

State of Louisiana TANF Evaluation

Year 3 Evaluation of TANF Initiatives Programs

Louisiana Department of Education
After School for All Program

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Foreword

Under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, states are allowed to use federal TANF block grant funds to support a variety of programs targeting needy families beyond the traditional welfare-eligible population. Availing itself of the flexibility allowed under TANF, the Louisiana State Legislature allocated a sizable amount of the state's unspent federal TANF funds, starting in FFY2002, to a variety of programs known collectively as the TANF Initiatives. The total allocations amounted to \$105 million in FFY2002 and \$160 million in FFY2003. In its third year, the TANF Initiatives consist of over 20 programs administered by 11 state agencies with a total budget of \$127 million.

For the past three years, Berkeley Policy Associates, a social policy research and consulting firm in Oakland, California, has conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the State of Louisiana's TANF-funded programs under contract with the Division of Administration. Included in this evaluation are the state welfare programs administered by the Department of Social Services (the Family Independence Temporary Assistance Program and the Strategies to Empower People Program) as well as selected programs under the TANF Initiatives Program. The third year evaluation of the TANF Initiatives covers the following programs: After Schools for All Program and Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program (the Department of Education), Tuition and Upgrade Programs (the Workforce Commission and the Louisiana Community and Technical College System), Post Release Skills Program (the Department of Public Safety and Correction), Pre Release Program for Incarcerated Fathers (the Louisiana Community and Technical College System), Substance Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Program (the Department of Health and Hospitals) and Drug Court Program (the Louisiana Supreme Court). The current report represents one in a series of the Year 3 TANF Initiatives Evaluation Reports.

Key Findings

- Iowa test scores for After School for All (ASFA) students in some subjects increased by up to two (normal curve equivalent) points after program participation. Moreover, the gain in Iowa test scores in these subjects exceeded those for non-ASFA students.
- The 2004 LEAP 21 scores for ASFA students were generally low: in 2004, on average (between the four test subjects) 26 percent of fourth grade ASFA students scored “Unsatisfactory” on the tests, while on average 33 percent of eighth grade ASFA students scored “Unsatisfactory”.
- 2004 LEAP 21 scores for ASFA students lagged the scores for non-ASFA students.
- Results of a teacher survey at thirteen sites suggest that about half of teachers of students in the ASFA program found that the program improved academic performance for most or all students.
- Teacher survey results and provider interviews suggest that the school day program and the ASFA program were well integrated academically at most schools, in part because day teachers were included among after school staff.
- Communication between after school staff and students’ day school teachers could be strengthened to better focus academic interventions to address students’ individual needs.

Introduction

Program Overview

The After School for All (ASFA) TANF Initiative calls for public schools, faith-based and other community-based organizations, and private, non-profit organizations to provide academic, enrichment, and recreational activities for elementary, middle, and high school students before and after school and during the summer. The program, administered by the Department of Education (DOE), is guided by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Social Services that stipulates the goals of the programs and the allowable uses of the federal TANF funds. In FY2004, DOE issued \$9.025 million to 61 provider organizations to provide After School for All services.

Exhibit 1
TANF Initiatives Program Summary: After School for All Program

Contract Agency	Administered by the Department of Education (DOE) Under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Social Services (DSS)
Grant Amount	\$9.5 million total in SFY04 (\$9.025 for contractors)
Expenditures to Date	\$7,651,735 (as of July 31, 2004)
Program Background and Services	The After School TANF Initiative called for non-profit and for profit programs to provide academic, enrichment, and recreational activities for elementary, middle, or high school students primarily during after school and summer hours.
Number of Contractors	61 providers in SFY04
Number of Sites	185 sites in SFY04
Target Population	Students who reside in high-poverty communities.

The RFP issued by DOE stipulates that ASFA contractors adhere to the following provisions:

- Contractors need to meet performance measures of 50 percent attendance and 50 percent retention, among other indicators;
- Academic enrichment, recreation, and tutoring are required of all contractors;
- Each contractor must be trained in the implementation of an approved after school curriculum and utilize the curriculum during the summer program as well as during the regular school year;
- Programs during the school year must provide an academic component and either recreation or enrichment, or both, weekly; and
- Contractors must offer programming for a minimum of 3 days a week for at least 10 months.

In addition, starting in the fall of 2002, DOE required contractors to select from a list of approved curricula. For the 2003-04 school year, ASFA contractors could choose between: *Voyager After School*, Benchmark Education Company's Reading Explorers Tutoring Programs, or *Fast ForWord - Basics* and/or *Fast ForWord - Reading*.

This year's After School for All evaluation is a continuation of evaluations conducted in 2002 and 2003. The 2002 report focused on evaluating the initial implementation of the program. Among other

recommendations, the study recommended that the program train instructors in the use of standardized curriculum models in order to improve program quality. Based on data collected from a program staff survey, the 2003 evaluation reported on program characteristics and student outcomes. This year's evaluation builds on the previous studies. Using the teacher survey and interview data, we examine the linkages and communication patterns between school day teachers and ASFA staff,¹ implementation challenges encountered by the programs, and teachers' perspectives on the strengths and weaknesses of the ASFA program. In addition, using standardized test score data, student-level school administrative data, and student-level ASFA program administrative data, we analyze student's academic outcomes before and after attending the ASFA programs and measure the degree to which test scores, school attendance, and behaviour improved after program attendance.

Relevant Findings from Other After School Program Evaluations

A focus of the After School for All Evaluation is on academic outcomes for participating students. Several rigorous evaluations have reported that sustained attendance in after school programs, especially those with a strong academic focus, can positively impact students' academic performance.² Although the first year of the national evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers reported little or no impact,³ the participants in this program were found to have low levels of participation (an average of fewer than two days per week) and academic content of the programs was limited.

A longitudinal impact study of Los Angeles' BEST,⁴ an after school program serving 14,000 elementary school children, reported that among students who participated in the program for four years or more, higher levels of participation were positively associated with performance on standardized tests in mathematics, reading, and language arts. Participation in the program was also found to lead to fewer absences in grades 6 and 7.

A quasi-experimental evaluation of the TASC (The After School Corporation) After School Program, which serves thousands of children throughout New York State, found that participants with at least sixty days of participation per year made greater gains in math test scores than did a comparison group

¹According to the U.S. Department of Education, "linkages between school day and after school personnel that maximize child-focused activities and coordinate use of facilities and equipment" are one of several characteristics that are common in successful youth programs.

² *The Evaluation Exchange* Spring 2004 issue was devoted to discussion of after school participation issues. (www.gse.harvard.edu/hfr)

³ U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Under Secretary. (2003). *When School Stay Open Late: The National Evaluation of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program, First Year Findings*. Washington, DC: Author.

⁴ Huang, D., Gibbons, B., Kim, K. S., Lee, C., & Baker, E. L. (2000). A decade of results: The impact of the LA's BEST after school enrichment initiative on subsequent student achievement and performance. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for the Study of Evaluation, Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, University of California.

of nonparticipants.⁵ Students who participated for two or three years made greater relative gains than those participating for one year.

Also the focus of a quasi-experimental evaluation was the Foundations After School Enrichment Program,⁶ which serves students in kindergarten through twelfth grades at 87 sites throughout the Northeast. Foundations programs implement a structured curriculum that is literature-based, linked to national standards, and designed to reinforce skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. An evaluation conducted at nineteen elementary school sites found that students were progressing faster than the national norm group in math skill development and they were keeping pace with the norm group in reading. An analysis that controlled for grade level and school found that the Foundations students' overall average improvement in test scores between the pretest and posttest was significantly greater than among non-Foundations comparison group students.

Providers' Perspectives on the TANF After School for All Program

Interviews with After School Providers

Evaluators conducted telephone interviews with a sample of ASFA program providers in order to obtain their perspective on the program and to identify site-level factors that might have influenced program implementation. We restricted the sample to ASFA programs that were located on school sites. Out of the 185 ASFA Program sites that operated during the 2002-03 school year, well over half (127) were located on school campuses. Of these ASFA on-school sites, 92 were operated by outside community-based or faith-based organizations, and 35 were run by the parish school systems. We used the enrollment information from DOE's 2002-03 ASSIST database to identify fifteen school sites with the highest enrollments in the TANF ASFA program.⁷ In the late spring we contacted the providers or the site coordinators at these fifteen sites and succeeded in scheduling interviews with nine of the fifteen sites. Interviews were approximately one half hour in length and included questions about how the program was integrated with and supported by the school; obstacles encountered in the implementation process; parent involvement; and needs for additional support from the Department of Education.

⁵ Welsh, M. E., Russell, C. A., Williams, I., Reisner, E. R., & White, R. N. (2002). Promoting learning and school attendance through after school programs: Student-level changes in educational performance across TASC's first three years. Washington DC: Policy Studies Associates.

⁶ Klein, S. P., & Bolus, R. (2002). *Improvements in math and reading scores of students who did and did not participate in the Foundations After School Enrichment Program during the 2001-2002 school year*. Santa Monica, CA: Gansk & Associates. Available at: www.communityschools.org/foundations.pdf (Acrobat file).

⁷ The ASSIST database is an administrative database that tracks ASFA student attendance, program hours and other program information.

Integration of the After School Program with the Site

Most interview respondents noted considerable continuity between day school and after school staffing. All of the after school programs employed credentialed teachers. At seven of the nine programs, teachers from the schools' day programs made up part or all of the staff of the after school programs, in some cases serving as site coordinators. Other staff from the day school, including teachers' aides and support staff, provided staffing for several of the after school programs as well. Involvement of school principals in the after school programs varied, but most respondents reported that the principals were supportive of the programs.

The involvement of day teachers in the after school programs facilitated integration of the after school program with the academic curriculum of the schools. Day teachers who worked in after school programs were familiar with the students' homework assignments and were able to communicate easily with other day teachers about students' individual needs for support. At some schools, day teachers were involved in planning the after school program, designing the program to reinforce learning that takes place during the school day. Involving teachers in planning also helped secure their buy-in to the program.

Other approaches that served to help integrate the after school program with sites included maintenance of weekly homework assignment sheets for each student, joint trainings of teachers and after school staff, and occasional involvement of day teachers in after school events and special classes. One provider reported that after school staff distributed a survey to the teachers asking them to identify student needs. At some sites, after school staff were able to review students' day school progress reports.

With one exception, providers reported that teacher support for the program was "medium" or "high," with teachers often referring their students to the program and, at a minimum, showing willingness to share information with after school staff as needed. Only one respondent, whose program had hired after school staff from outside the district, reported a very low level of support from day school teachers and staff.

Program Implementation

Providers reported that implementation of their basic program design generally proceeded as planned. Most were satisfied with their curricula and were optimistic that the programs were contributing to improvements in students' academic performance. Obstacles to implementation were reported at only two sites: one provider reported a delay in receiving the Voyager curriculum materials and associated training, and a second (described above) reported lack of cooperation from school staff. At other sites, occasional program challenges did arise in the course of the year, including:

- ***Sustaining attendance.*** Several providers, most of them serving middle schools, expressed the concern that attendance was sporadic or dropped over the course of the year, particularly after spring testing had been completed. It appeared to providers that some parents and students, as well as teachers, relied on the after school program primarily as an intervention to boost LEAP 21 test scores, which are now used as a basis for grade promotion. Providers expressed concern that many students lost interest in the after school program after the testing period was over. Providers planned a variety of engaging activities, including field trips, arts and crafts, and sports, in order to balance the academic program and enhance student motivation, but they were not always successful in sustaining attendance.
- ***Transportation.*** Several providers noted the need for better bus service or for improved safety on buses/bus stops during the winter months when dismissal time was after dark.
- ***Difficulties serving high-risk students.*** A few providers mentioned that the students served by the program were in need of additional services, and one stated that the Voyager curriculum had to be adapted by the teachers in order to be more “grade appropriate” for struggling students.

Parent Involvement

Providers reported that parents were enthusiastic about the program and many were eager to enroll their children over the summer and for the following year. Active parent involvement was very limited, but providers did have some success in recruiting small numbers of parents to provide assistance with field trips and other special events. Some programs sponsored family potlucks, bowling nights, or weekend family outings, and reported good turnouts for these events. Two middle schools had separate grants for parent education; these grants were effective in bringing parents to the school during after school hours for workshops on technology and on parenting issues. After school providers at these schools reported greater success than the others in involving parents in the after school program—one of them had parents volunteering for the program on a weekly basis—but they attributed this success to the parenting grant, rather than to the efforts of the after school program per se.

DOE Support

Most interview respondents reported that advice, training and support they had received from DOE (both through individualized assistance and through workshops) had been helpful. A few providers made suggestions for improved DOE support, including:

- **Improvements in the ASSIST database.** Several respondents noted that the online database seemed to shut down periodically, occasionally losing data that had already been entered, resulting in extra work for the program staff. It should be noted that changes in the ASSIST database are currently under development.
- **Technical assistance to improve local program administration and supervision.** Several providers identified a need for guidance on how to make the best use of supervisory time, including what to look for when observing classrooms.
- **Advice on parent involvement.** Because involving parents in after school programs presented a challenge, a few providers suggested that workshops on this topic would be helpful.

Day School Teachers' Perspectives on the After School for All Program

The Day School Teacher Survey

BPA conducted a day school teacher survey at selected school campuses where TANF Initiatives After School Program sites were located in order to obtain teachers' assessments of the program's benefits and to better understand how the after school programs were integrated with the day program.⁸ We designed a two-page questionnaire (included in Appendix E) with questions about teacher/after school staff communication, student outcomes, and teachers' recommendations for program improvements. We mailed surveys to principals or site coordinators at the fifteen largest school-based programs (identified through the ASSIST database as described above), asking them to distribute surveys to all day teachers.⁹ A total of 219 teachers from thirteen schools responded to the survey, for an average response rate of 54 percent across these schools.

Respondent Characteristics

Among survey respondents, 64 percent were elementary school teachers (grades 1 through 5) and the remaining 36 percent were middle school teachers (grades 6 through 8). Teachers of each grade from one through eight were represented, with the largest number of respondents teaching grades three and four.

⁹ Out of the 185 After School for All Program sites that operated during the 2002-03 school year, well over half (127) were located on school campuses.

Many of the middle school respondents reported a subject specialty, with over one-third teaching math and/or English/Language Arts. The After School for All Program has a heavy focus on improving students' test scores on the LEAP and IOWA standardized tests in math and English language skills. About thirty percent of middle school respondents teach history or social studies and one-fifth teach science. Approximately ten percent of all elementary school students and 26 percent of all middle school teachers reported other teaching specialties including speech, technology, health/physical education, and career/vocational education.

A large majority of survey respondents—approximately three-fourths--reported that one or more of their students were participants in the 2003-2004 After School for All Program. Another 17 percent of elementary school teachers and 12 percent of middle school teachers reported that they were not certain whether any of their students were enrolled in the TANF ASFA program.

Twelve percent of the teachers reported that they did not know about the ASFA program prior to receiving the survey. We exclude these teachers from subsequent tabulations of survey responses.

Approximately 45 percent of respondents indicated that they taught in their schools' After School for All program as well as in the day program. To avoid any possible bias related to these respondents, we limit the analysis of survey findings on student outcomes (discussed below) to the responses of day teachers who did not also teach in the After School Program.

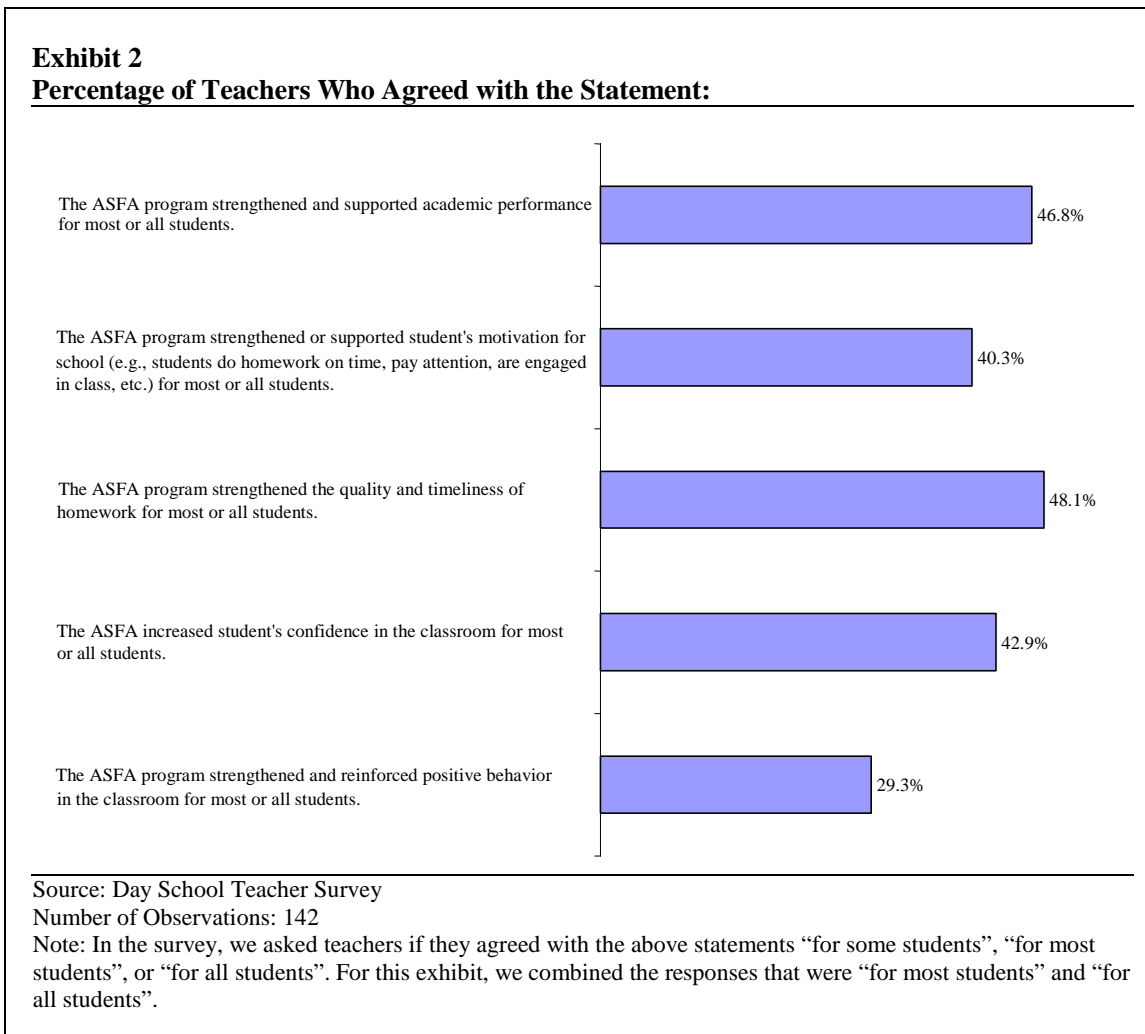
Teacher's View on Student Outcomes

The survey asked teachers whether the After School for All Program strengthened students' academic performance, motivation, quality of homework, confidence, and classroom behavior. Over eighty percent of middle school teachers and almost half of elementary school teachers reported that the after school program strengthened academic performance for most or all students who participated in the program. The quality and timeliness of homework completion was reported to be strengthened for most or all students by almost 75 percent of middle school teachers and 55 percent of elementary school teachers. Slightly lower percentages of teachers reported other positive outcomes for most students (with the lowest percentages reporting strengthening of classroom behavior) but for all behaviors identified on the questionnaire the vast majority of teachers reported positive effects for at least some students.

Middle school teachers consistently reported more positive student outcomes than did elementary school teachers. This difference might reflect in part more active communication between middle school teachers and after school staff that is described below, which could have led to greater awareness by middle school teachers of the program's effects on students.

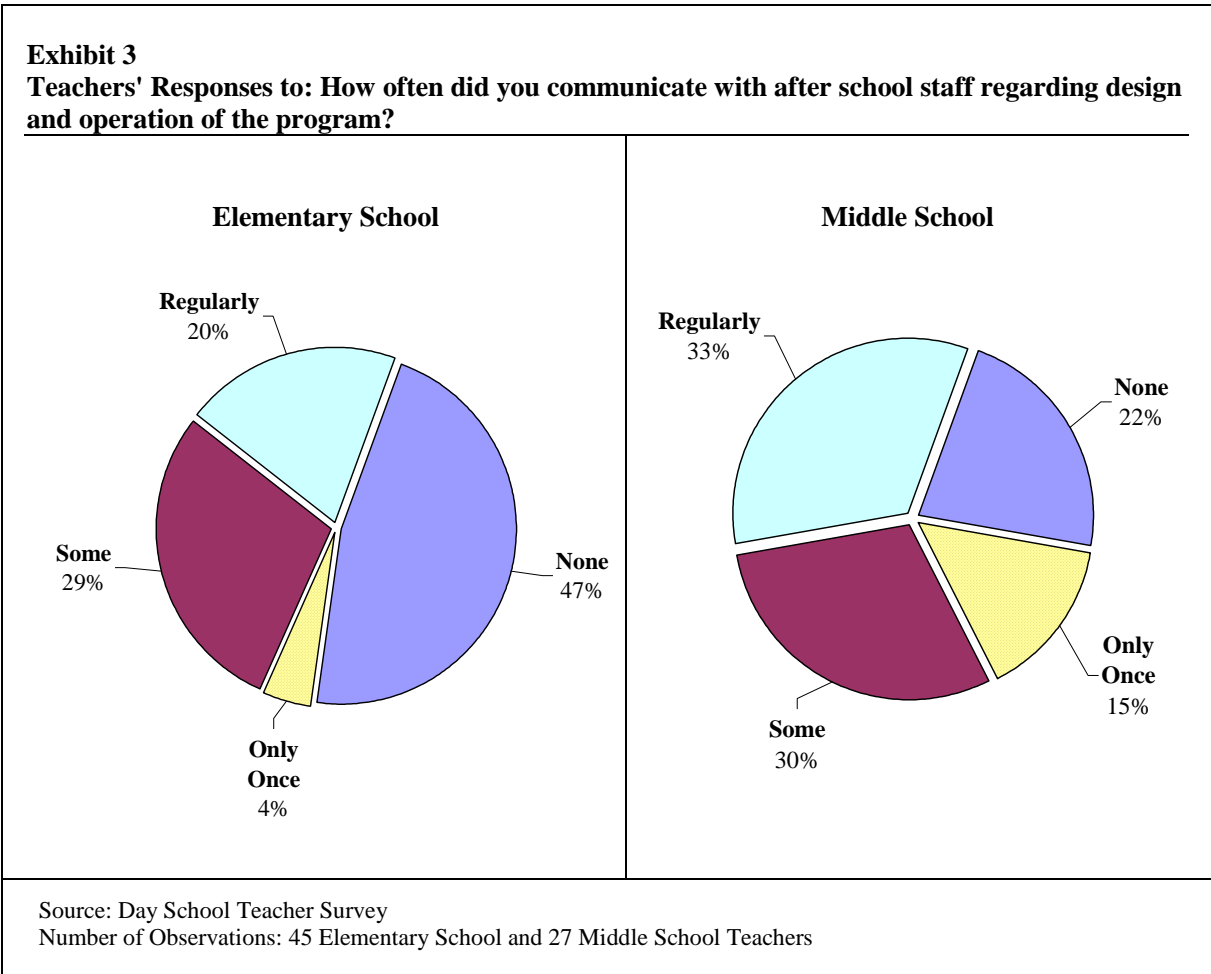
Exhibit 2 presents the merged responses on outcomes for “most” or “all” students by teachers at all grade levels. About half the respondents reported academic and homework benefits of the ASFA program for either most or all students.

When asked to write in comments on additional outcomes of the After School for All Program, at least six teachers wrote that the program contributed to improved test scores. Other benefits mentioned were that students were becoming more responsible, had better study habits, showed improved writing skills, and in the words of one teacher, “Students appear more relaxed, better able to concentrate, more cooperative, and motivated academically.” Several teachers also commented on the benefits of a “positive” and “safe” after school environment.



Communication Between Day School Teachers and After School Staff

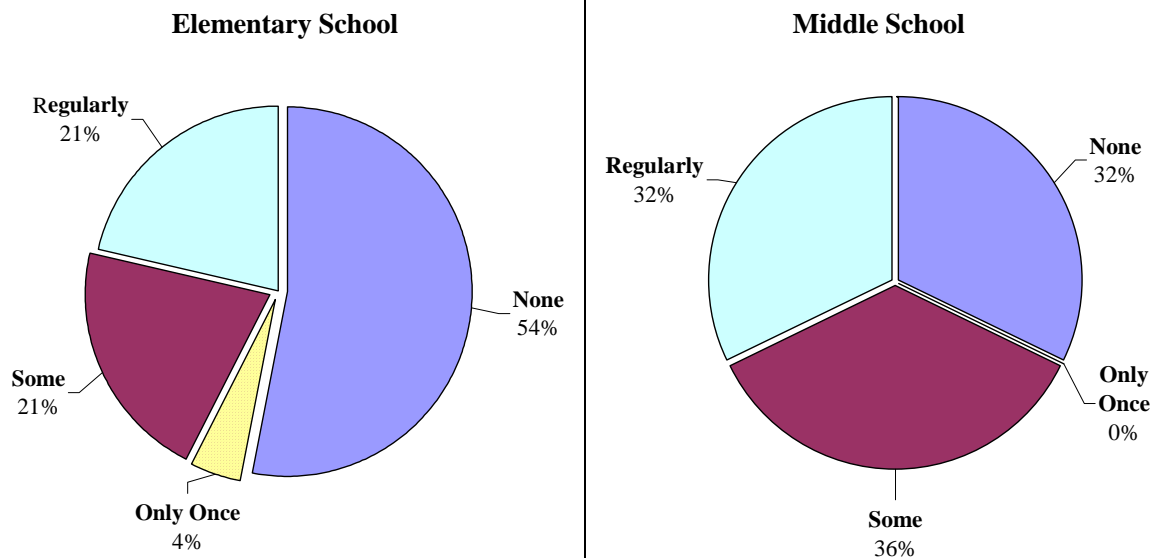
While communication with day teachers was not required of TANF After School for All programs, the teacher survey included questions about such communication as a measure of integration of the After School Program with the Day Program.¹⁰ We asked teachers about the frequency of their communication with after school staff regarding design and operation of the program; academic strategies for working with children; and individual children’s needs. The following findings are based on the responses of day teachers who: 1) did not teach in the After School for All Program, as well as 2) reported that they had students enrolled in the 2003-2004 ASFA program. Exhibits 3 and 4 summarize these responses.



¹⁰ Integration with the Day Program is one of the hallmarks of a quality after school program. See North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, “Resources for After-School Programming: Strengthening Connections.” <http://www.ncrel.org/21stcclc/connect/intro.htm>.

Communication patterns did not vary significantly across the three topics, with about one fifth of elementary school respondents and one third of middle school respondents consistently reporting “regular” communication across the three topics. About one half of elementary school teachers reported “no communication” for each of the topics. Proportions of middle school teachers reporting no communication ranged from one fifth (regarding design and operation of the program) to one third (regarding individual children’s issues). It should be noted that while the proportion of teachers reporting “no communication” are high, almost all of these after school programs include day teachers on their staff, and these teachers could be expected to provide continuity between the day curriculum and the after school program without requiring additional communication with other teachers. In the areas of program design and general academic strategies, involvement by other day teachers may not have been necessary at all schools. However, we should also note that, when asked for a general assessment of program weaknesses (discussed later in this chapter) the largest subgroup of respondents (13 teachers) commented that communication and coordination between day teachers and after schools teachers should be improved.

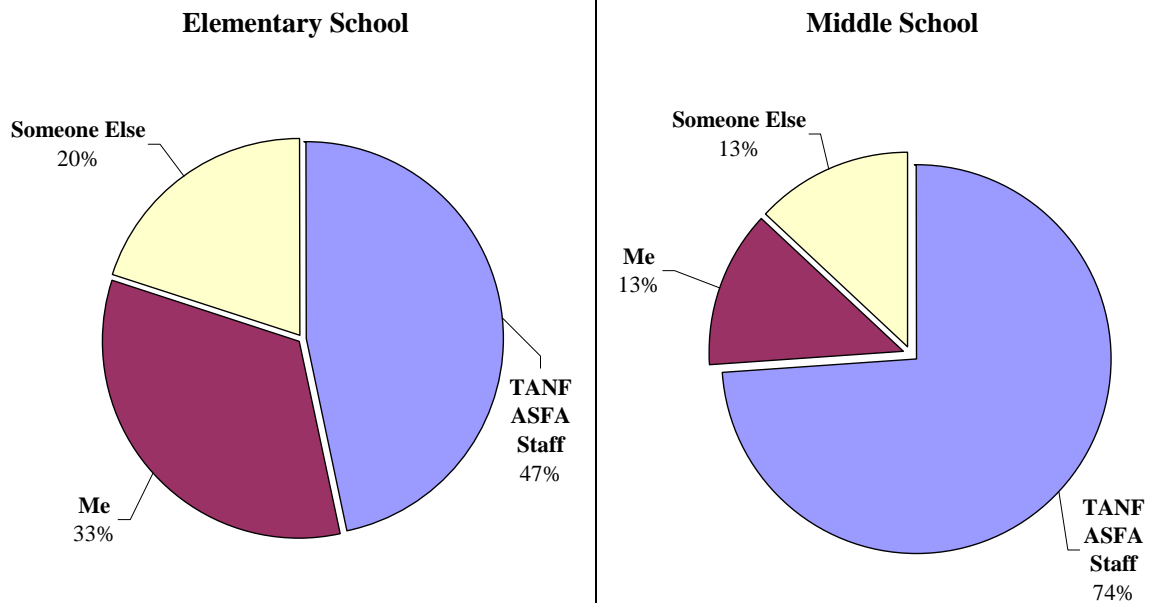
Exhibit 4
Teachers' Responses to: How often did you communicate with after school staff regarding individual children’s needs?



Source: Day School Teacher Survey
 Number of Observations: 75 Elementary School and 28 Middle School Teachers

The greater frequency of communication reported by middle school teachers indicates more active involvement in the after school program by middle school respondents than elementary school respondents. The larger size of the middle school after school programs and the greater number of after school staff at the middle school level may have resulted in greater visibility of the programs and more opportunities for communicating with day school staff. As Exhibit 5 show, most communication was initiated by after school staff rather than by the day teachers.

Exhibit 5
Teachers' Responses to: Who initiated communication with TANF After School Program staff?



Source: Day School Teacher Survey
Number of Observations: 30 Elementary School and 23 Middle School Teachers

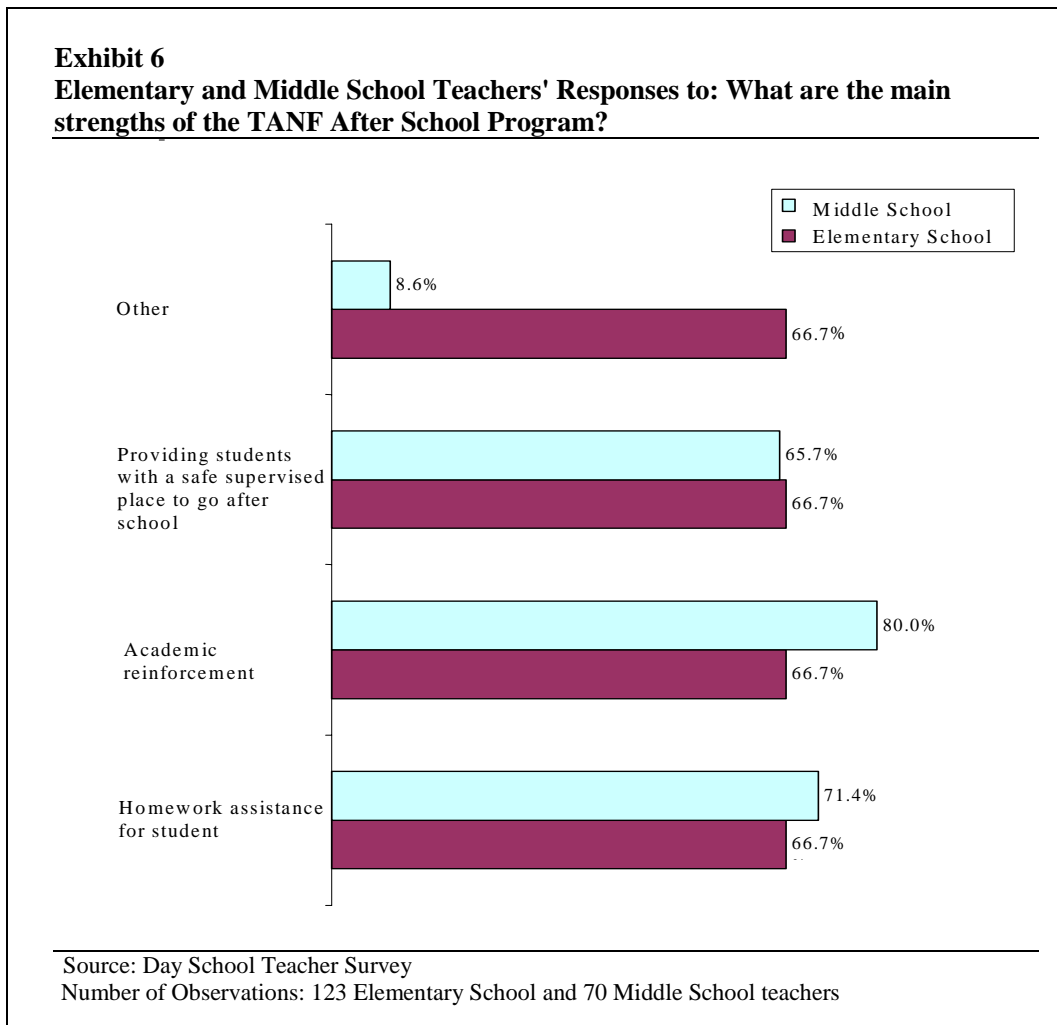
The finding of most concern is the large proportion of teachers (one third of middle school teachers and over half of elementary school teachers) who reported no communication with after school staff regarding individual children's needs or issues. Since all responses presented here were from teachers with students attending the after school program, some communication with after school staff regarding these children's academic needs and progress would have been desirable in order to target after school interventions as effectively as possible.

Teachers' Assessments of the Program and Recommendations for Improvements

A large majority of teachers considered the After School Program to offer important strengths in each of the areas identified on the survey, including providing a safe environment, and providing academic reinforcement and homework assistance. Middle school teachers were particularly likely (with eighty percent responding positively) to identify academic reinforcement as a program strength.

A few teachers wrote comments on additional strengths of the program. These include:

- The program provides an opportunity for students to receive individualized instruction.
- Students receive access to additional materials to help them complete assignments.
- The program teaches test-taking strategies.



Although some reported the academic component or the program discipline to be weak, most respondents characterized the program as a very valuable part of the school. One teacher commented that the program “is essential for reinforcement and continuation of the regular academic program”; that “our children’s lives and well-being, achievement and success depend on this as much as on their day-time curriculum.”

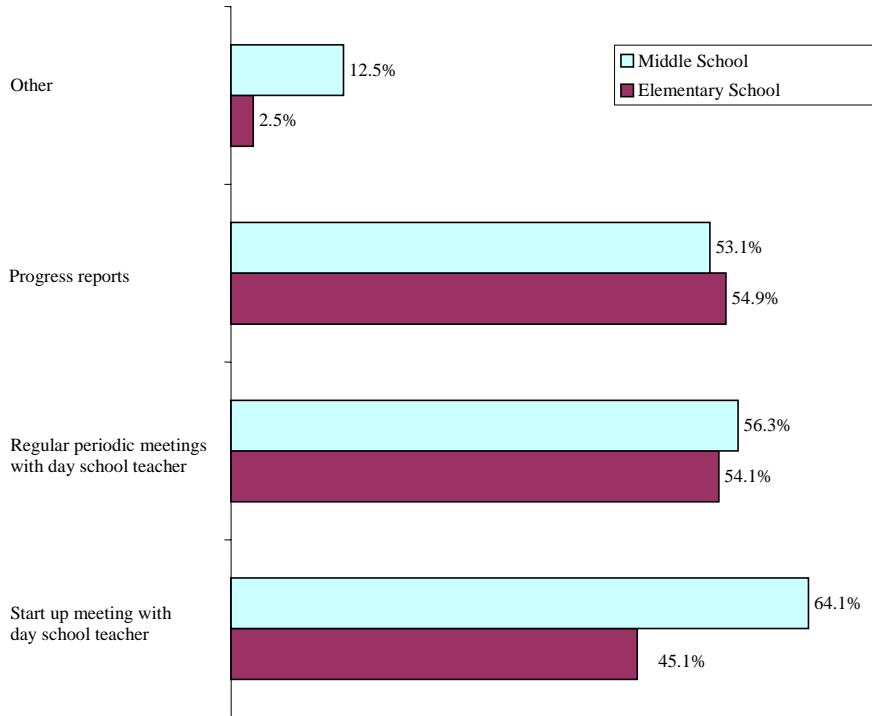
While teachers’ overriding view was that the programs were beneficial, they also made some suggestions for improvements in the After School for All Programs:

- Concerns about large class size or inadequate teacher-student ratio were expressed by four teachers. Some teachers believed that the greatest strength of the after school program was in offering individualized assistance, and this benefit was compromised if the program served too many students or had a large group size.
- Four respondents expressed concern about inconsistent attendance in the after school program.
- At least five respondents expressed concern that the program was not serving all students who needed it; some complained that priority for attendance was not sufficiently linked to need.
- Several respondents commented that, with three hours of after school programming, the school day became too long and tiring for students. Respondents also noted that the summer programs were too taxing as well.
- A few suggested a greater focus on test-taking skills, including one suggestion that the program “provide supplementary materials to help enhance reading, writing, math and reference materials . . .that will help reinforce testing.”
- A few respondents suggested that the programs communicate with parents more frequently and/or more directly.
- A few respondents identified transportation problems as a barrier to attendance.

Recommendation #1:

Preserve the After School for All Program as a program with both academic and nonacademic (recreation, safety, enrichment) goals, and assist programs in sustaining attendance through strategies that might include improved transportation services and sports/cultural activities that would motivate students to attend throughout the year.

Exhibit 7
Elementary and Middle School Teachers' Recommendations for Improving Day School Teacher-ASFA Staff Linkages



Source: Day School Teacher Survey
Number of Observations: 122 Elementary School and 64 Middle School teachers

Teachers were also asked about strategies that might be adopted to improve linkages between the after school program and the day program. Their responses suggest that more regular systems of communication between day teachers and after school teachers would be desirable, at least in some schools. One teacher elaborated that it would help if after school staff arranged to “get regular input from day teachers as to what each student may need targeted help with.” A second suggested that “written assessments should be given to the day school teacher” by the after school staff. A third suggested “more meetings between after school staff and day staff” for goal setting.

Recommendation #2:

ASSIST After School for All Programs in implementing regular communication with participants’ day teachers to ensure academic interventions are targeted to address each student’s needs.

Student Outcomes

In this section, we focus on program outcomes using standardized test scores, student-level ASFA program data and student-level school administrative data. We also summarize the characteristics of students who participate in the ASFA program.

Profile of Students Who Attend the After School for All Program

In Exhibit 8, we examine the demographic characteristics of students in the ASFA program using two administrative databases, ASSIST, a student-level database which tracks students in the ASFA program, and SIS, also a student-level database which tracks all public school students in Louisiana. The exhibit compares the characteristics of ASFA students to nonparticipants who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03. According to the administrative data, 13,375 students attended the ASFA program during the 2002-03 school year. Of these students, most were in elementary or middle school: 35 percent were in grades K through 3, 38 percent in grades 4 through 6 and 18 percent were in grades 7 or 8. Only 8 percent were in high school.

The exhibit shows that ASFA students are predominately African-American and are much more likely to be financially disadvantaged when compared to non-ASFA students. Ninety-four percent of ASFA students were African-American, compared to 47 percent of nonparticipants who were African American. In addition, a significantly higher percentage of ASFA students received free lunches when compared to non-ASFA students: 77 percent of ASFA students received free lunches, while 55 percent of non-ASFA students received free lunches.

In Exhibit 9, we report the average number of attendance days and disciplinary incidents for ASFA and non-ASFA students. On average, the ASFA students' attendance and disciplinary records were similar to those of students who were not in the program, indicating that ASFA students are no more or less likely than nonparticipants to experience behavioral problems at school. For example, 20 percent of ASFA students had a disciplinary incident during the 2002-03 school year, compared with 18 percent of students not in the program. Of those who had at least one disciplinary incident, the average number was 2.2 for ASFA students and 2.3 for other students. Finally, ASFA students had slightly better attendance records than students outside the program. On average, ASFA students had 8 absent days, while students outside the program averaged 11 absent days during the school year.

Exhibit 8
Demographic Characteristics For ASFA Students and Nonparticipants in 2002-03

	Percentage of ASFA Students	Percentage of Nonparticipants
Race/Ethnicity:		
African American	93.6	59.7
White	5.1	36.3
Hispanic	0.6	2.1
Asian	0.7	1.7
Native American	0.0	0.3
Free/Reduce Price Lunch Recipiency:		
Received Free Lunches	76.8	55.3
Received Reduced Price Lunches	6.8	7.4
Did Not Receive Free or Reduced Price Lunches	16.4	37.2
English Proficient		
English Proficient	99.4	98.6
Not English Proficient	0.6	1.4
Female		
Female	53.1	48.6
Male	46.9	51.4
Grade Level:		
Kindergarten	4.7	7.4
1	8.1	7.4
2	10.1	7.2
3	12.2	7.4
4	12.5	7.9
5	11.6	7.2
6	14.0	7.6
7	9.2	7.4
8	8.7	8.1
9	2.8	7.9
10	2.1	6.7
11	1.6	5.8
12	1.2	5.9
Other	1.2	6.2
Total Number of Students	13,375	415,488

Source: SIS and ASSIST Databases, Louisiana Department of Education

Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

Exhibit 9
Average Number of Disciplinary Incidents and Absent Days in 2002-03

	Average Number of Disciplinary Incidents	Average Number of Absent Days	Percent With Disciplinary Incidents	Total Number of Students
ASFA Students	0.44	7.86	19.9	13,375
Nonparticipants	0.40	10.69	18.4	415,688
ASFA Students With At Least One Disciplinary Incident	2.20			2,666
Nonparticipant Students With At Least One Disciplinary Incident	2.30			76,504

Source: SIS and ASSIST Databases, Louisiana Department of Education

Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

Exhibit 10
Characteristics of Schools Attended by ASFA Students in 2002-03

	Percentage of Schools Served by ASFA
Received Title I Schoolwide Funding	447
Had Poverty Levels of 70 Percent or Greater	201
Had Poverty Levels of 70 Percent and Did Not Receive Title I Schoolwide Funding	62
Total Number of Schools	754

Sources: SIS and ASSIST Databases, Louisiana Department of Education.

Types of Schools Attended by ASFA Students

A large number of schools that are attended by ASFA students have very high concentrations of students in poverty. As shown in Exhibit 13, in 2002-03, about 447 of the 745 schools attended by ASFA students were schools that received federal Title I school-wide funds. Title I grants school-wide funding to schools that have student poverty enrollment that is greater than 40 percent. An additional 62 schools served by the ASFA program that did not receive Title I funding in 2002-03 were located in parishes with very high poverty rates.¹¹

IOWA Test Scores

In this section, we examine IOWA test scores for ASFA students and for non-ASFA students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03. We discuss score changes for both groups from year-to-year. Our results indicate the following:

- ASFA student scores in math and social studies on average increased by one to two points between 2003 and 2004. The score increases in both subjects were larger than the increases achieved by non-ASFA students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.
- ASFA student scores in reading increased by 0.44 points, an increase that was equal to the increase for nonparticipants in that subject.
- ASFA student scores in language fell by 0.53 points between 2003 and 2004, a margin close to the decrease for non-ASFA students (.35 points).
- ASFA students scores in science fell by 1.81 points between 2003 and 2004, while the scores for nonparticipants fell by 1.00 points.
- Among students who received free lunches, the increases in the math and social science tests were higher for ASFA students than they were for non-ASFA students.

¹¹ Poverty in this case is measured by the percentage of students in the parishes who receive free or reduced price lunches. Parishes that have at least 70 percent of the students receiving free or reduced price lunches are defined here as “high poverty rate” parishes. The parishes are (in descending order of the percentage of students who received free or reduced price lunches in 2002-03): East Carroll, St. Helena, Madison, Red River, Iberville, Tensas, Bogalusa City, Pointe Coupee, St. John the Baptist, Orleans, Washington, Monroe City, Avoyelles, East Feliciana, St. Landry, Evangeline, Concordia, Morehouse, St. James, Bienville, and Franklin.

¹² LEAP 21 testing in English Language Arts and Mathematics began in the spring of 1999. Social Studies and Science tests were added in spring 2000.

¹³ Louisiana Department of Education, www.louisianaschools.net.

¹⁴ This policy began in spring 2000.

¹⁵ Because we only have ASFA student-level administrative (ASSIST) data for the 2002-03 school year, we have no way to determine whether students in the ASSIST data for 2002-03 were also participants during the 2001-02 school year.

- IOWA test score increases do not seem to be correlated with the number of days of ASFA program attendance.
- As might be expected, scores for students who repeated grades increased by as many as 15 points from year-to-year. The score increases for grade-repeaters who participated in the ASFA program were in general equal to or higher to the score increases of non-ASFA students who repeated grades in mathematics and language.

About the Reported IOWA Test Scores

The Iowa tests have been administered to Louisiana public school students in grades 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 since the spring of 1998. There are two tests: the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) is administered to students in grades 3, 5, 6 and 7, and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED) is given to students in grade 9 and to a small number of students in grade 8.¹⁶ In contrast to the LEAP 21 tests, the Iowa tests are norm-referenced tests; the scores from these tests indicate how student's knowledge and skills compare to those of a norm group. Because some students take the same Iowa test (ITBS or ITED) in consecutive years, we can measure ASFA program effects by analyzing year-to-year changes in test scores for ASFA students and comparing those changes to those for nonparticipants.

In this section, we report the normal curve equivalent (NCE) scores.¹⁷ The NCE scores are similar to percentile rankings; they illustrate a student's standing compared with a large, nationally representative group of students, and range from 1 to 99 with a mean of 50. However, unlike percentile rankings, normal curve equivalent scores are rescaled so that the implied actual score differences are the same over the entire score distribution. The advantage of using NCE scores over percentile rankings is that one can validly perform statistical operations on the scores, such as calculating score differences over time and calculating mean scores over different groups. Average NCE scores from the 2003 Iowa Tests for ASFA program participants and nonparticipants are summarized in Appendix A.

¹⁶ In spring 2003, approximately 5,800 students in grade 8 and 3,500 students in the Options (PreGED/Skills) program took the ITED.

¹⁷ The normal curve equivalent has a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 21.06.

Change in Iowa Test Scores between 2003 and 2004 for ASFA Students

In Exhibit 11, we report the year-to-year score changes for five subjects: reading, language, mathematics, social studies, and science.¹⁸ The results are encouraging: we found that on average ASFA students' scores in some subjects improved from year-to-year, while in other subjects the scores stayed the same or showed a very small decrease. More specifically, scores for ASFA students in the reading, mathematics and social studies tests rose on average by .50 to two points between 2003 and 2004, ASFA students' scores in language stayed the same, while scores in science fell by .18 points.¹⁹

In Exhibit 11, we also compare scores for ASFA students to scores for non-ASFA students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03. How ASFA students performed when compared to nonparticipants varies across subjects, but generally, year-to-year score changes for ASFA students were equal to or better than changes for non-ASFA students. In the mathematics and social studies tests, the average score improvements for ASFA students were greater than they were for nonparticipants. For example, in the mathematics test, ASFA students scores on average increased by 1.91 points, whereas the scores for nonparticipants rose by 0.99 points. Similarly, in the social science test, scores for ASFA students increased by 1.09 points, while the scores for nonparticipants increased by only 0.36 points. On average ASFA student scores in language virtually remained unchanged, while those for non-ASFA students decreased by 0.35 points, and the small score in reading for ASFA students (0.44) matched the 0.46 point increase for non-ASFA students. In the science test, the ASFA student's scores decreased by 1.81 points while the scores for non-ASFA students decreased by 1.00 points.

¹⁸ The scores reported are the total scores, which are composite scores of several tests in each subject area.

¹⁹ In 2003, the average Iowa test scores for ASFA students were significantly lower than nonparticipants in all subjects. For example, in the reading test, the average ASFA student score was 35.9, compared with 42.6 for nonparticipants, and in mathematics, the average ASFA student score was 39.1, while it was 45.7 for nonparticipants. These scores are reported in Appendix B.

²⁰ Each total is a composite score of several tests in each subject area.

²¹ Because we are reporting normal curve equivalent scores, the fact that on average there was little or no positive change in scores does not indicate that no academic progress was made from year-to-year. Rather, it indicates that on average the students' standings compared to the norm group remained about the same from one year to the next.

²² This exhibit reports the students' grade levels during the 2002-03 school year.

Exhibit 11
Average Point Change in Iowa Normal Curve Equivalent Test Scores Between 2003 and 2004 for ASFA Students and Nonparticipants

	Point Change in Score	Total Number of Students
Reading Total Score:		
ASFA Students	0.44	3,333
Nonparticipants	0.46	58,222
Language Total Score:		
ASFA Students	-0.53	3,334
Nonparticipants	-0.35	58,195
Math Total Score:		
ASFA Students	1.91	3,332
Nonparticipants	0.99	58,159
Social Studies Total Score:		
ASFA Students	1.09	3,329
Nonparticipants	0.36	58,093
Science Total Score:		
ASFA Students	-1.81	3,330
Nonparticipants	-1.00	58,042

Source: IOWA Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education
 Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

Change in Iowa Test Scores for Selected Subgroups

In this section, we analyze the change in Iowa test scores for subgroups of ASFA participants based on:

- grade level;
- free lunch reciprocity; and
- the number of days spent in the ASFA program.

We found that a large proportion of the test score gains discussed above were achieved by students who had repeated grades in 2002-03 and 2003-04. Exhibit 12 reports the change in test scores for ASFA students and nonparticipants, broken out by grade level.²³ Because the Iowa test is only

²³ This exhibit reports the students' grade levels during the 2003-04 school year.

administered to students in grades 3, 5, 6, 7, 9 (and to a small number of eighth graders), we only observe consecutive year test score changes for students who were in grades 5 and 6 during the 2002-03 school year, or for students in grades 3, 7 or 9 in 2002-03 who repeated grades in 2003-04. We divide the exhibit into two parts: test score changes for students who were in grades 5 and 6 in 2002-03, and those students in grades 3, 7 and 9 who repeated grades in 2003-04.²⁴

Exhibit 12 shows that some students who repeated grades in 2003-04 had large gains in test scores, whereas the gains for students who did not repeat grades were smaller. For example, in the mathematics test, test score increases for third graders who repeated grades rose by 15.42 points, while they rose 5.17 points for sixth graders (most of whom had not repeated grades). Increases in test scores for grade repeaters is to be expected; these students have obtained the benefit of an additional year of similar material, in the second they have the benefit of having already taken a very similar test, and the norm group against which they are being compared is mostly composed of students who are one year younger. At the same time, it is encouraging that grade repeaters, including those who attended the ASFA program, did show significant improvement in Iowa test scores from year-to-year.

In most subjects, the score changes for nonparticipants were similar to those for ASFA students; however, for certain grades and subjects, score changes for ASFA students were very favorable when compared to nonparticipants. For example, score increases for ASFA students who were in grade 3 in 2001-02 (and in 2002-03) were higher than or equal to nonparticipants in all four subjects.

Exhibit 13 reports the change in test scores for ASFA students and nonparticipants by free lunch and reduced lunch reciprocity. The exhibit suggests that ASFA students who receive free and reduced lunches do fairly well when compared with other students who are financially disadvantaged. In math and social studies, among students who received free and reduced lunches, average score increases were higher for ASFA students. For example, in the mathematics test, on average scores for ASFA students who received free lunches increased by 1.56 points, while they increased by 1.18 points for nonparticipants who received free lunches. In the social science and language tests, among students who received free lunches, the positive score changes were higher for ASFA students. In the science test, scores for ASFA students decreased by a slightly larger margin than they did for non-ASFA students.

²⁴ In the spring 2004 Iowa test, 14.7 percent of ASFA students repeated test grade levels from the prior year, while 15.0 percent of nonparticipants repeated test grade levels.

Exhibit 12
Average Point Change in Iowa Normal Curve Equivalent Test Scores Between 2003 and 2004 for ASFA Students and Nonparticipants by Grade Level

	Grade in 2002-03				
	3	7	9	5	6
<u>Reading Total Score:</u>					
ASFA Students	11.88	7.87	1.72	-3.73	2.59
	125	100	39	1,399	1,665
Nonparticipants	12.04	6.87	3.51	-3.66	3.43
	2,869	3,097	3,243	46,840	47,321
<u>Language Total Score:</u>					
ASFA Students	13.94	4.30	1.12	-5.35	3.09
	125	100	39	1,398	1,667
Nonparticipants	13.53	5.62	2.16	-4.79	3.02
	2,865	3,083	3,248	46,818	47,304
<u>Mathematics Total Score:</u>					
ASFA Students	15.42	7.74	1.05	-3.60	5.17
	125	101	39	1,395	1,667
Nonparticipants	13.92	6.99	2.94	-3.73	4.21
	2,862	3,086	3,256	46,815	47,295
<u>Social Studies Total Score:</u>					
ASFA Students	11.82	4.23	-0.33	-1.65	2.43
	125	99	39	1,395	1,666
Nonparticipants	11.08	4.80	2.12	-3.09	2.64
	2,864	3,067	3,229	46,800	47,248
<u>Science Total Score:</u>					
ASFA Students	9.34	2.41	2.76	-5.06	2.98
	125	99	40	1,395	1,666
Nonparticipants	9.82	5.51	1.99	-4.43	3.31
	2,863	3,068	3,199	46,802	47,244

Source: IOWA Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education
 Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

Exhibit 13
Average Point Change in Iowa Normal Curve Equivalent Test Scores Between 2002 and 2003 for ASFA Students and Nonparticipants By Free/Reduced Lunch Recipiency

	<u>No Free or Reduced Lunch</u>	<u>Received Free Lunch</u>	<u>Received Reduced Lunch</u>
<u>Reading Total Score:</u>			
ASFA Students	2.07 527	0.19 2,604	-0.59 203
Nonparticipants	0.65 37,700	0.57 56,417	0.40 9,915
<u>Language Total Score:</u>			
ASFA Students	-0.13 503	0.26 2,606	-1.43 203
Nonparticipants	0.20 35,473	-0.15 56,366	-0.37 9,920
<u>Mathematics Total Score:</u>			
ASFA Students	3.48 526	1.56 2,604	2.31 203
Nonparticipants	0.70 37,676	1.18 56,354	0.62 9,921
<u>Social Studies Total Score:</u>			
ASFA Students	1.99 524	1.09 2,608	-1.25 203
Nonparticipants	0.17 37,655	0.50 56,281	0.06 9,916
<u>Science Total Score:</u>			
ASFA Students	2.40 525	-0.66 2,603	-0.67 203
Nonparticipants	0.36 37,636	-0.16 56,237	-0.10 9,915

Source: IOWA Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education
 Note: The nonparticipants in this sample include all students who did not participate in the ASFA program, including those who attended different schools as ASFA students.

Exhibit 14
Average Point Change in Iowa Normal Curve Equivalent Test Scores Between 2002 and 2003 for ASFA Students and Nonparticipants, By # of Days In ASFA Program in 2002-03

	ASFA Student Who Attended for Fewer than 60 Days	ASFA Students Who Attended for 60 Days or More
Reading Total Score:	0.62	-0.40
Language Total Score:	0.72	-0.65
Mathematics Total Score:	2.08	1.08
Social Studies Total Score:	1.49	-0.84
Science Total Score:	0.13	-1.67
Total Number of Students	2,752	578

Source: IOWA Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education

Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

We found that the number of days spent in the ASFA program does not seem to be correlated with a favorable change in Iowa test scores. Exhibit 14 reports the test score changes for ASFA students for two groups: students who attended the program for 60 or more days in the 2002-03 school year and students who attended for fewer than 60 days. The figures show that in all subjects, the test score changes for ASFA students who attended the program for at least 60 days lagged behind those for ASFA students who attended for less than 60 days.²⁵

LEAP 21 Test Scores

In this section, we report LEAP 21 test scores for ASFA students for tests taken in 2003 and 2004. We found that in 2003 and 2004, the percentages of ASFA students who scored at “Basic” or above were lower than non-ASFA students. We also report that in 2004, high percentages (up to 40 percent) of ASFA students scored “Unsatisfactory” on the tests, and that students in the ASFA program scored lower than non-ASFA students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03. This suggests that there exists a need for remedial instruction for a significant number of ASFA students.

²⁵ We do not mean to imply that greater attendance at the ASFA program is associated with a decrease in test scores. The figures in the exhibit do not correct for observed or unobserved heterogeneity among the two groups of ASFA students; students who are more likely to spend more time in the program may be different from other students and have characteristics that could also influence the change in test scores from year-to-year.

The LEAP 21 (Louisiana Educational Assessment Program for the 21st Century) is administered to all fourth and eighth grade students in public schools. The LEAP 21 test measures student's proficiency in four subjects: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science.²⁶

We report the achievement level LEAP 21 scores. There are five achievement levels, which are defined as follows:

- **Advanced:** A student at this level has demonstrated superior performance beyond the proficient level of mastery.
- **Mastery:** A student at this level has demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter and is well prepared for the next level of schooling.
- **Basic:** A student at this level has demonstrated only the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling.
- **Approaching Basic:** A student at this level has only partially demonstrated the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling.
- **Unsatisfactory:** A student at this level has not demonstrated the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of schooling.²⁷

Prior to spring 2004, fourth and eighth grade students were required to score at "Approaching Basic" or higher in English Language Arts and Mathematics in order to qualify to be promoted to the next grade.²⁸ Effective in spring 2004, fourth grade students are now required to score a combination of "Basic" and "Approaching Basic" in English Language Arts and Mathematics in order to qualify to be promoted to the next grade. Eighth graders will be required to meet the same combination standard in spring 2006.

We examine the spring 2003 and spring 2004 LEAP 21 achievement level scores for ASFA students and for students outside the program.²⁹ Because the LEAP 21 test is only administered to fourth and eighth grade students, the LEAP 21 test scores cannot be used like the Iowa test scores and cannot measure the change in a student's knowledge and skills over time. LEAP 21 test scores thus cannot be used to compare pre- and post-program performance. Rather, we examine the LEAP 21 scores in order to provide us with a baseline indication of how the academic needs of ASFA students compare with other students across the state. In addition, we examine the LEAP 21 scores over the two years to compare how successive cohorts of ASFA students have fared academically. This comparison provides us with an indication of how the program overall has performed over time.

²⁶ LEAP 21 testing in English Language Arts and Mathematics began in the spring of 1999. Social Studies and Science tests were added in spring 2000.

²⁷ Louisiana Department of Education, www.louisianaschools.net.

²⁸ This policy began in spring 2000.

Exhibit 15a
2003 LEAP 21 Achievement Level Scores for ASFA Students and Nonparticipants
4th Grade Students

		<u>Percent Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Percent Basic or Above</u>	<u>Total Number of Students</u>
English:	ASFA Students	13.9	51.8	1,638
	Nonparticipants	17.6	55.5	32,481
Mathematics:	ASFA Students	21.9	48.9	1,638
	Nonparticipants	22.1	53.8	32,476
Science:	ASFA Students	16.4	34.3	1,637
	Nonparticipants	16.2	46.2	32,433
Social Studies:	ASFA Students	18.7	48.3	1,638
	Nonparticipants	18.5	54.9	32,421

Source: LEAP 21 Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education

Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

Exhibit 15b
2003 LEAP 21 Achievement Level Scores for ASFA Students and Nonparticipants
8th Grade Students

		<u>Percent Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Percent Basic or Above</u>	<u>Total Number of Students</u>
English:	ASFA Students	20.6	34.3	1,047
	Nonparticipants	17.2	48.4	27,348
Mathematics:	ASFA Students	42.0	30.7	1,110
	Nonparticipants	34.2	42.6	29,852
Science:	ASFA Students	32.6	26.8	1,035
	Nonparticipants	23.2	44.4	26,675
Social Studies:	ASFA Students	33.5	30.0	1,035
	Nonparticipants	24.6	47.3	26,622

Source: LEAP 21 Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education

Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

²⁹ We report the 2002 LEAP 21 test results in the appendix.

2003 LEAP 21 Scores

Exhibits 15a and 15b show the LEAP 21 achievement level scores for the spring 2003 tests, for ASFA students and for non-ASFA students who attend the same schools as ASFA students. The scores are reported for fourth and eighth grade students separately in the two exhibits. We summarized the exhibits by displaying three columns: the percentage of students who scored “Unsatisfactory”, the percentage of students who scored “Basic” or above, and the total number of students who took the test. Additional details on LEAP 21 achievement level scores for 2002, 2003 and 2004 are included in the Appendices B, C, and D.

In the English Language Arts, Mathematics and Social Studies tests, about half of fourth grade ASFA students scored “Basic” or above. In the science test, only 34 percent of ASFA students scored at “Basic” or above. When compared to non-ASFA students who attended the same schools as ASFA students, on average ASFA students scored lower than non-ASFA students. For example, in Mathematics, 49 percent of fourth grade ASFA students scored at “Basic” or above, while 54 of fourth grade non-ASFA students scored at “Basic” or above.

The 2003 test scores for ASFA students in the eighth grade are worse than those for ASFA students in the fourth grade. For example, less than one-third of eighth grade ASFA students scored at “Basic” or above in the Mathematics, Science and Social Studies tests, while 34 percent scored at “Basic” or above in the English Language Arts test. This is significantly lower than the percentage of non-ASFA students in the eighth grade who scored at “Basic” or above. What is particularly of concern is the percentage of ASFA students who scored “Unsatisfactory” on the tests. Forty-two percent of eighth grade ASFA students scored “Unsatisfactory” on the Mathematics test, while about one-third of eighth grade ASFA students scored “Unsatisfactory” on the Science and Social Studies tests.

2004 LEAP 21 Scores

In Exhibits 16a and 16b, we report the LEAP 21 achievement level scores for the spring 2004 tests for fourth and eighth grade students, respectively. In 2004, less than half of ASFA fourth and eighth grade students scored at “Basic” or above in any of the four subjects. For example, only 38 percent of fourth grade ASFA students scored “Basic” or above in Science, and 40 percent scored “Basic” or above in Mathematics. This is lower (by as many as 12 percentage points) than the percentage of non-ASFA fourth grade students who scored “Basic” or above. The results are worse for eighth grade ASFA students: fewer eighth grade students scored at “Basic” or above, and the gap between ASFA students and non-ASFA students is wider. For example, in the science test, the gap in the percentage of eighth grade ASFA and non-ASFA students who scored “Basic” or above was over 20 percentage points.

Exhibit 16a
2004 LEAP 21 Achievement Level Scores for ASFA Students and Nonparticipants
4th Grade Students

		<u>Percent Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Percent Basic or Above</u>	<u>Total Number of Students</u>
English:	ASFA Students	22.8	49.4	1,591
	Nonparticipants	21.1	55.5	31,659
Mathematics:	ASFA Students	32.1	40.4	1,590
	Nonparticipants	27.1	49.1	31,651
Science:	ASFA Students	21.2	38.3	1,589
	Nonparticipants	17.7	50.9	31,597
Social Studies:	ASFA Students	27.2	43.4	1,589
	Nonparticipants	22.7	54.4	31,593

Source: LEAP 21 Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education
 Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

Exhibit 16b
2004 LEAP 21 Achievement Level Scores for ASFA Students and Nonparticipants
4th Grade Students

		<u>Percent Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Percent Basic or Above</u>	<u>Total Number of Students</u>
English:	ASFA Students	23.4	28.9	1,153
	Nonparticipants	19.3	44.1	26,574
Mathematics:	ASFA Students	38.7	31.9	1,256
	Nonparticipants	27.8	49.6	28,636
Science:	ASFA Students	40.0	25.9	1,107
	Nonparticipants	26.4	46.0	25,734
Social Studies:	ASFA Students	29.8	32.9	1,103
	Nonparticipants	21.9	50.6	25,692

Source: LEAP 21 Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education
 Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

The exhibits show that achievement level scores in most subjects for ASFA students decreased slightly between 2003 and 2004. For example, in the English Language Arts, the percentage of fourth grade ASFA students who scored at “Basic” or above dropped from 52 percent to 49 percent, whereas the percentage of eighth grade ASFA students who scored at “Basic” or above dropped from 48 percent to 43 percent. On the other hand, the achievement level science test scores for fourth grade ASFA students increased between 2003 and 2004. 38 percent of ASFA students scored at “Basic” or above in the science test in 2004, where 34 percent had scored at “Basic” or above in 2003. Similarly, the percentage of eighth grade ASFA students who scored at “Basic” or above in mathematics increased by 3 percentage points in 2004.

The exhibits also shows that the gap in achievement scores between ASFA and non-ASFA students increased slightly between 2003 and 2004, as overall achievement level scores for non-ASFA students (attending the same schools as ASFA students) decreased by a smaller amount or increased by a larger amount between 2003 and 2004. As an example, the percentage of fourth grade non-ASFA students who scored at “Basic” or above in Mathematics decreased from 54 to 49 percent, while for fourth grade ASFA students, the percentage who scored at “Basic” or above decreased from 49 to 40 percent. For eighth grade non-ASFA students, the percentage who scored at “Basic” or above increased from 43 percent to 50 percent, while, as discussed above, it increased from 30 percent to 33 percent for ASFA students.

Given that we cannot observe *within student* LEAP 21 test score changes, it is difficult to use LEAP 21 test scores as a measure of how the ASFA program affects student’s academic performance. We feel that the Iowa test scores are better suited for that kind of analysis. However, it is of concern that so many ASFA students score poorly on the LEAP test and seem to be in need of remedial help. In Exhibit 19, we also display the number of students, by grade, who scored “Unsatisfactory” on each test in 2004. The exhibit shows that up to 32 percent of fourth grade and up to 39 percent of eighth grade ASFA students scored “Unsatisfactory” on the tests. We recommend that the Department of Education follow these poor performing ASFA student closely, refer these students to remediation programs and possibly align the program towards addressing the academic deficiencies that prevent these students from advancing to the next grade level.

Recommendation #3:

Request that ASFA schools strongly encourage program attendance for students who have failed the LEAP test or are at risk of failing due to below grade-level performance, refer such students to remediation programs if it is appropriate and track the academic progress of these students.

Summary of the Test Score Results

The improvement in Iowa test scores in certain subjects is an indication that ASFA students have made progress in improving their academic skills and knowledge. In math and social studies, the test score increases were higher than those for nonparticipants, while the score changes for ASFA students in the other subjects were very similar to the score changes for nonparticipants. The results also show that on average, grade repeaters, particularly those who were ASFA students, do significantly improve their standing within the repeated grade level. For other students, however, the increases were smaller.

Although the Iowa test score results show that the ASFA program does positively affect test scores, the 2003 and 2004 LEAP 21 test scores show that a significant of ASFA students still need intensive remedial help. In 2004, on average (over the four test subjects), 26 percent of fourth grade and 33 percent of eighth grade ASFA students scored “Unsatisfactory” on the tests. This is a clear indication that many ASFA students are not advancing and would benefit from some kind of academic intervention.

Exhibit 17
Average Change in the Number of Disciplinary Incidents and Absent Days
Between 2001-02 and 2002-03

	<u>Average Change in Number of Disciplinary Incidents</u>	<u>Average Change in Number of Absent Days</u>	<u>Total Number of Students</u>
ASFA Students	0.08	1.11	11,617
Nonparticipants	0.06	1.25	322,252

Source: SIS and ASSIST Databases, Louisiana Department of Education

Note: This sample is restricted to ASFA students and nonparticipants who were in the SIS Database in both the 2001-02 and 2002-03 school years and who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

Change in Attendance and Disciplinary Records Between 2001 and 2002 for ASFA Students

In this section, we examine the year-to-year change in attendance and disciplinary records for ASFA students. We analyzed ASSIST and SIS data for students who were in the SIS database for at least 2 years, and compared the number of absent days and disciplinary incidents for each student between the 2001-02 and 2002-03 school years. We also compared these figures to those for non-ASFA students. In general, as shown in Exhibit 17, we found that the changes in the number of absent days

and disciplinary incidents were comparable to those of non-ASFA students. However, we did find that one subgroup, ASFA students who attended the program for more than 60 days in 2002, did have favorable outcomes when compared to ASFA students who attended for fewer days and non-ASFA students. We found that:

- The number of disciplinary incidents between 2001 and 2002 *decreased* for ASFA students who attended for more than 60 days in the school year, while they *increased* for ASFA students who did not attend as frequently and for non-ASFA students.
- While the average number of absences increased for all students between 2001 and 2002, the increase was lower for ASFA students who attended for more than 60 days in 2002 than it was for other students.

Exhibit 18 displays the changes in the average number of absent days and disciplinary incidents between 2001 and 2002 for three groups: (1) ASFA students who attended the program for more than 60 days in 2002, (2) ASFA students who attended for less than 60 days in 2002, and (3) non-ASFA students. As discussed above, the exhibit shows that the number of disciplinary incidents for ASFA students who attended more than 60 days decreased on average by 0.15 incidents, while they increased on average by 0.09 incidents for ASFA students who attended less frequently and by 0.06 for non-

Exhibit 18
Average Change in the Number of Disciplinary Incidents and Absent Days Between 2001-02 and 2002-03
By Attendance Days in ASFA Program

	<u>Average Change in Number of Disciplinary Incidents</u>	<u>Average Change in Number of Absent Days</u>	<u>Total Number of Students</u>
ASFA Students			
Attended Less than 60 Days in 2002-03	0.09	1.26	9,632
Attended 60 Days or More in 2002-03	-0.15	0.35	1,982
Nonparticipants	0.06	1.25	322,252

Source: SIS and ASSIST Databases, Louisiana Department of Education

Note: This sample is restricted to ASFA students and nonparticipants who were in the SIS Database in both the 2001-02 and 2002-03 school years and who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

ASFA students. Similarly, the number of days absent increased on average by 0.35 days for ASFA students who attended for more than 60 days, while they increased by 1.26 days for other ASFA students and 1.25 for non-ASFA students.³⁰

Conclusion

Overall, our evaluation has found that the ASFA program is a valuable component of the State's educational system. Results from our Survey for Day School Teachers, conducted at thirteen sample schools where ASFA programs are operated on site, suggest that teachers value the program for its positive impact on students' academic performance and behavior. About half of the surveyed day school teachers of ASFA students report that the program improved academic performance for most or all of those students. Teacher survey results and provider interviews suggest that the school day program and the ASFA program were well integrated academically at most schools, in part because day teachers were included among after school staff. Our interviews with providers indicate that implementation of the program has proceeded smoothly and that the program had received valuable support from the Department of Education, parents and day school teachers.

Iowa test score results suggest that the program has had a positive academic effect on ASFA students. Iowa test scores for ASFA students in some subjects increased by up to two (normal curve equivalent) points after program participation. Moreover, the gain in Iowa test scores in these subjects exceeded those for non-ASFA students. However, LEAP 21 test scores also show that many ASFA students still experience serious academic difficulties and would benefit from additional academic help. Our analysis also suggests that the ASFA program had a positive effect on behavior of students who attend the program consistently. In particular, we found that disciplinary incidents decreased for ASFA students who attended the program for more than 60 days in the school year.

³⁰ We also examined the change in attendance and the number disciplinary incidents between 2001 and 2002 for other subgroups, including those defined by: reciprocity of free or reduced lunches, ethnicity, gender, and English proficiency. We found that the changes the attendance and disciplinary outcomes did not vary greatly between the subgroups.

Appendix A

Average 2003 Iowa Normal Curve Equivalent Test Scores ASFA Program Participants and Nonparticipants

	<u>Average Score</u>	<u>Total Number of Students</u>
Reading Total Score:		
ASFA Students	35.89	3,497
Nonparticipants	42.61	62,821
Language Total Score:		
ASFA Students	45.08	3,496
Nonparticipants	49.53	62,799
Math Total Score		
ASFA Students	39.06	3,494
Nonparticipants	45.69	62,784
Social Studies Total Score		
ASFA Students	40.03	3,493
Nonparticipants	45.21	62,760
Science Total Score		
ASFA Students	37.21	3,494
Nonparticipants	44.26	62,723

Source: IOWA Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education
Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

Appendix B
2002 LEAP 21 Achievement Level Scores
ASFA Program Participants and Nonparticipants

	<u>Percent Advanced</u>	<u>Percent Mastery</u>	<u>Percent Basic</u>	<u>Percent Approaching Basic</u>	<u>Percent Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Percent Basic or Above</u>	<u>Total Number of Students</u>
<u>4th Grade Students</u>							
English:							
ASFA Students	1.1	7.8	32.5	38.1	20.4	41.5	1,758
Nonparticipants	2.8	14.3	36.4	30.0	16.5	53.5	32,422
Mathematics:							
ASFA Students	0.5	3.5	29.8	31.1	35.2	33.8	1,758
Nonparticipants	2.0	9.6	35.9	24.8	27.7	47.5	32,412
Science:							
ASFA Students	0.6	3.2	31.8	39.4	25.1	35.6	1,763
Nonparticipants	3.0	9.4	38.6	31.1	17.9	51.1	32,376
Social Studies:							
ASFA Students	0.2	2.3	31.6	32.6	33.2	34.1	1,757
Nonparticipants	1.0	7.1	42.5	25.6	23.8	50.6	32,318
<u>8th Grade Students</u>							
English:							
ASFA Students	0.5	8.3	25.3	52.2	13.8	34.0	435
Nonparticipants	1.5	14.6	29.9	39.8	14.1	46.1	25,924
Mathematics:							
ASFA Students	0.6	0.9	23.5	33.6	41.4	25.0	464
Nonparticipants	1.2	2.8	33.5	28.8	33.8	37.4	28,198
Science:							
ASFA Students	0.5	6.4	22.5	40.3	30.3	29.3	409
Nonparticipants	1.1	13.3	30.5	31.0	24.1	44.9	24,286
Social Studies:							
ASFA Students	0.0	5.9	29.2	37.0	27.9	35.0	408
Nonparticipants	0.8	8.4	40.5	25.6	24.6	49.7	24,239
Source: LEAP 21 Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education.							
Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.							

Appendix C
2003 LEAP 21 Achievement Level Scores
ASFA Program Participants and Nonparticipants

	<u>Percent Advanced</u>	<u>Percent Mastery</u>	<u>Percent Basic</u>	<u>Percent Approaching Basic</u>	<u>Percent Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Percent Basic or Above</u>	<u>Total Number of Students</u>
<u>4th Grade Students</u>							
English:							
ASFA Students	0.2	6.5	45.1	34.2	13.9	51.8	1,638
Nonparticipants	0.8	11.6	43.1	26.9	17.6	55.5	32,481
Mathematics:							
ASFA Students	0.2	7.7	41.0	29.2	21.9	48.9	1,638
Nonparticipants	2.3	11.5	40.0	24.1	22.1	53.8	32,476
Science:							
ASFA Students	0.3	3.9	30.1	49.2	16.4	34.3	1,637
Nonparticipants	1.6	10.4	34.2	37.6	16.2	46.2	32,433
Social Studies:							
ASFA Students	0.2	4.9	43.2	33.0	18.7	48.3	1,638
Nonparticipants	1.5	10.1	43.3	26.6	18.5	54.9	32,421
<u>8th Grade Students</u>							
English:							
ASFA Students	0.1	5.4	28.7	45.1	20.6	34.3	1,047
Nonparticipants	0.9	13.3	34.3	34.4	17.2	48.4	27,348
Mathematics:							
ASFA Students	0.5	0.9	29.4	27.3	42.0	30.7	1,110
Nonparticipants	2.7	4.5	35.4	23.1	34.2	42.6	29,852
Science:							
ASFA Students	0.0	3.6	23.2	40.7	32.6	26.8	1,035
Nonparticipants	0.8	12.2	31.4	32.5	23.2	44.4	26,675
Social Studies:							
ASFA Students	0.0	2.3	27.6	36.5	33.5	30.0	1,035
Nonparticipants	0.2	8.3	38.8	28.0	24.6	47.3	26,622

Source: LEAP 21 Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education

Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.

Appendix D
2004 LEAP 21 Achievement Level Scores by Grade
ASFA Program Participants and Nonparticipants

	<u>Percent Advanced</u>	<u>Percent Mastery</u>	<u>Percent Basic</u>	<u>Percent Approaching Basic</u>	<u>Percent Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Percent Basic or Above</u>	<u>Total Number of Students</u>
<u>4th Grade Students</u>							
English:							
ASFA Students	1.1	11.0	37.3	27.8	22.8	49.4	1,591
Nonparticipants	2.2	16.0	37.3	23.4	21.1	55.5	31,659
Mathematics:							
ASFA Students	0.6	6.2	33.6	27.5	32.1	40.4	1,590
Nonparticipants	1.6	11.7	35.7	23.8	27.1	49.1	31,651
Science:							
ASFA Students	0.3	4.3	33.7	40.5	21.2	38.3	1,589
Nonparticipants	1.0	11.2	38.7	31.4	17.7	50.9	31,597
Social Studies:							
ASFA Students	0.4	5.0	38.0	29.3	27.2	43.4	1,589
Nonparticipants	1.1	11.9	41.4	22.9	22.7	54.4	31,593
<u>8th Grade Students</u>							
English:							
ASFA Students	0.2	3.4	25.3	47.7	23.4	28.9	1,153
Nonparticipants	0.6	8.7	34.8	36.6	19.3	44.1	26,574
Mathematics:							
ASFA Students	0.4	1.0	30.6	29.4	38.7	31.9	1,256
Nonparticipants	2.0	4.7	43.0	22.7	27.8	49.6	28,636
Science:							
ASFA Students	0.1	3.7	22.1	34.1	40.0	25.9	1,107
Nonparticipants	1.0	14.4	30.6	27.7	26.4	46.0	25,734
Social Studies:							
ASFA Students	0.1	3.2	29.6	37.3	29.8	32.9	1,103
Nonparticipants	1.0	9.5	40.2	27.5	21.9	50.6	25,692
Source: LEAP 21 Test Score Data and ASSIST Database, Louisiana Department of Education							
Note: The nonparticipants in this sample only include students who attended the same schools as ASFA students in 2002-03.							

Appendix E

Survey for Day School Teachers

Survey for Day School Teachers

The State of Louisiana is conducting an evaluation of the "After School for All" program operated by the State Department of Education and funded by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). We are interested in learning about the TANF After School for All Programs that are serving the students at your school. These after school programs may be located in your school or outside the school.

Please refer to the label in the upper right hand corner of this survey to identify the name(s) of your local TANF After School for All Program(s).

Thank you for helping us strengthen these programs by completing this survey.



General Questions
Please answer the questions below in order to help us understand your day school teaching background.

1. Select each grade that you teach. *(Choose all that apply)*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

2. Select which subjects you teach. *(Choose all that apply)*

Primary School - all subjects History / Social Studies
 Math English / Language Arts
 Science Foreign Language
 Other (Please Specify): _____

3. Do you currently have any students whom you know are participating in the local TANF after school programs (listed in the right hand corner) this year?

Yes No I am not sure

4. Some TANF after school programs hire certified teachers. Do you currently work or teach for a local TANF after school program?

Yes No

5. Prior to receiving this survey, were you aware of the local TANF after school program(s) that serve your area?

Yes No

Communication with After School for All Program Staff
Select the best answer for the following questions only in terms of the local TANF after school programs listed on the in the top right hand corner.

6. To what extent did the TANF after school staff members communicate with you about each of the following issues during this school year?

	Frequency of communication during the school year...				
	None	Only Once	Some (2-3 times)	Regularly (4 or more times)	Not Applicable
a. The design and operation of the TANF after school program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. General academic strategies for working with children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Issues concerning individual children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Other issues (Please Specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. If you have communicated in the past with any TANF after school program staff, who initiated the communication first?

TANF after school program Staff Someone else (e.g., Principal, parent)
 Me Not applicable

If none of your students have participated in the TANF after school program, then please mark the oval and skip to Question 14

