

Louisiana Leads the Nation in Student Learning Growth



NIET's partners in **LOUISIANA** have invested in high-impact professional learning and coaching that improves instruction and student learning. As student achievement across academic subjects and grades outpaces expectations, these effective practices are increasingly reflected in state

policy. Through a partnership with the Louisiana Department of Education, NIET delivers high-impact, statewide training and on-site support to strengthen observation, feedback, and coaching practices aligned to the Louisiana Educator Advancement and Development System (LEADS).



Investing in Educators Drives a ‘Southern Surge’ in Student Learning Growth

Louisiana is leading the nation in student growth, resulting in recognition as part of a “Southern surge” among states achieving historic learning gains. The state’s commitment to increasing expectations for students while simultaneously increasing the coaching and support provided to teachers has set an example for how states can improve student success.

UNLEASHING THE EXPERTISE AND TALENT OF TEACHER LEADERS

Recognizing the talent within schools and classrooms, many school systems are creating teacher leadership roles to staff schools more strategically and drive continuous improvement within existing budgets.

Including teacher leaders in instructional leadership teams has proven to be a highly successful strategy. Elevating teachers into leadership roles provides classroom teachers with more relevant, timely, actionable support while also creating new professional opportunities and career pathways for educators.

This year, NIET partner Natchitoches Parish School Board was nationally recognized in *The Boston Globe* for its use of teacher leaders to facilitate weekly teacher collaboration meetings and provide individual coaching for teachers. The strategic use of teacher leaders drove significant improvements in educator effectiveness and student achievement, with the district earning its highest-ever district performance score and rising from a state ranking of 43rd in 2020 to 22nd in 2025.

“Louisiana’s partnership with NIET has been a win for teachers and students. I’ve seen the power of NIET’s work firsthand, and their collaboration and support provide opportunities for educators and students to thrive.”

DR. CADE BRUMLEY
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION, LOUISIANA



HIGH-QUALITY OBSERVATION AND FEEDBACK THROUGH LEADS

Responding to educators looking for high-quality, actionable feedback and follow-up support in classrooms, the Louisiana Educator Advancement and Development System (LEADS) is strengthening instructional practices across the state. Built on evidence-based rubrics of instructional practice, LEADS connects feedback from observations to a coaching cycle — supporting teachers to continuously improve classroom instruction using high-quality instructional materials (HQIM).

As part of this initiative, NIET provides training in high-quality observation and feedback practices across the state and supports districts in building collaborative professional learning systems and coaching cycles for teachers to strengthen classroom practices.





LOUISIANA'S
INVESTMENTS
IN EDUCATOR
EFFECTIVENESS
ARE PAYING OFF

SPOTLIGHT:

Great Classroom Teaching in Jefferson Parish Schools

Mentor teachers have an impact in Jefferson Parish Schools. Sarah Watkins, a mentor teacher at Stella Worley Middle School in Jefferson Parish Schools, was recognized this year for great classroom teaching as a surprise recipient of the Milken Educator Award.

As a mentor teacher, Sarah coaches teachers, models instructional strategies, and facilitates teacher collaborative learning. By extending the reach of strong classroom teachers like Sarah, Jefferson Parish is building instructional excellence across classrooms and improving outcomes for students — helping Louisiana lead the nation in student learning growth.

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4 YEARS

OF CONSECUTIVE
STUDENT GROWTH

Louisiana is the only state to make significant growth in both reading and math National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores over the last four years.