added. The objective of this session is for students to calculate probabilities for specific events by generating Pascal's triangle.

Instructions

1. Set up the Binostat peg board on a flat surface with the holes facing up. Firmly push the pegs into the holes until all holes are filled.
2. Insert the end of the Binostat peg board with the groove (located just below the row with 10 pegs) into the long hole in the base. Hold up the base a bit and angle the bottom on the Binostat peg board forward and set the two pieces down. The two pieces should fit together so the Binostat peg board is supported at a slight angle.

Activity

1. Place a pencil under the triangle directly below the line with three pegs.
2. Notice the marble has only two paths
3. Move the pencil down one line
4. Notice the ball has multiple paths, sometimes ending in the same spot.
5. Map out the number of paths to end at each spot on the "Binostat" Worksheet, working your way down lines using the pencil.
6. After completely illustrating Pascal's triangle, student will take turns dropping marbles through the slot.
7. Predict where the marble will end up, and if correct, give yourself 2 points, if you were off by one row, give yourself 1 point. If you were off by 2 slots you receive 0 points.
8. The player with the most points wins.

Things to Note

Binostat WS Answer Key is provided under Related Content.
Binostat must be level to work properly. If not level, slide a few sheets of paper under to make level.

Natural Disasters
Stream Table Kit

Parts Included:

- a plastic tray
- drain trough
- elevation wedge
- siphon tube
- hose clamp (module BOM) - Natural Disasters
- gallon bucket (module BOM) - Natural Disasters

Purpose:

A stream table allows students to explore the intricate processes of rivers and streams in a hands-on and visual manner. It enables students to witness erosion, sediment transport, and the formation of landforms. In Natural Disasters students will use the stream table to generate wind waves, tsunamis, and floods. In Sustainable Agriculture, students will use the long trough and elevation wedge to test soil erosion.

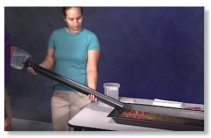
Instructions

Natural Disasters

1. Attach the piece of plastic tubing to the drain in one end of the stream table. Secure the tubing with the clamp provided to prevent leakage around the tubing connection.
2. Place the plastic bucket on the floor and place the other end of the plastic tubing in the bucket.

Activity

1. Discover the effects of waves on shorelines. (410-415)
2. Tsunami Generator (423-425)
3. Use the stream table to discover the effects of a flash flood. (511-514)



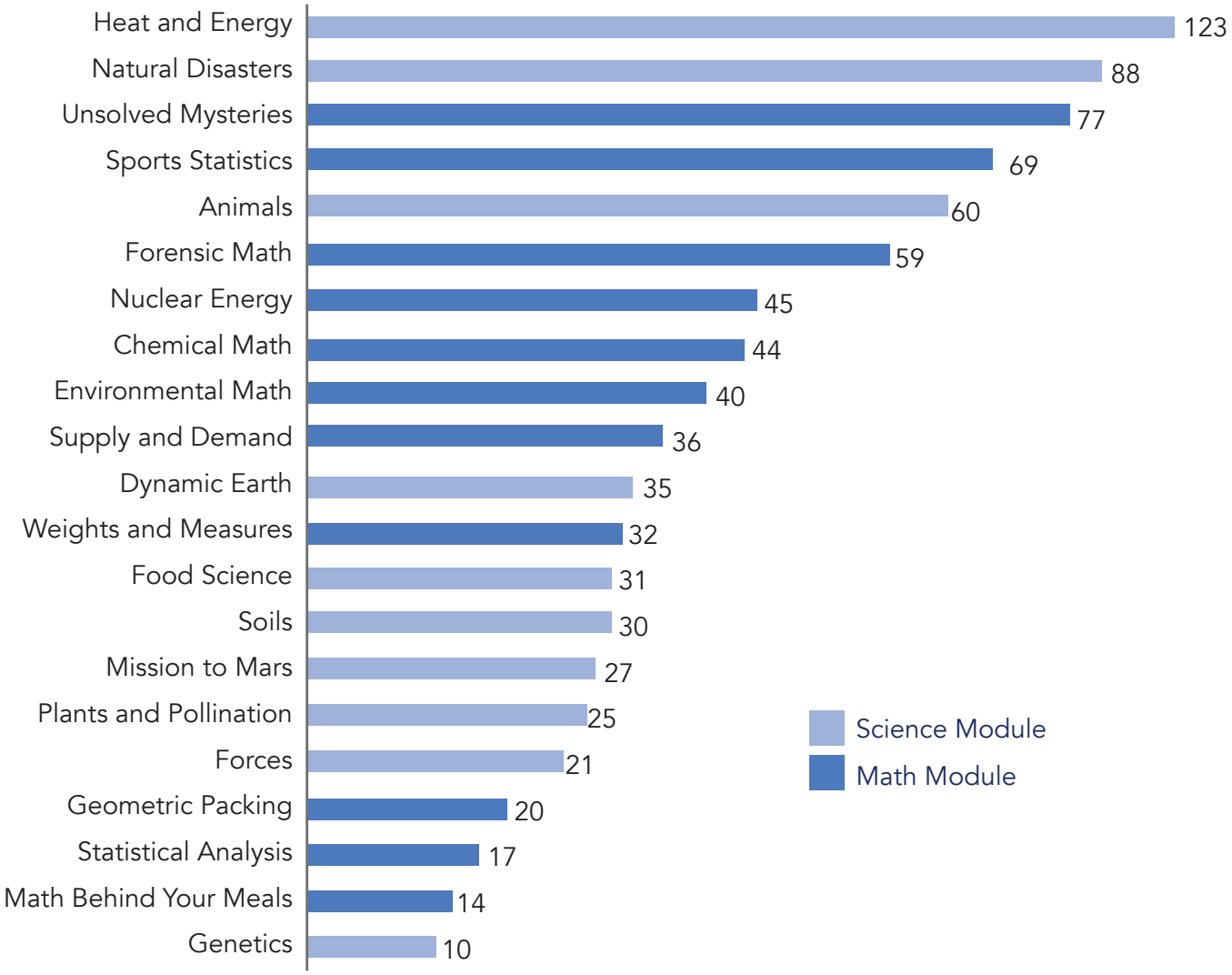
Things to Note

You will need at least 5 feet of space for setup. Keep away from power sources/electronics. The stream table utilizes sand and water spills are likely. It is ok to reuse sand from one class to the next (sand may be wet). **There should be student to student discussions based on the questions the teacher on screen is asking.** Students may need to pause to answer all questions.

C. Preparing Students for the Louisiana Workforce of Tomorrow

Star Academy motivates students by relating what they're learning to applications in the real world and their future careers. Based on results from a recent survey of 500 students, the math and science modules that Louisiana students are most interested in coincide with many of the industry needs in the state. For example, the Heat and Energy module exposes students to careers in safety and engineering. The Natural Disasters module exposes students to careers in environmental preservation and emergency management.

Favorite Modules Ranked by Star Academy Students



Heat & Energy

- Industrial Safety Engineers
- Chemical Engineers
- Petroleum Engineers
- Chemists
- Nuclear Engineers

Natural Disasters

- EMTs or Paramedics
- Public Safety Personnel
- Fire Fighters
- Construction Inspectors
- Emergency Managers

Module Career Linkages

Sports Statistics

- Sports Coaches
- Team Statisticians
- Sports Recruiters
- Sports Media Communications
- Team Managers

? Unsolved Mysteries

- Criminologists
- Police Detectives
- Crime Scene Investigators
- Forensic Scientists
- Forensic Pathologists

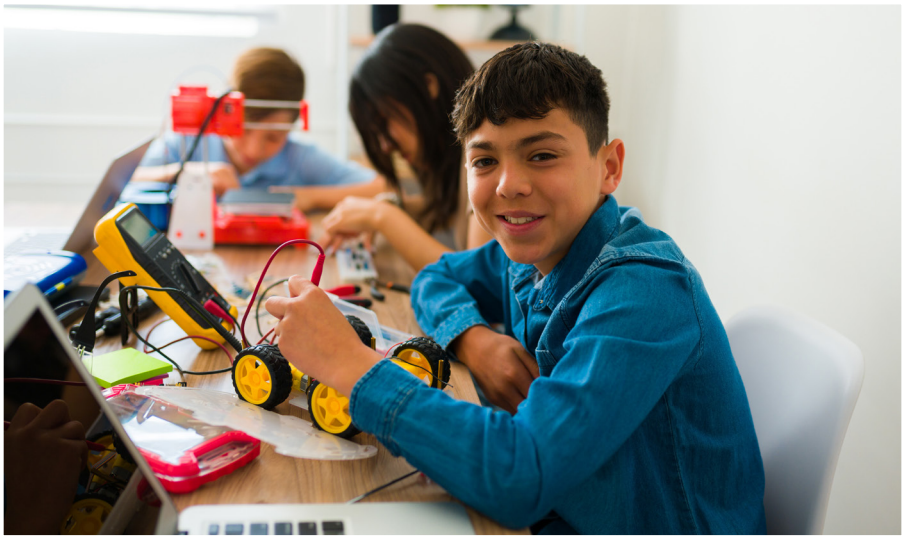
D. Career Exposure

Students receive exposure to a diverse array of over 100 different career paths throughout the academic year. Each module is connected to 5-10 specific careers, fostering a direct link between the skills acquired in the classroom and their practical applications in various professional fields.

To gauge the impact that career exposure has on students, 500 Star Academy 7th and 8th grade students across Louisiana were recently surveyed. One of the survey questions was, "Now that you have completed Star Academy lesson modules, what is a career that you would like to pursue?" The list below reflects students' top responses.

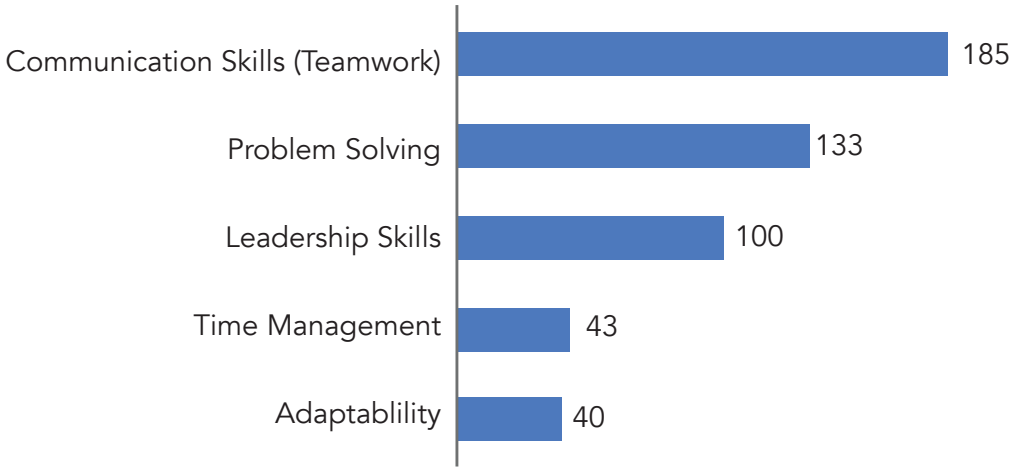
- ★ **Forensic Anthropologist**
- ★ **Engineer**
- ★ **Eco-Architect**
- ★ **Robotics Engineer**
- ★ **Aerospace Engineer**
- ★ **Eco-Friendly Architect**
- ★ **Research Scientist**
- ★ **Marine Biologist**
- ★ **Ultrasound Technician**
- ★ **NASA Astronomer**
- ★ **Architect**
- ★ **Cryptographer**
- ★ **Geologist**
- ★ **Civil Engineer**
- ★ **Horticulturist**
- ★ **Botanist**
- ★ **Geophysist**
- ★ **Microbiologist**
- ★ **Technical Writer**
- ★ **Genetics Engineer**

Parents of Star Academy students have shared how impressed they are while listening to their students discuss the careers they are now interested in pursuing.



In addition to being exposed to potential careers, Star Academy students are learning valuable workforce skills. Students were surveyed throughout the Star Academy program to assess which skills are being practiced on a regular basis. The chart below reflects these skills as reflected in over 500 student responses.

Employability Skills Learned, Ranked #1 by Star Students

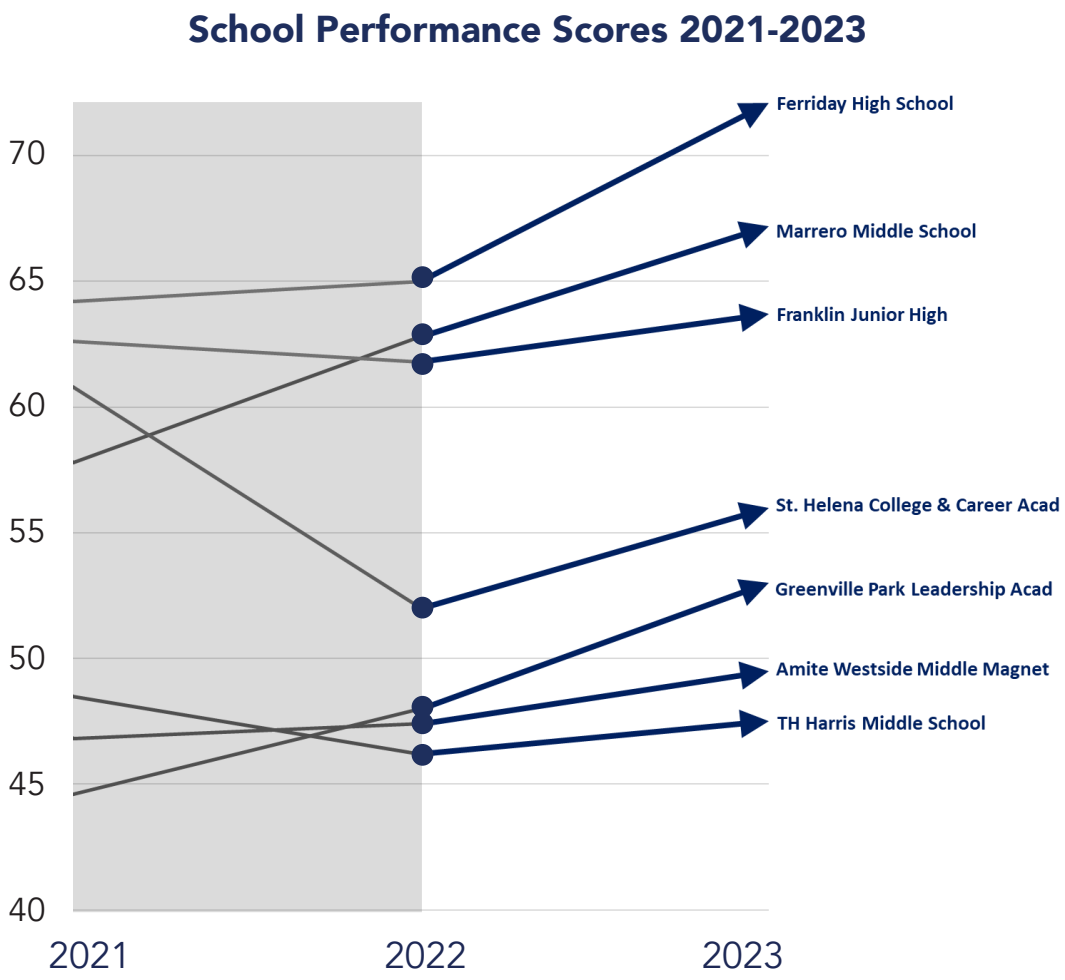


Section 03

Student Success

A. Academic Improvements

The School Performance Scores released by the State of Louisiana showed that all seven of the schools with Star Academy programs implemented in the 2022-2023 school year saw significant improvements.

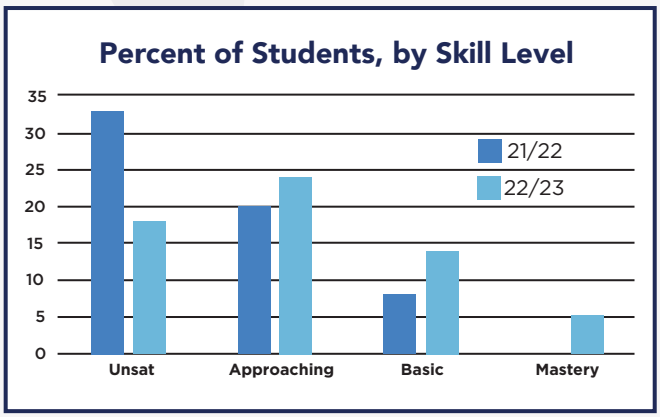


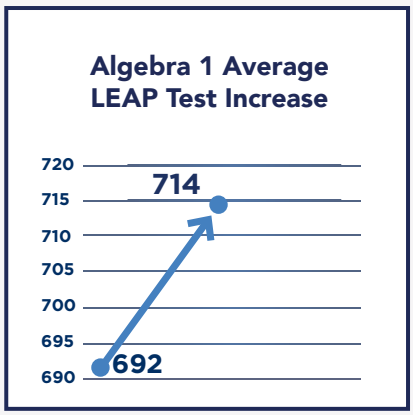
It is also important to point out that these schools were some of the lowest-performing schools in the state.

Math Improvements

In Louisiana's Concordia Parish School District, educators expected Star Academy to make a difference for kids at Ferriday High who needed an extra push. Fifty out of the 60 students enrolled in the program increased their standardized test scores between 8th and 9th grade, with an average increase of 18 points. Students in the "Unsatisfactory" category dropped by nearly half, from 33% to 18%.

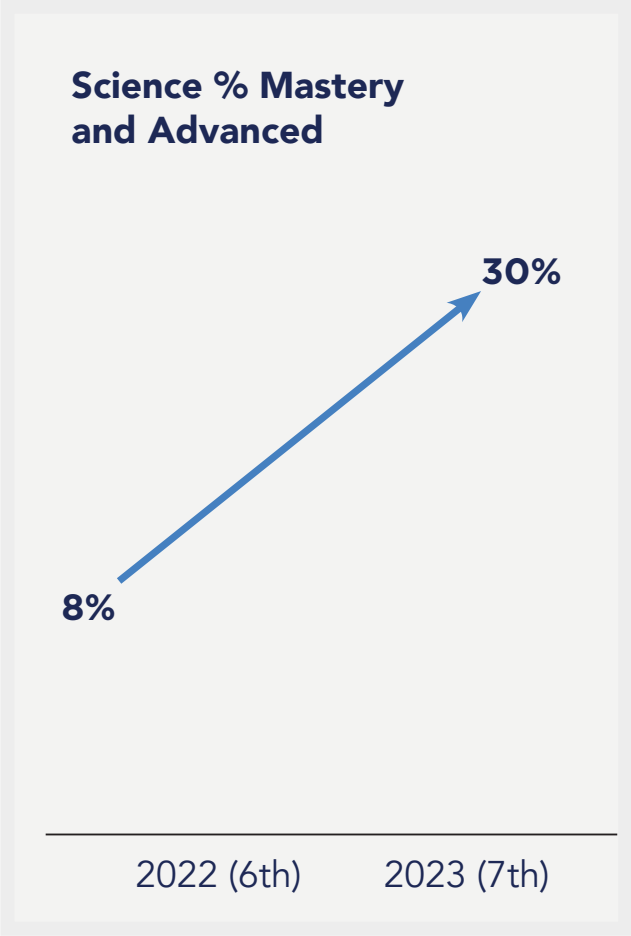
Math Improvement, 21/22 to 22/23

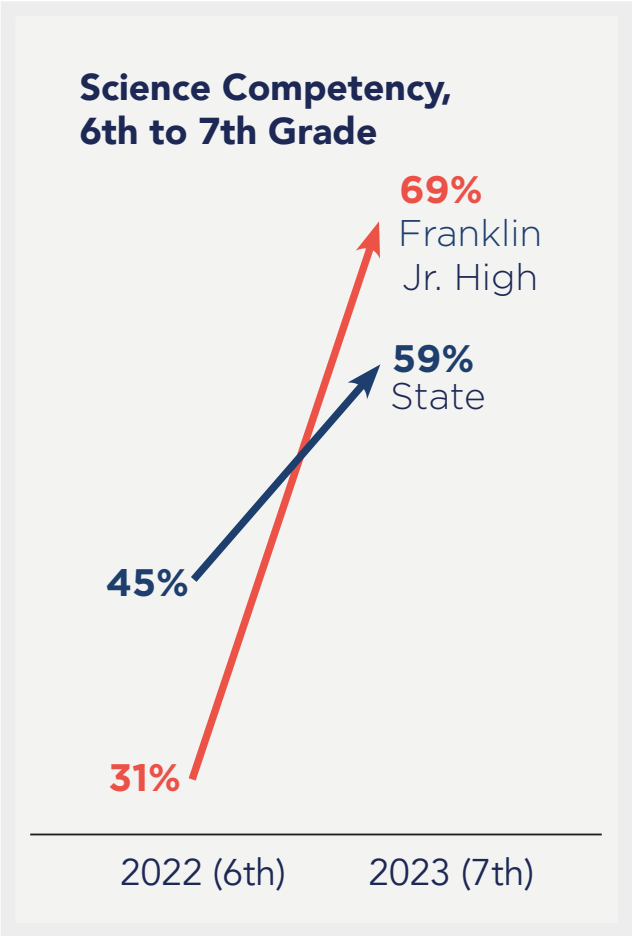




Science Improvements

At Franklin Junior High, located in St. Mary Parish, only 31% of students tested as "Basic" or above in science. A year later, this number had more than doubled to 69%, comfortably surpassing the state average. The percentage of students achieving "Mastery" and "Advanced" had risen from 8% to 30%. These students might not have considered a career in science, but now they are equipped to contribute powerfully to Louisiana's workforce.





Percentage of students testing as "Basic" or above in science.

B. Student and Parent Testimonials

Star Academy educates the whole student. This means not just keeping them in school and getting them back on track academically, but also giving them the social skills, discipline, and self-confidence to thrive in a job of their choosing. Students learn to collaborate with peers, manage their time, and prioritize what's important. It's common to see kids who were once distracted and uninvolved in learning make a radical shift towards eager participation and pride in their accomplishments.

What Students Are Saying

"I've always been shy to ask questions because I was afraid to get picked on, but in Star Academy, the teachers don't judge you, they want to help you!"

"Because of Star Academy, I'm actually going to graduate when I'm supposed to."

"In my experience at Star Academy, I have learned a lot more in math. I have learned new concepts and topics in math that I didn't even know about. This will help me later in life."

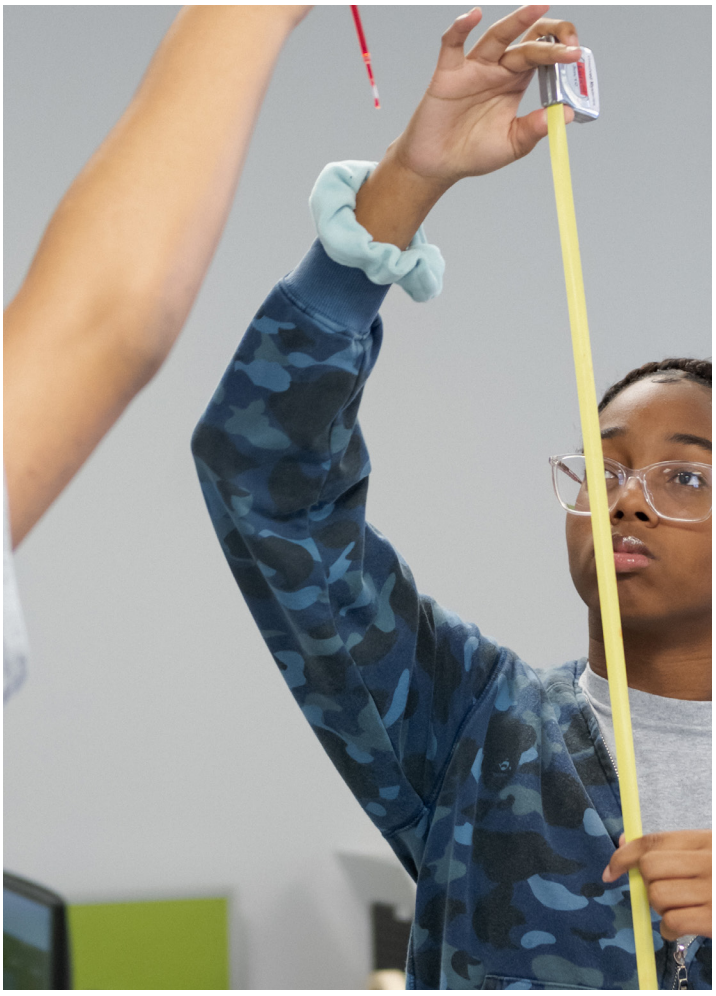
What Parents Are Saying

"Our daughter couldn't stop talking about the engaging experiences in Star Academy. It has been incredible to see her have a new found love for learning."

"Witnessing the remarkable progress in our child's education is a testament to the commitment of the Star Academy teachers and principal. Their dedication is truly making a difference in shaping bright futures."

"The positive changes in my son's behavior and grades has been amazing. I was unsure about Star Academy in the beginning, but it has met and exceeded my expectations as a new way of learning."

"My child used to struggle with anxiety, but Star Academy has really helped him to come out of his shell. He now looks forward to going to school every day."



Section 04

Educator Support

A. Professional Development Training and Events

Star Academy Professional Development is open to new teachers and administrators of Star Academy. The professional development sessions are hosted and facilitated by NOLA Education and bring together educators for two days of networking and best practices.

NOLA Education trained over 100 educators in the course of four regional trainings in the summer of 2023, in addition to providing on-site training for new teachers and ongoing support throughout the school year.

Louisiana Districts Trained:

- ★ Jefferson Parish
- ★ Tangipahoa
- ★ St. Helena
- ★ St. Mary
- ★ Concordia
- ★ Bogalusa
- ★ St. Landry
- ★ Evangeline
- ★ Iberia
- ★ Rapides

B. Ongoing Educational Services and Support

Every Star Academy site in the state of Louisiana has its own dedicated Education Support Specialist (ESS). The ESS offers comprehensive support services that play a vital role in the success of Star Academy, including monthly on-site visits and weekly communication with teachers.

Educational Support Specialists, Curriculum Coaches, IT Technicians, and Program Liaisons are always just a phone call away. NOLA's Education Services team also offers professional development that enables educators to better understand the at-risk student experience and provides proven techniques to reach them effectively.

I love doing experiments every day because it helps me see how I can apply these subjects in the real world.

Star Academy Student

C. Teacher Networking Resources

Star Academy educators communicate through a networking platform. This is a place for the Star Academy community to meet, learn and support one another. Building a sense of community is key to a successful Star Academy. This networking platform allows Star Academy teachers and administrators to reach out for support as well as to share stories and tips for success. Within the platform, Star Academy educators can connect with other Star Academies nationwide in our Krewe of Astraea group. Content area teachers and administrators also have access to their content groups for more direct content-related support.

D. Educator Testimonials

"One of the ways that Star Academy prepares students for the workforce is through the career exploration component. It allows students to explore careers they wouldn't normally get a chance or have access to, especially living in a rural community."

Tanya Johnson

Counselor, Franklin Junior High School

I have noticed a significant change in my students since implementing Star Academy. They're already thinking about their future, and they're confident. They want to be law students, studying the Constitution, and they just love it."

Monica Downing

Teacher, Franklin Junior High School

Many of the students in the Star Academy program have faced adversities in their lives that have caused them to fall behind their peers. One thing that's great about Star Academy is that the approach is different - the teacher is more of a facilitator, and it's less sit-and-get, and more hands-on learning."

Alisha Gilbert

Executive Director of Speacial Education Instruction, Jefferson Parish Schools

When this cohort of students first started in the Star Academy program, some were reading on a lower level, where now when they take their reading assesements, you can see the students' progress. It is clear that they are applying skills learned through Star Academy, and as a result are now reading on grade level."

Tyeisha Perique

ELA Teacher, Marrero Middle School

Section 05

School and District

A. Curriculum Alignment to State Standards

The curriculum is customized for every Star Academy site so that it aligns to state standards. The curricula combine Modules, Individualized Prescriptive Lessons, Math Connections, Blended Science, and Living Curriculum units of study. Also provided is a research and development lab area for collaborative projects, both for Academy students and the school community at large.

B. Recognition

Through partnership with NOLA Education, Star Academy sites are offered public relations services such as:

- ★ Event planning (ribbon cuttings & open houses)
- ★ Website & social media content
- ★ Accolades & ambassadorship
- ★ Press releases & media coverage
- ★ Photo shoots
- ★ Video shoots

The intention is to be able to allow districts to easily share their student success stories and feature their Star Academy program.

"Star Academy is an opportunity for these kids to experience learning opportunities that they would not have normally had within a traditional learning curriculum."

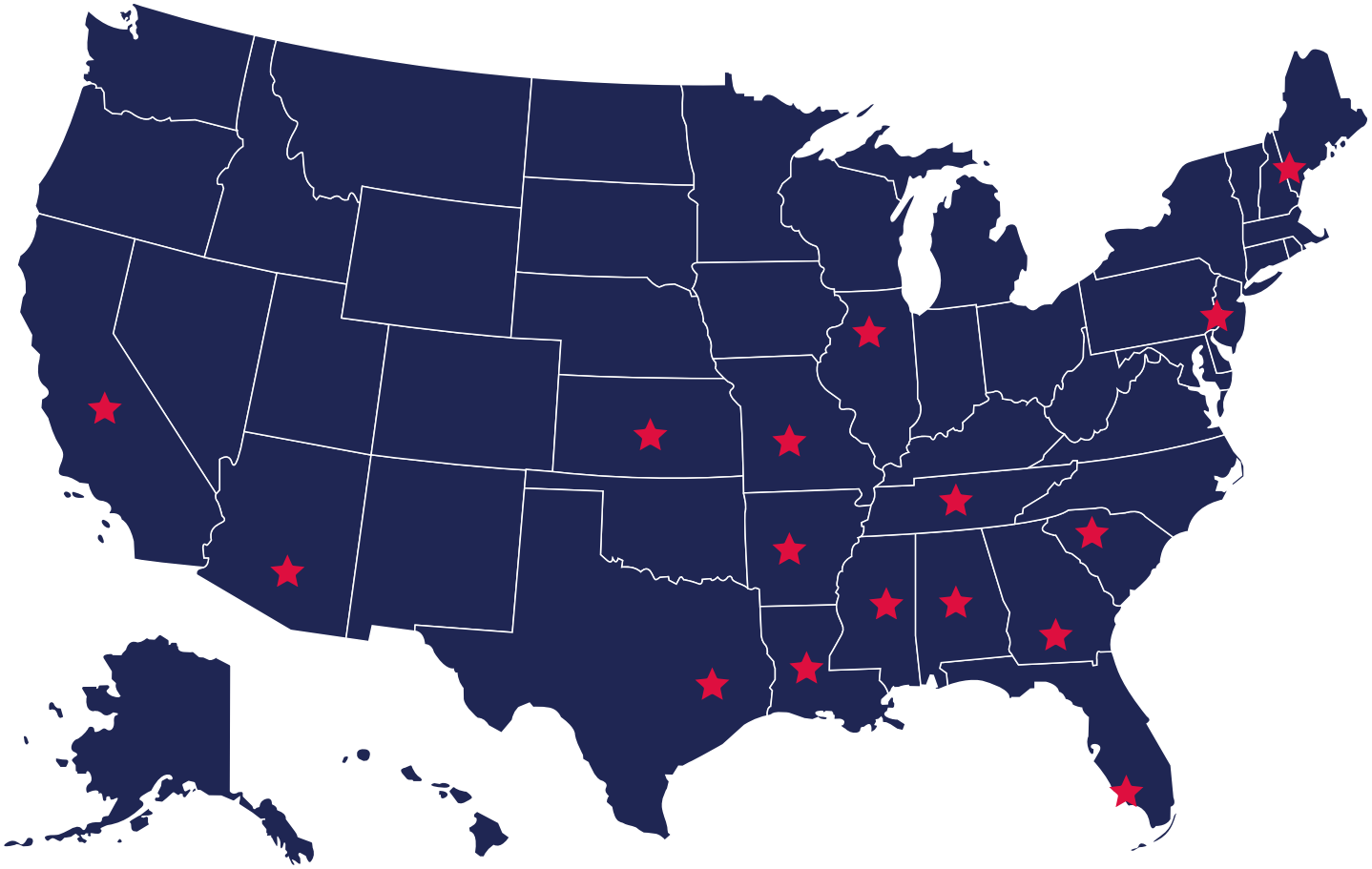
-J Ina

Principal, Franklin Junior High School

Section 06

National Impact

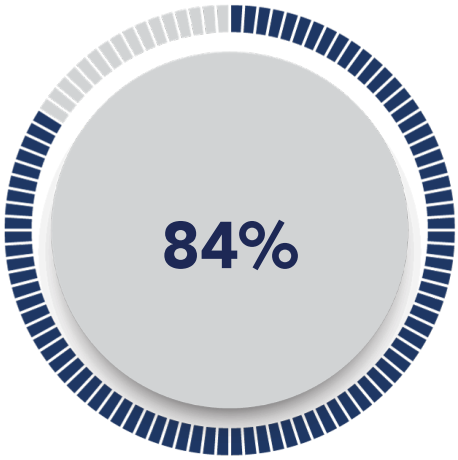
16 States Served
80+ Schools • 20,000+ Students



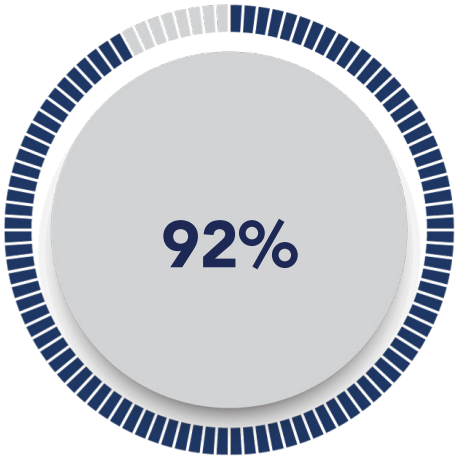
National Impact

Mississippi Schools 2-Grade-Level Advancement, Retention Rate

Since 2014, five Star Academy programs in rural Mississippi have seen retention rates rise to 92%, while 84% of enrollees advanced two grade levels in a single year.



2-Grade-Level Advancement

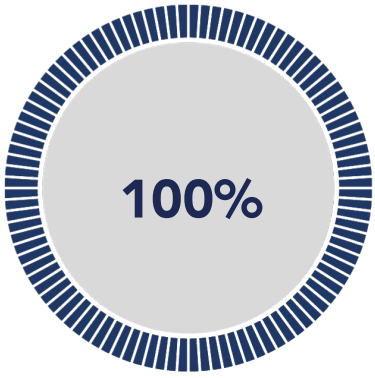


Retention

Alabama Schools: Students Having Graduated or "On Track to Graduate"

Three county school districts in Alabama were struggling to keep students moving ahead and graduating. Since introducing Star Academy, they've reported extremely high rates of students either awarded diplomas or "on track to graduate" as compared to peer districts.

Mobile County Schools 2012-Current

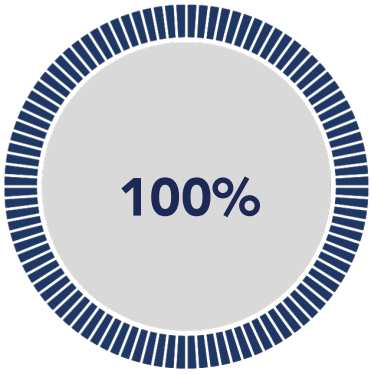


ESCAMBIA County Schools 2012-Current

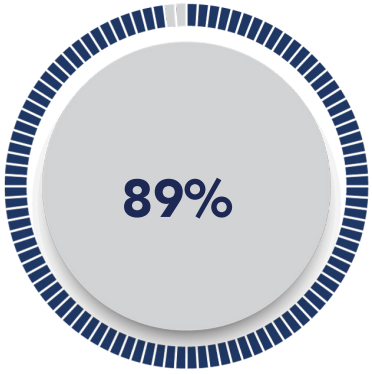
Montgomery County Schools 2012-Current

Berrien County, Georgia: Standardized Test Pass Rates

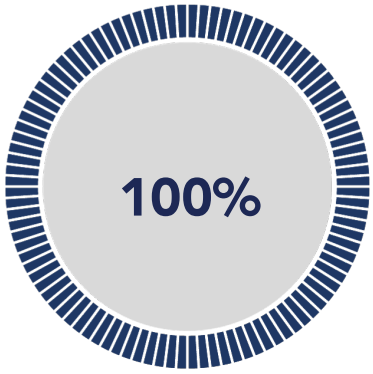
Since implementing the Star Academy program, schools in Berrien County, Georgia have greatly increased standardized test pass rates. In addition, they have reported a 71% increase in student attendance rates, and in 2020, that 98% of their Star Academy completers were still in school and on-track to graduate.



Standardized Test Pass Rate: Literature



Standardized Test Pass Rate: Algebra



Standardized Test Pass Rate: Geometry

Section 07

National Summit Recap

Star Academy is committed to helping educators and administrators serve their students in the most effective way. To help achieve this, the 2023 Star Academy Summit brought together over 50 Star Academy educators from across the nation for two days of engaging sessions.

Sessions allowed teachers, counselors, and administrators the opportunity to learn best practices, enhance leadership skills, and elevate their overall experience as Star Academy partners.

This was the 4th annual Star Academy Summit and it proved to be a testament to the power of continuous learning and collaboration in education. The Summit served as a reminder that in the ever-evolving landscape of education, we are all lifelong learners.

Educators and administrators from the following districts attended:

- ★ Jefferson Parish
- ★ Tangipahoa Parish
- ★ St. Helena Parish
- ★ St. Mary Parish
- ★ Concordia Parish
- ★ Bogalusa City Schools
- ★ St. Landry Parish
- ★ Evangeline Parish
- ★ Iberia Parish

Section 08

Upcoming Expansion, Modifications & New Lessons

To further the Star Academy commitment of delivering products and services that help educators inspire students and facilitate engaging, effective learning experiences, we are excited to share a preview of what's to come in the following year.

- ★ In our continuous efforts to revolutionize learning, we're developing a new High School Physical Science course. This course will include diverse project-based learning opportunities and a cutting-edge digital experience for students to relate directly to real-world applications.
- ★ Star Academy is also working to streamline and enhance classroom management, with the development of an updated learning management system. Crafted to be powerful yet easy to use, this system will transform the management and delivery of classroom instruction.
- ★ Student Program Initiatives - Star Academy is offering new programs to better serve students and allow for real-life learning opportunities. One of these programs is Student Jobs, which will impart employability skills and career awareness. Others include a Student Summit, Student of the Month/Year recognition, Student Ambassadors and Certifications

As we move forward into the coming year, we remain passionately dedicated to crafting cutting-edge tools for education, giving educators everything they need to make learning immersive, inclusive, and inspiring.

NOLAEducation,LLC

learn more at:

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www.StarAcademyProgram.com
1.800.526.5173