Step Forward

Report to the Community
October 2015

Metro Shreveport-Bossier City
Strive Network

www.stepforwardnla.org

Dear residents of Caddo, Bossier, DeSoto, and Webster parishes,

We recognize the well-being of our children is the most powerful indicator of the economic and social health of our community. Their ability to achieve as students and develop as citizens literally will determine either our community's growth or its decline.

Trends in North Louisiana indicate there is cause for our concern. Many children do not start school with the basic knowledge they need and continue to lag behind their peers in subsequent grades. This has resulted in an alarming number of children who drop out prior to graduation and are then unprepared to earn a living.

We all hope for each child's success for their own benefit; yet we often fail to realize this goal impacts not only the child, but every person in our community. In just a few short years, the collective outcomes of our children will result in positive or negative economic and social impacts which will affect us all. Local businesses will either grow or eventually cease to exist, based on the educational status of the local workforce. Similarly, poverty levels will either rise or fall in correlation with business growth. Cities and municipalities will either flourish or wither, relying on the tax base created by the width and depth of employed wage earners. So much is dependent upon the success of our children. Put simply, we all will eventually benefit or suffer as a result; therefore ensuring that each child can succeed to his or her potential is of vital interest to us all.

Step Forward is an example of a "collective impact" initiative which requires commitment from community leaders and citizens with different perspectives, working to develop consensus solutions to address specific problems – in our case academic failure for too many children. Step Forward is working to develop data-driven solutions. That is, by measuring some key educational and workforce indicators as outlined in this report, we are committed to identifying areas of need as well as areas of success.

Your interest and involvement in Step Forward is so important. To learn more, please contact me at 318.221.0582 or via email at alderman@cfnla.org. Step Forward respects the wisdom of our community and believes the knowledge of developing solutions is within our people. We believe that our community's ability to provide support or "social capital" is boundless and is absolutely necessary as we work to ensure success for our children today, and a stronger community tomorrow. Our children have a request for us. They are asking us all to **step forward**.

Sincerely,

Laura Lane Alderman
Executive Director
Step Forward

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Table of Contents

List of Figures

Summary Dashboard

Indicator	Baseline 2012	Current	Target 2016	Trend
1. Kindergarten readiness	49.5%	48.5	51	-
2. Ages 3 & 4 enrolled in school	51.3%	45.5	54	-
3. Low birth weight	13.8%	13.1	10	+
4. Immunizations	78.9%	77.2	82	-
5. Child obesity	17.0%	18.5	15	-
6. Child poverty	30.5%	36.3	27	-
7. Third grade ELA basic and above	59% (2015)	59.0	65	n/a
8. Fourth grade on time on level	53.2%	54.6	60	+
9. Ages 6-11 poverty	25.6%	33.2	25	-
10. School discipline (in/out of school)	10.2/7.4%	9.6/6.3	6.5/3	+
11. Truancy referrals (unique)	3,121	3,199	3,050	-
12. Student dropout	3.4%	3.5	2.8	-
13. Idleness ages 16-19	9.1%	9.6	6	-
14. Stealing and fighting	1,442	1,186	900	+
15. Cohort graduation	68.8%	74.2	78	+
16. Average ACT score	19.9	19.2	21	-
17. Enrolled in college first fall after HS	62.1%	65.7	70	+
18. Enrolled in college ages 18-24	28.9%	31.4	35	+
19. Two-year enrollment 24 and under	8,091	9,607	10,500	+
20. Two-year degrees granted	2,178	2,374	2,600	+
21. Some college or above ages 18-24	44.4%	47.7	52	+
22. In labor force ages 20-24	77.5%	73.9	78	-
23. Employed ages 20-24	63.0%	59.3	64	-
24. Unemployment ages 20-24	13.4%	15.5	10	-
25. College graduate wages ages 18-24	$24,013	23,328	25,500	-

Vision

Regional partnerships committed to driving student success, productive citizenship, global competitiveness and shared accountability

Mission

Fostering regional partnerships through active citizenship; improving educational outcomes for all children; building and sustaining a vibrant community; and preparing a globally competitive workforce

Leadership Council

Bishop Larry Brandon
Pastor
Praise Temple Full Gospel Baptist Church

Dr. Cade Brumley
Superintendent
DeSoto Parish Schools

G.B. Cazes
Vice President
Cyber Innovation Center

John Dean
Partner of Counsel
Heard, McElroy and Vestal

Zell Dudley
Director, Business Development
North Louisiana Economic Partnership

Chris Gabriel
Executive Vice President
Volunteers of America North Louisiana

Dr. Lamar Goree
Superintendent
Caddo Parish School Board

Dr. Jim Henderson
President
Northwestern State University

Paula Hickman
Executive Director
The Community Foundation of North Louisiana

Rev. Timothy Jones
Pastor
Peaceful Rest Baptist Church

DC Machen
Superintendent
Bossier Parish Schools

Tim Magner
Education Consultant

Paul Pratt
Director of Community Relations
Chesapeake Energy

Africa Price
Director of Public Relations and Communications
City of Shreveport

Dr. Phillip Rozeman, MD
Cardiovascular Consultants

Nancy Walker
Former kindergarten teacher and community volunteer

Operation Team Leaders

Nancy Alexander – Early Childhood Network

Sonja Bailes – Communications and Outreach

Rick Bateman – Post-Secondary

Susan Beaird – Funding

Dr. Joseph Bocchini – Health

Rosalyn Glover Bryant – Parent Advisory

LeVette Fuller – Early Literacy Network

Dudley Glenn – Civic Service

Lydia Jackson – Policy/Advocacy

Terrie Johnson – High School

Jacques Lasseigne – Economic Network

Michael Phillips – Youth Civic Development / My Brother's Keeper Network

Mary Rounds – Youth Civic Development / My Brother's Keeper Network

Billy Snow – Early Literacy Network

Nancy Walker – Early Childhood Network

Frederic Washington – Youth Advisory

Introduction

In order to address the many challenges that are facing our area's young people, leaders from across our community have joined forces with the Step Forward effort. These individuals and groups are united behind a common purpose: to strengthen and support the area's children in order to improve their academic achievement and prospects for entering a successful career.

The Step Forward initiative represents the work of an array of community stakeholders. These individuals and groups are united by an important set of principles. These principles are:

❖ **Shared Common Vision** that focuses on regional collaboration to drive student success, productive citizenship, and global competitiveness;

❖ **Collaborative Action** that aligns the work of community partners as they continually identify, adopt, and scale what improves student outcomes;

❖ **Data Driven, Evidence Based Decision Making** that delivers positive results for children from cradle to career;

❖ **Communication** that offers transparency about our outcomes; and

❖ **Investment** that sustains and scales what the data says works.

These principles are what drive this initiative. By coming to the table and participating at this critical time, the members of this project have endorsed and are guided by these principles. In doing so, they have all agreed to take our community in a new direction and **step forward.**

Step Forward Team

Step Forward enjoys support from a wide range of stakeholders in the community. They include community partners working in early childhood, k-12, higher education, workforce development, businesses, foundations, and nonprofit and civic organizations. These individuals and groups have been involved in discussions and planning since December 2012.

Goals & Objectives

Be **PREPARED** for school,

Be **SUPPORTED** inside and outside of school,

SUCCEED academically,

Be **EQUIPPED** with tools to become an effective and productive citizen,

ENROLL in postsecondary education,

GRADUATE and **ENTER A CAREER**.

The Step Forward initiative operates within the Shreveport-Bossier City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), a four-parish region in northwest Louisiana discussed in detail below.

Current Projects

Early Childhood

1. Understand current status of kindergarten readiness via parent surveys and identification of exemplar child care programs;

2. Provide education regarding kindergarten readiness in feeder programs for pilot schools;

3. Increase health services to pilot schools and their feeder preschool programs; and

4. Provide literacy volunteers for specified preschool programs and feeder child care centers.

Early Literacy

1. Strengthen summer reading library/school partnership to ameliorate summer reading drop;

2. Recruit and train literacy volunteers for third-grade students;

3. Parent education regarding early grade literacy; and

4. Increase health services at pilot schools.

Youth Civic Development – My Brother's Keeper

1. Increase community support of schools via development of a school-site community center;

2. Recruit and train mentors to serve in specific Caddo Parish middle and high schools within the Transformation Zone; and

3. Conduct truancy/dropout data analysis to develop recommendations for intervention.

Workforce Development

1. Hold career/life fair for 18-24-year-olds;

2. Create a marketing toolkit to disseminate information to 18-24-year-olds;

3. Conduct employer survey regarding workforce needs;

4. Create employer speaker's bureau regarding workforce needs; and

5. Create a life needs resources/training options brochure for 18-24-year-olds.

Guide to the Charts

The 39 charts below attempt to present a good deal of information as clearly and simply as possible. The text above and below each figure describes the measure at hand and where it comes from. Most of these statistics can be recreated by the curious reader with the links provided and some familiarity with MS Excel or a similar spreadsheet program. In the cases of weighted data, the population totals used to create the weights come from either the U.S. Census or the state Department of Education.

Most of the charts include both percentage values and number/count values for each data point in each year. Keep in mind the size of a population often varies from year to year. For example, the total counts of individuals under age 5 in the area for the years 2010-2014 are 27,986, 29,059, 29,250, 32,146, and 31,160 (ACS 1-year estimates). If an indicator for this population remained at 50 percent during each of these years, the number/count value would be different in each year.

It is even possible for the percentage to rise as the number/count falls, and vice versa. This is more likely to occur between the years 2012 and 2013, when Webster Parish (re)joined the metropolitan statistical area. Generally, one uses the percentage when comparing different years (and areas) because it expresses the value as a fraction of 100 and is unaffected by population size. The number/count however is necessary information when considering the magnitude of the interventions needed to accomplish the goal of population-level change.

About the Community

All of the numbers presented in this introduction are from the U.S. Bureau of the Census (unless otherwise noted) and are discussed at length in the report below.[i] Following the introduction a profile will emerge of the young metro Shreveport-Bossier City residents in four stages, from the early days of the cradle to the beginning of a career.

The Shreveport-Bossier City metropolitan statistical area contains four parishes with various population sizes: Caddo (252,063), Bossier (125,064), Webster (40,333), and DeSoto (27,142). As surrounding communities become socially and economically integrated with the urban core, the boundaries of the metro area expand. Patterns of commuting to work also figure into the federal Office of Management and Budget's delineation decisions. The addition of Webster in 2013 does introduce complications for annual comparisons, but the benefits far outweigh any technical concerns. The latest estimate of the total metro population is 445,142. Of a total 381 metro areas—from New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA (20 million), to Carson City, NV (54,522)—we are the 114th most populous in the U.S.

The metro population is distributed into the five cities with populations over 5,000 and into many smaller surrounding areas. The five cities and their 2014 population sizes are Shreveport (198,242) in Caddo; Bossier City (67,472) in Bossier; Minden (12,808) and Springhill (5,148) in Webster; and Mansfield (5,006) in DeSoto. Shreveport is the largest in the metro area, twice the size of the other four cities combined. All together, these 288,676 residents of the five largest cities make up almost two thirds of the metro population (Shreveport alone is 44 percent). Although the remaining 156,466 individuals do not live in places of 5,000 or more, they are not formally rural because they are inside the metropolitan statistical area geography. That is, many places here are small, but they are socially and economically integrated into Shreveport and Bossier City.

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, metro Shreveport-Bossier City gross domestic product (GDP), a more or less comprehensive measure of economic activity, has grown by more than $150 million per year over the past decade since 2005, to $24 billion in 2014.[ii] This was preceded by even larger average annual growth in the early 2000s. Yet poverty rates remain higher than the national average of 15 percent and have recently turned upward.[iii]

Gross domestic product and poverty rates in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, 2009-2014
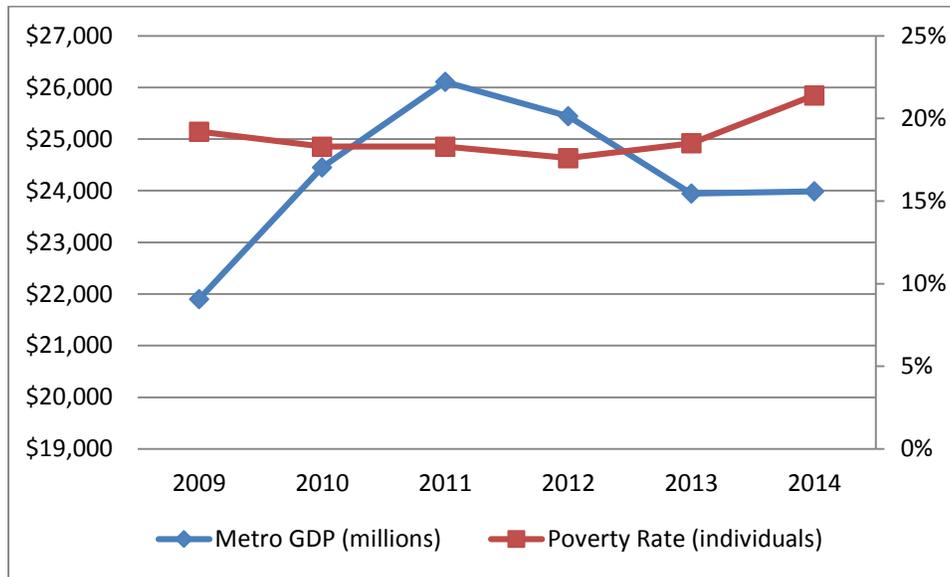
Note: GDP values are CPI inflation adjusted by the author. The 2014 number is an advance estimate from the BEA.
Data: http://www.bea.gov/regional/; http://factfinder.census.gov/

A lot of new wealth has been generated locally through resource extraction and many have benefited greatly. The mining share of metro GDP went from the mid-teens in the early 2000s to over 25 percent in 2011 before falling to 20.7 percent in 2013.[iv] The number of mining establishments increased 55 percent from 2005-2013.[v] The number of paid employees in the local mining industry increased threefold from 2005-2013.[vi] And annual payroll in the local mining industry increased by a factor of 2.9 during this period to more than 378 million dollars in 2013.[vii] Some of this may have contributed to the

recent decline in poverty levels, but this improvement appears to have been overcome and the current poverty rate for individuals is probably at or near 20 percent.

This is not to say that poverty in the area has remained unchanged for a long time. This region and the country as a whole have witnessed major improvements in the poverty rate since 1960. Overall metro Shreveport-Bossier City poverty rates by decade are: 37 percent (1960), 25 percent (1970), 17 percent (1980), 23 percent (1990), 20 percent (2000), and 18 percent (2010). The most recent estimate is 21.4 percent in 2014.[viii] Those at highest risk of being in poverty are no longer older individuals, as they once were. They are now children. The most recent poverty figure for those under 18 years is 32.7 percent or 35,101. For those 65 years and over this figure is 10.5 percent or 6,511.[ix]

Percent and count of group that is less than 50 percent of the poverty level in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, all ages

American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
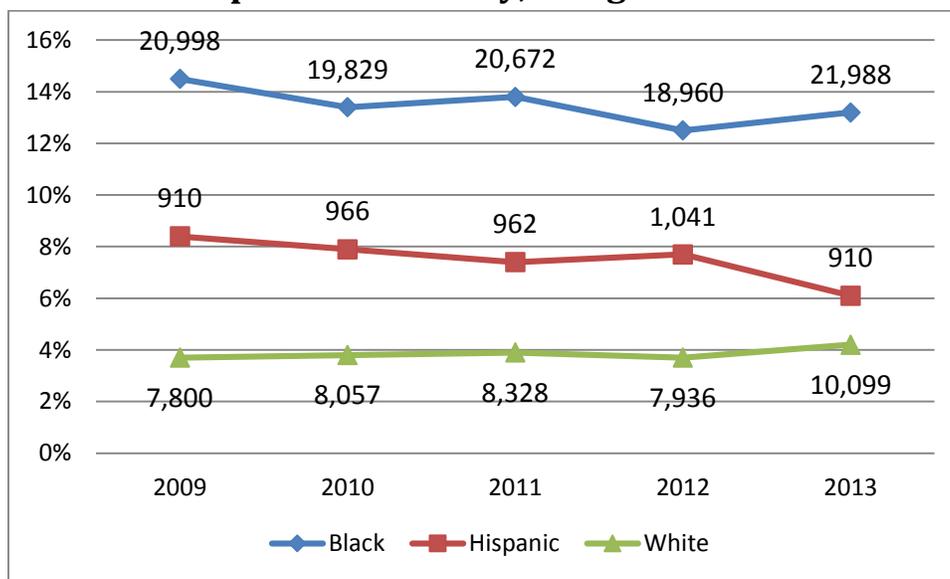
This chart shows the share of each group in deep poverty, or less than half of the poverty line, from 2009 to 2013.[x] The rate of African-Americans in deep poverty is three times that of whites.[xi] The rate of Hispanic deep poverty is in

between and has been declining. Poverty and income definitions are discussed in detail in the report below.

At the turn of the 20th century, the great sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois wrote about the changing social and economic conditions of African-Americans during the previous three decades.[xii] He famously described race as the "veil" that colors all human relations in America. Seventy-five years later, William Julius Wilson, another great sociologist, wrote about the declining significance of race in America.[xiii] He maintained that social class differences had become more important than race in determining an individual's life chances. The works of these scholars continue to be relevant today. Educated African-American professionals abound in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, and yet some of our community's poorest children are African-American. The number of African-American metro Shreveport-Bossier City residents in deep poverty is twice the number of white residents. However, African-American unemployment rates are falling, and educational attainment is rising.

The number of African-Americans with education beyond high school has increased more than 2,000 per year over the past six years, to an estimated 44,838 in 2014. More than a third of African-American males now have some college or above, an estimated 16,538 in 2014. The number of African-Americans employed in management, business, science, and arts occupations has increased more than 900 per year since 2010 to an estimated 16,877, more than 70 percent female, in 2014.[xiv]

Unemployment rates in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, age 16 and over

American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
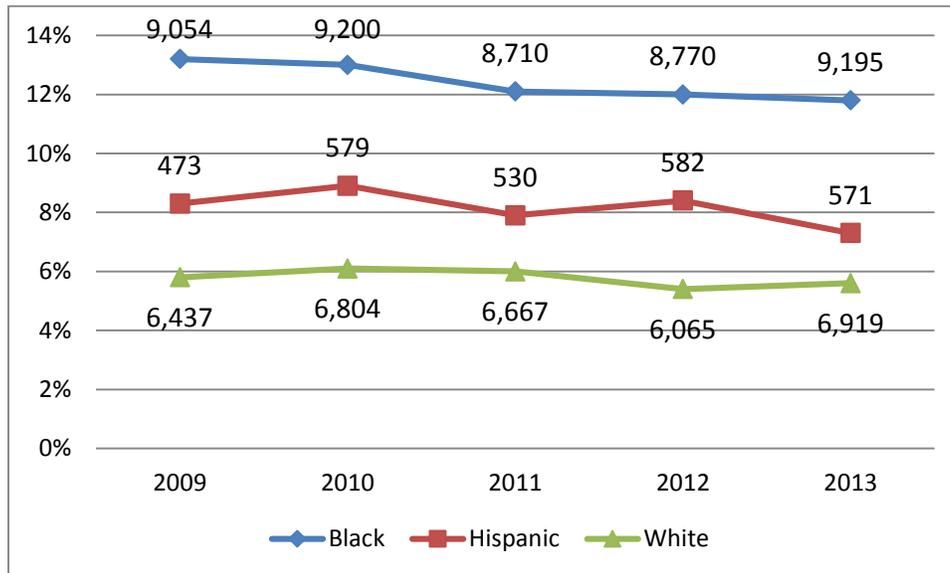
Still, the unemployment rate for African-Americans has remained twice as high as the rate for whites for years. But it is on the decline, from 13.2 percent in 2009 to 11.8 percent in 2013.[xv] The two most recent ACS 1-year estimates are 9.5 and 9.1 percent in 2013 and 2014.

Some college or above in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, age 25 and over

American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
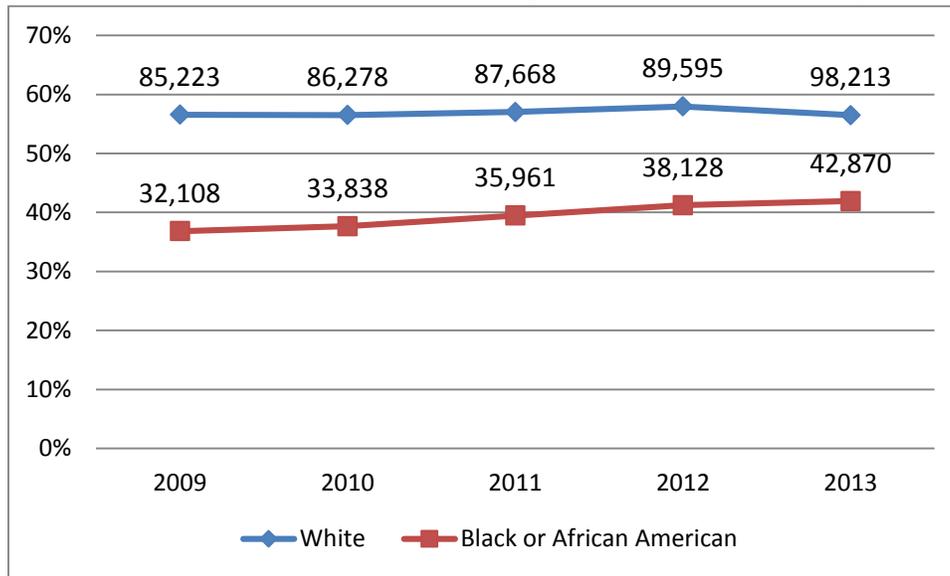
The disparity in rates of unemployment above is in part a function of the distribution of individuals in these groups across the educational attainment categories.[xvi] This chart presents the share of each group with formal education beyond high school. The share of white residents with this level of education has remained steadily around 57 percent. The share of African-American residents with some college or above, 42 percent in 2014, continues to increase by more than 1 percent per year. At the current growth rate, this could reach 50 percent by 2020 and converge upon whites in this category by 2025.[xvii] At Step Forward, work is being done to achieve this sooner.

Some college or above in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, age 25 and over, 2013

50,917	47,296	27,402	15,468

(Bar chart: White female, White male, Black female, Black male; y-axis 0% to 60%)

American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
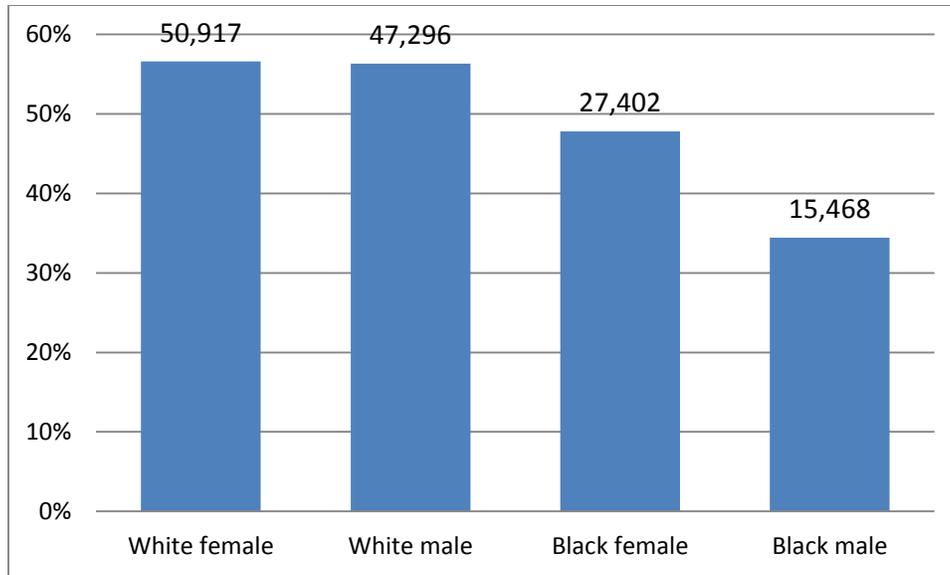
Nearly half of all African-American women have attended school beyond high school. The number for African-American men is comparatively low. By making sure that more young African-American men are prepared and encouraged to enroll in a technical college, community college, or university, this gap can be narrowed.

Percent and count of group in management, business, science, and arts occupations in Shreveport-Bossier City, age 16 and over

American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
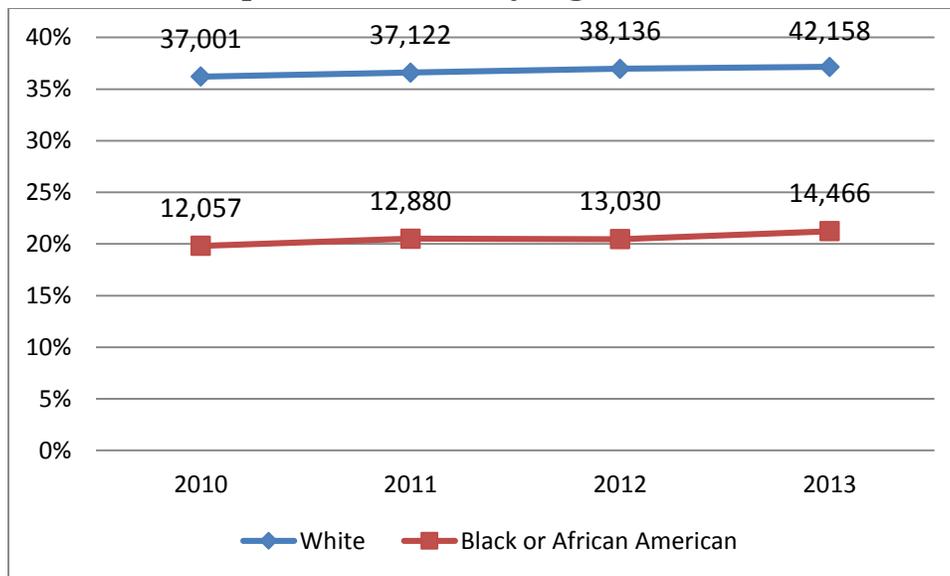
There is also race disparity in the occupational distribution of metro Shreveport-Bossier City residents. Most of the professional and administrative occupations held by the middle classes are captured in the broad occupational classification "management, business, science, and arts occupations." Median earnings for these occupations in metro Shreveport-Bossier City in 2013 were $47,576. This is 31 percent higher than the next highest category. The four other broad classifications and their 2013 median earnings are: service occupations ($16,727); sales and office occupations ($24,850); natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations ($36,289); and production, transportation, and material moving occupations ($30,779).

Percent and count of group in management, business, science, and arts occupations in Shreveport-Bossier City, age 16 and over, 2013

A bar chart with the y-axis ranging from 0% to 50% in 5% increments. The bars show:
- White females: approximately 43%, labeled 22,677
- White males: approximately 32%, labeled 19,481
- Black females: approximately 27%, labeled 10,489
- Black males: approximately 13.5%, labeled 3,977

American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/

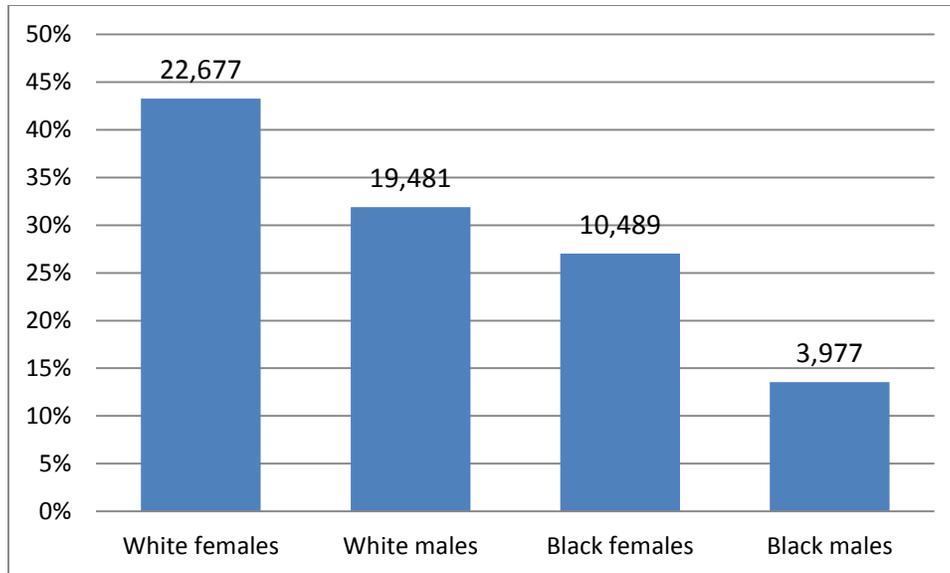Nearly five times more white males than African-American males are employed in management, business, science, and arts occupations, by number. Women are well represented here in these mostly middle class occupations.

Americans have a penchant for addressing social problems through volunteerism. Long ago in the 1830s, the French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States—there were 24 at the time—on assignment from his government.[xviii] Though Tocqueville at first doubted the ability of the middle classes to effectively govern a society, he observed this in person and attributed it to a high level of civic engagement and "practical intelligence." Step Forward depends heavily on the creativity and engagement of stakeholders and the community in order to address the important local issues of today.

Data-Driven Program

Step Forward uses data to drive project planning, goal setting, and evaluation. This report uses information from the following sources:

> U.S. Bureau of the Census; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; National Center for Health Statistics; Louisiana Children's Cabinet; Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals; Louisiana Board of Regents; Louisiana Department of Education; Caddo Parish Department of Juvenile Services; and the Shreveport Police Department.

Some of our most important community indicators are from the Census Bureau, including measures of poverty, school enrollment, educational attainment, employment, and income, in addition to population statistics for the area. This information is available annually as a result of the American Community Survey (ACS), which took the place of the decennial census "long form" in 2010.[xix] American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates are rolling annual averages based on a sample of households.[xx] The unweighted sample count of population for the 2014 ACS 1-year estimates in metro Shreveport-Bossier City is 6,263. For the 2013 ACS 5-year estimates (most recent available) the unweighted sample count is 30,838.

Rapid change is captured slowly by the multi-year method, but the larger sample size reduces the margins of error, narrowing the confidence intervals around the estimates. When considering the ACS figures one might think of the 5-year estimate as the more accurate statistic for that variable in this area and the 1-year estimate as a preview, as they are available several months earlier. When these two values differ (as they often do) one might think of the "true" value as close to the 5-year estimate and in the direction of the 1-year estimate.

Indicators

In the spring of 2013, the Step Forward team developed a set of indicators to track progress toward the stated goals of the project. These indicators were selected based on criteria developed by the Strive Network.

Is the proposed indicator:
- A valid measure of the outcome?
- Easily understandable to local stakeholders?
- Reasonably similar across the region and school districts?
- Produced by a trusted source?
- Affordable to gather and report?
- Available consistently over time?
- Able to be improved through local action, and useful in the day to day work?

The 2013 baseline report included nine indicators. The most recent data suggest the area has improved on four of these measures from baseline (fourth grade on time on level, high school cohort graduation, college enrollment ages 18-24, and some college or above ages 18-24). We have added sixteen additional indicators to this report fitting the criteria above.

The figures below present the 25 population level indicators and other information. Some Step Forward projects will impact these indicators directly and others will impact them indirectly. More than one project is necessary to change conditions such as school enrollment or employment rates in a metro area of this size. Currently, ten of the 25 indicators (40 percent) are trending positive from their baseline.

Goals for the community in the figures are represented in gray with dotted lines. These are not official estimates, projections or forecasts. The more of these indicators that are heading in the right direction, the more likely the necessary conditions exist for future success.

Early Childhood Education

Being ready for kindergarten allows a child to be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to her. About half of all kindergarteners in metro Shreveport-Bossier City lack the letter and number awareness, understanding, and fluency expected of students at this grade level upon school entry. This means that about 3,000 5-year olds in the area, each year, are not prepared when they begin school in the fall. The other half are ready. By increasing readiness skills for 100 children per year, it is possible to reach 52 percent by 2017.

Indicator 1. Incoming kindergarteners arriving ready for kindergarten in the fall in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2015 and 2016
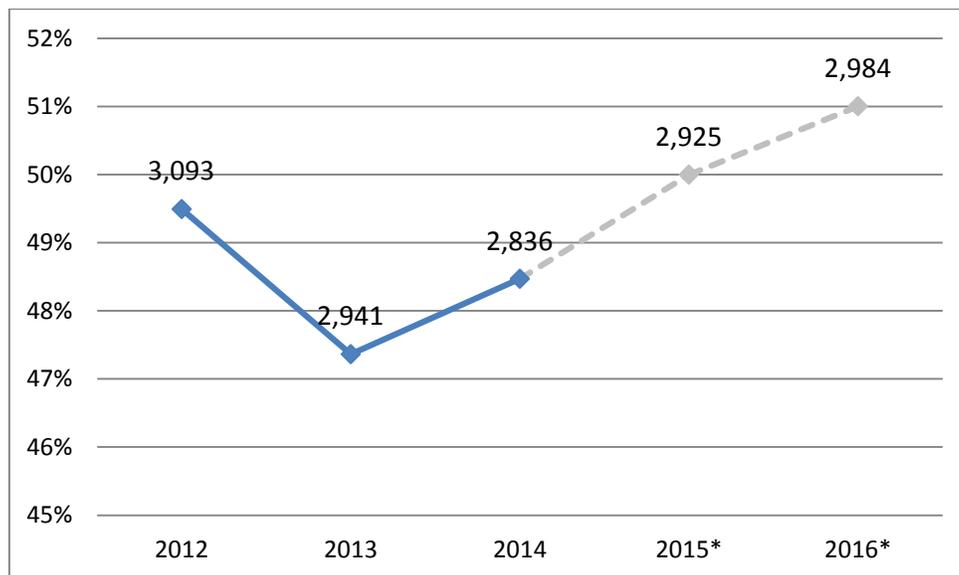
Louisiana Department of Education, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS Next, "core" level, fall) data weighted by parish kindergarten enrollment
Source: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/data-center

Children do not develop naturally into kindergarten-ready students; the necessary language, literacy, and numeracy skills must be learned in interaction with others. Higher preschool enrollment almost certainly has a

positive impact on kindergarten readiness community-wide. According to the most recent data from the Census, only about half of our 3- and 4-year-olds are enrolled in school. This amounts to some 4,000 children each year who are not interacting with others in a structured educational setting during the year preceding their enrollment in kindergarten. The following figure presents estimates using one year of data (more current) and five years of data (more accurate) collected from area residents by the ACS.

Indicator 2. Ages 3 and 4 enrolled in school in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, ACS 1-year and 5-year estimates, with goals for 2015 and 2016

American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
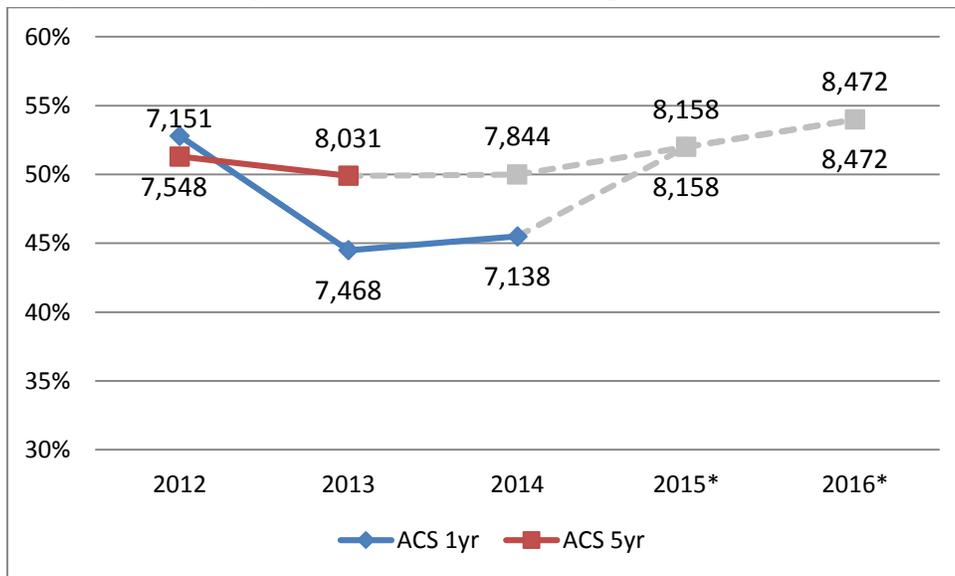
Good health and wellbeing are necessary for infants and children to develop into students who are ready and eager to learn. This begins in the early days of life, and an important measure at the population level is the percentage of live births that are underweight. Although there are fewer than 1,000 low birth weight deliveries in this area each year, an increase of over 200 healthy-weight infants is required to bring the low birth weight rate below 10 percent.

Indicator 3. Low birth weight (under 2,500 grams (5lbs., 8 oz.)) in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2014-2016
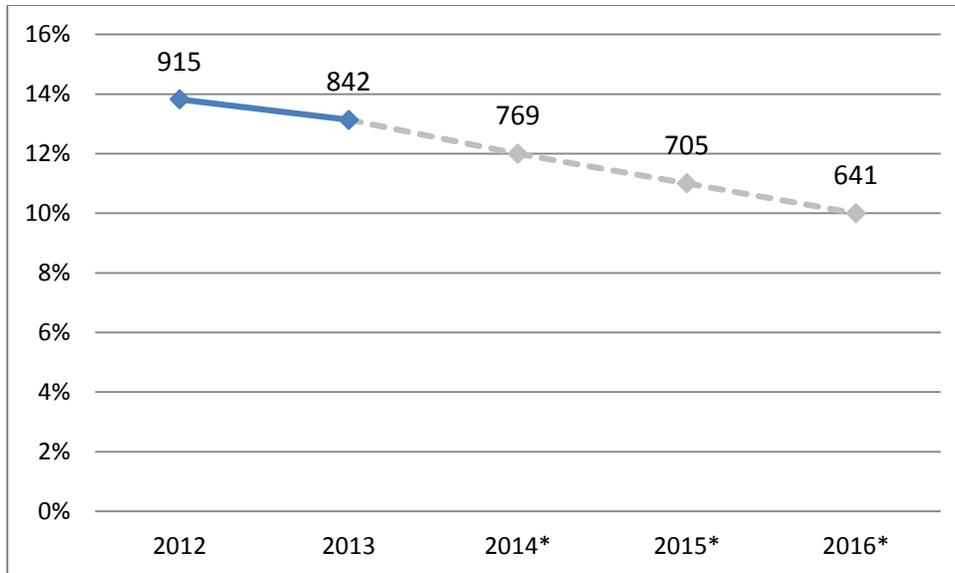
National Center for Health Statistics, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level data weighted by parish total live births
Data: http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/births.htm

Two additional population-level measures of child health are rates of immunization and obesity. Higher rates of immunizations through vaccination reduce preventable infectious diseases in the community.[xxi] Lower rates of obesity mean more children are in good health now and as they age.[xxii] Both impact how prepared they are as a group to succeed early and often in school. According to data from the state Department of Health and Hospitals Office of Public Health Immunization Program and DHH Nutrition Services, less than 80 percent of all children 19-35 months are immunized and more than 16 percent of WIC children ages 2-5 are obese in the Shreveport-Bossier City metro area.

Indicator 4. All children 19-35 months vaccinated with DTaP and MMR in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2015 and 2016
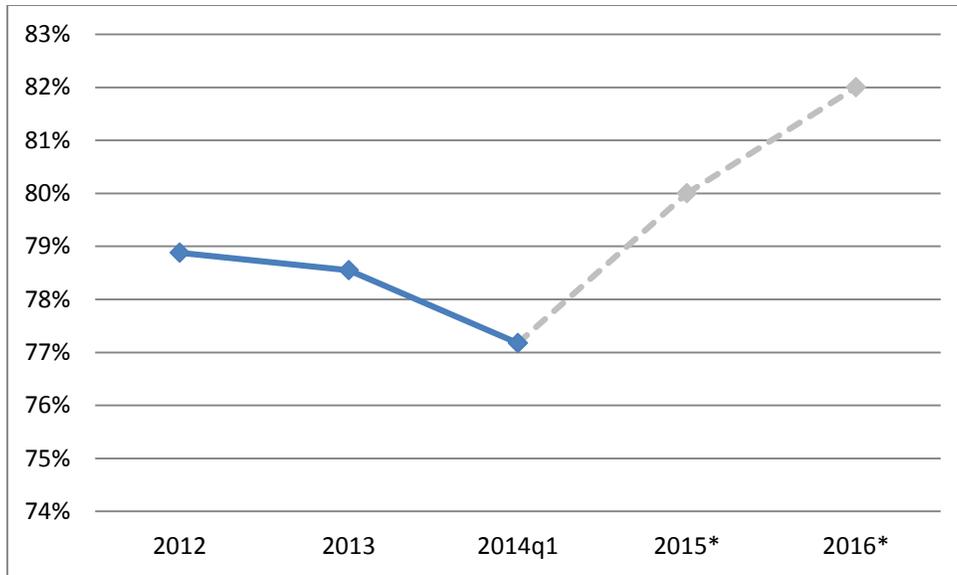
State of Louisiana Children's Cabinet, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level data weighted by parish total population under age 5
Data: http://www.kidsdashboard.la.gov/

Indicator 5. Obesity (BMI >= 95%) in WIC children ages 2-5 in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2015 and 2016
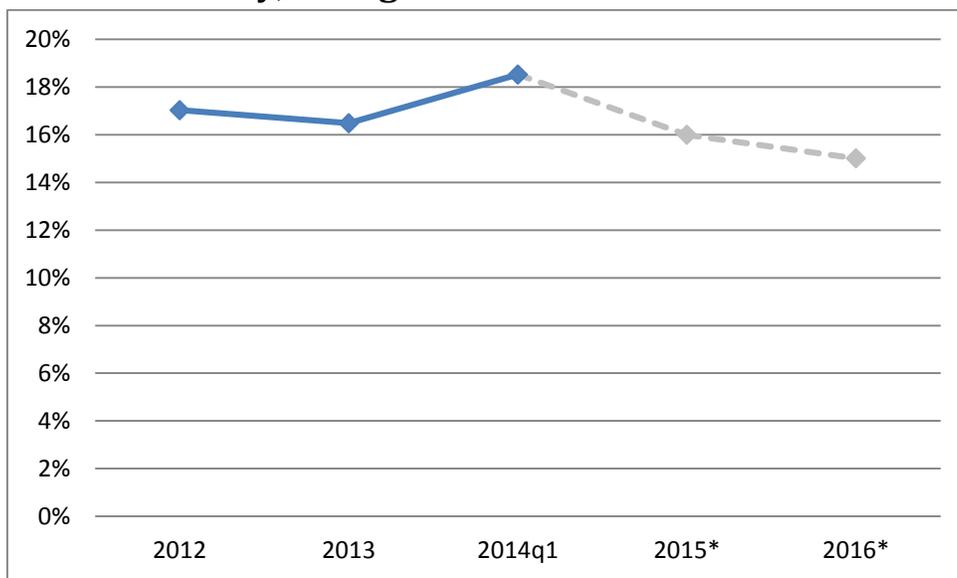

State of Louisiana Children's Cabinet, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level data weighted by parish total population under age 5
Data: http://www.kidsdashboard.la.gov/

One driving force behind lagging child health and education outcomes in metro Shreveport-Bossier City is the persistently high rate of child poverty.[xxiii] More than 10,000 children under age 6 live in families with annual incomes below the official poverty threshold, and possibly more than 13,000 in 2014.[xxiv] The most recent estimate from the Census, which became available September of this year, amounts to some 13,359 children (36.3 percent) who are living below the poverty line.[xxv] And most of these 13,000 plus kids (61 percent) have income to poverty ratios below 0.5 – that is, they are at less than half of the poverty line. How much is this in dollars? By using the 2014 poverty threshold for a family of four, $24,230, the result is that the 8,161 children below 50 percent of the poverty line are in families with incomes at or below $1,009.58 per month.[xxvi]

Indicator 6. Children under 6 in poverty in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, ACS 1-year and 5-year estimates, with goals for 2015 and 2016

American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
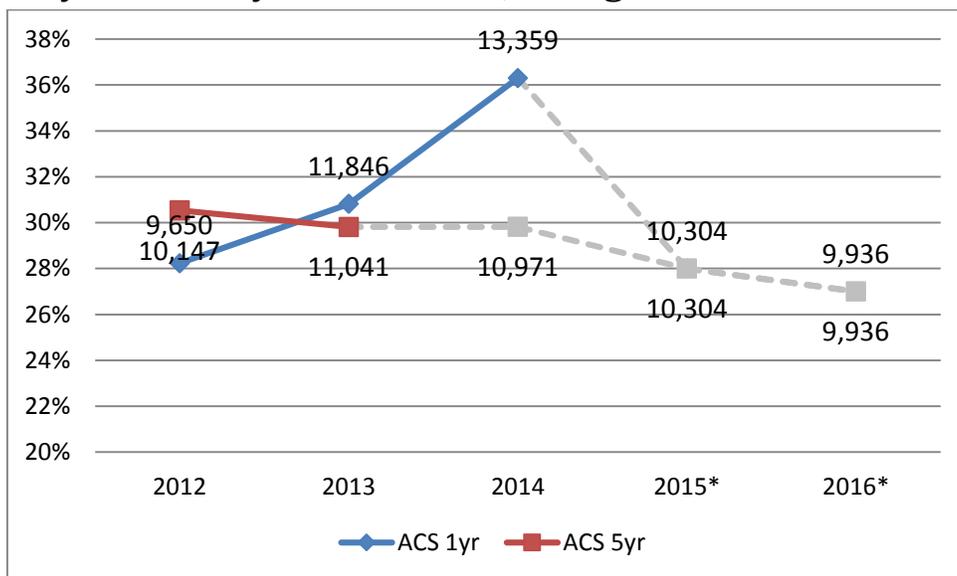
The most recent estimate is for 2014 and shows much higher counts and rates of child poverty. The 1-year estimate for 2013 also showed an increase in child poverty. After having been stable for several years, though already high, child poverty appears to be climbing higher.

Children under 6 in poverty in metro Shreveport-Bossier City by race, ACS 5-year (2009-2013) and 1-year (2014) estimates

American Community Survey 5-year (2009-2013) and 1-year (2014) estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
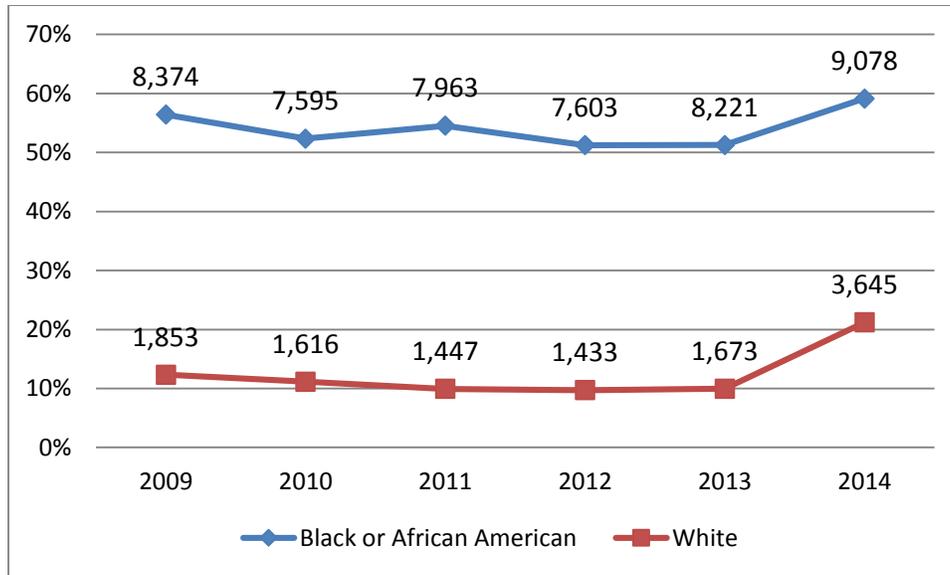
The rate of child poverty is five times higher for African-American children than it is for white children over the past several years according to the more accurate though less current ACS 5-year estimates. As in the figure before, the new ACS 1-year estimate indicates that child poverty is worsening. A new multi-year estimate for 2014 will be available in December 2015.

Many poor children are in single-parent families. Poverty rates for families with one "female householder, no husband present, with related children under 5 years only" in our area were 57, 53, 51, and 55 percent in the years 2010-2013, according to ACS 5-year estimates. Specific numbers aside, many children in the area are poor and this poverty is distributed toward the lower income levels.

Early Literacy

Books in the home are important for the literacy development of children, as is a visible pattern of reading and learning by the adults around them. How children spend their time at home may be just as important as how they spend it at school. Twenty years ago, Hart and Risley (1995) presented research findings from two and a half years of monthly home observations in 42 families. [xxvii] This research demonstrated what has come to be known as the "3o million word gap." This is the difference in the total number of words addressed to children by age four in families with professionally employed parents compared to families with children on welfare. In addition to this enormous gap in the quantity of words spoken to young children, they also found a difference in the ratio of encouraging feedback to discouraging feedback between these groups (6:1 in professional families and 1:2 in welfare families). This amounts to some 560,000 more instances of encouragement than prohibition in professional households and 125,000 more prohibitions than encouragements in welfare households by age four.

This important research is reminiscent of Anderson, Wilson and Fielding (1988), who when studying fifth graders found a gap of 2.3 million words read per year between those in the 90th percentile (40 minutes per day) and those in the 10th percentile (less than two minutes per day) of time spent reading outside of school.[xxviii] These two recent classics in the educational research literature show the magnitude of the interventions that are necessary in order to provide equal experience in school, equal opportunity in the labor force, and personal enrichment through academic study for all young people in metro Shreveport-Bossier City.

Incoming third-graders arriving ready for third grade reading in the fall in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2015 and 2016
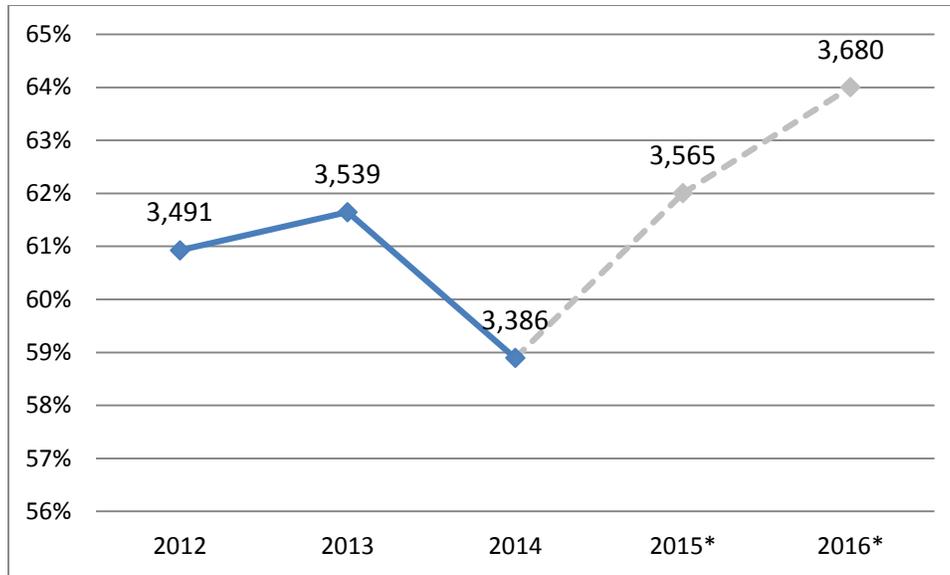
Louisiana Department of Education, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS Next, core reading level, fall) data weighted by parish third-grade enrollment
Data: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/data-center

In the third grade, around age eight and with three years of formal education, students are expected to transition from learning-to-read to reading-to-learn. Those who complete this shift successfully have an 80 percent chance of continued success in school.[xxix] Not quite two-thirds of metro third graders meet the core standards of the DIBELS assessment, falling short of this important literacy milestone. An additional 449 students are required to increase those reaching core standards to two-thirds (66.7 percent).

Indicator 7. Third-grade English language arts proficiency (basic and above) in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goal for 2016
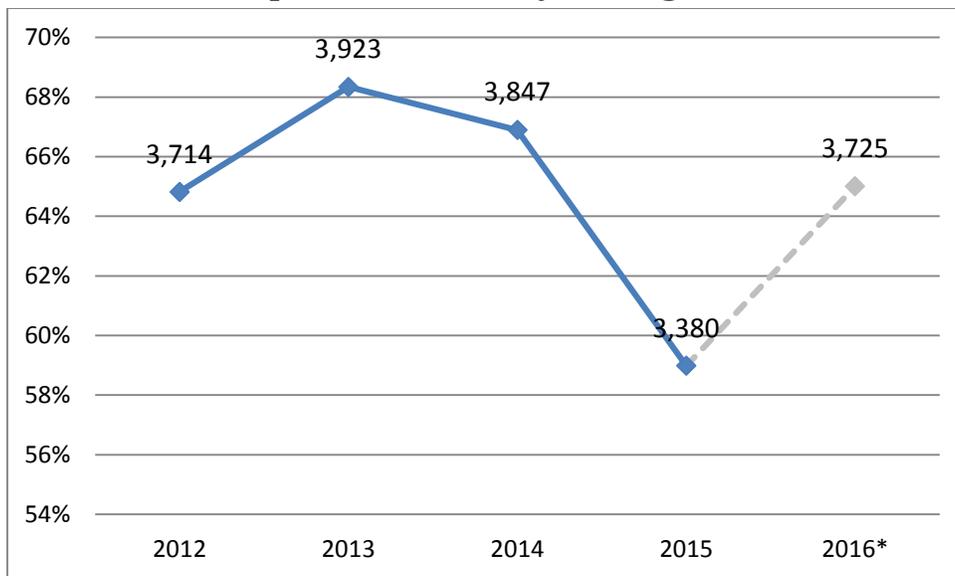
Louisiana Department of Education, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level spring iLeap data weighted by parish third-grade enrollment
Data: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/data-center

Another preferred measure the state has used to assess the English language arts (ELA) proficiency of students is the Integrated Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (iLEAP), given in the spring through grade eight. This assessment begins in the third grade, and the share of our third-graders at levels basic, mastery, or advanced (basic and above) has been hovering around two-thirds.

The 2015 round of testing employed a new instrument from the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC).[xxx] These results suggest that 467 fewer third-graders in the spring of 2015 performed at the "basic and above" level of third-graders over the past few years. Much of this difference is likely due to the change in the assessment instrument, and the 59 percent 2015 figure serves as a new baseline.

Indicator 8. Fourth grade on-time and on-level in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2014-2016
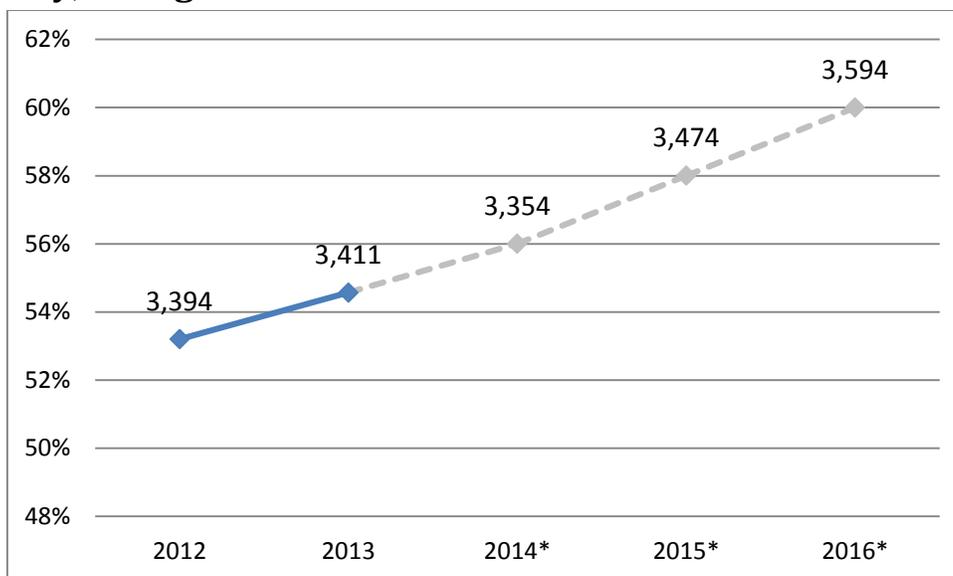

State of Louisiana Children's Cabinet, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level data weighted by parish fourth-grade enrollment
Data: http://www.kidsdashboard.la.gov/

The third-graders who score at basic and above on the iLeap assessment in both English language arts and math, and who have moved from grade-to-grade with their peers since kindergarten, are considered "on-time and on-level" when they enter fourth grade.[xxxi] According to the most recent data available from the state Department of Education, just under 55 percent of our fourth-graders meet these criteria. Increasing this quantity to 60 percent will require an additional 180 students who meet the standard of "on-time and on-level."

Poverty rates for those ages 6-11 have increased similarly to those for the population under age 6. Poverty conditions are likely related to what is keeping some metro Shreveport-Bossier City children from being ready for third and fourth grade. As with the poverty numbers for children age 5 and under, both the counts and rates of poverty are much higher among African-American children than white children age 6-11.

Indicator 9. Age 6-11 in poverty in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, ACS 1-year and 5-year estimates, with goals for 2015 and 2016

American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
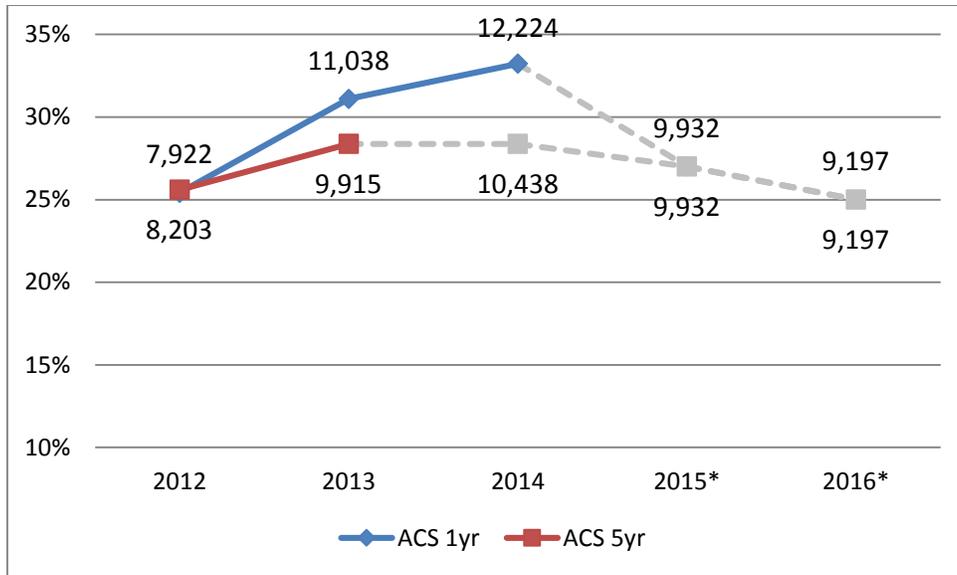
Age 6-11 in poverty in metro Shreveport-Bossier City by race, ACS 5-year (2009-2013) and 1-year (2014) estimates

American Community Survey 5-year (2009-2013) and 1-year (2014) estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
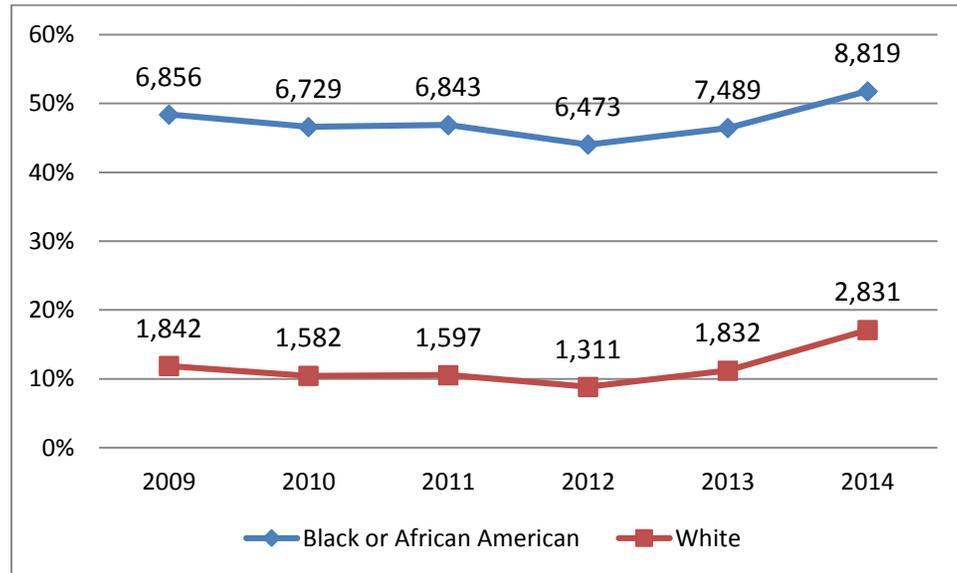
Youth Civic Development – My Brother's Keeper

When individuals age into the teenage years, they begin to experience more personal freedom by making more decisions for themselves. The earliest behavioral interventions occur in the home and in the school. Some later require interventions of a kind beyond the capabilities of most parents and teachers.

Our community sees about 3,000 truancies, 1,000 school dropouts and 2,000 idle teens per year, with 315 Shreveport Police Department arrests for stealing and 871 for fighting in 2014. Although both violent and property crime rates are generally low these days compared to the 2000s (and much lower than their peaks in the 80s and 90s), the goal will be to build upon past success and work toward reducing them further. Suspensions are on the decline. Reducing truancy is likely to reduce stealing, fighting, and leaving school before graduating. Improvements in the average ACT score may be an additional positive outcome of increased school attendance.

Indicator 10. School discipline rates for all grades in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2014-2016
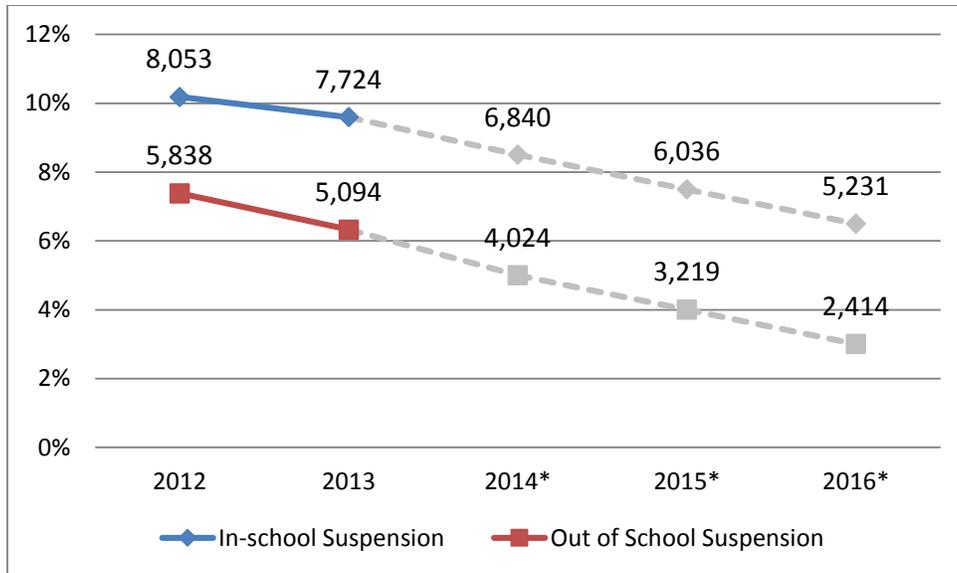
Louisiana Department of Education, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level data weighted by parish K-12 enrollment
Data: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/data-center

Indicator 11. Truancy referrals (unique) for all grades in Caddo Parish, with goals for 2015 and 2016
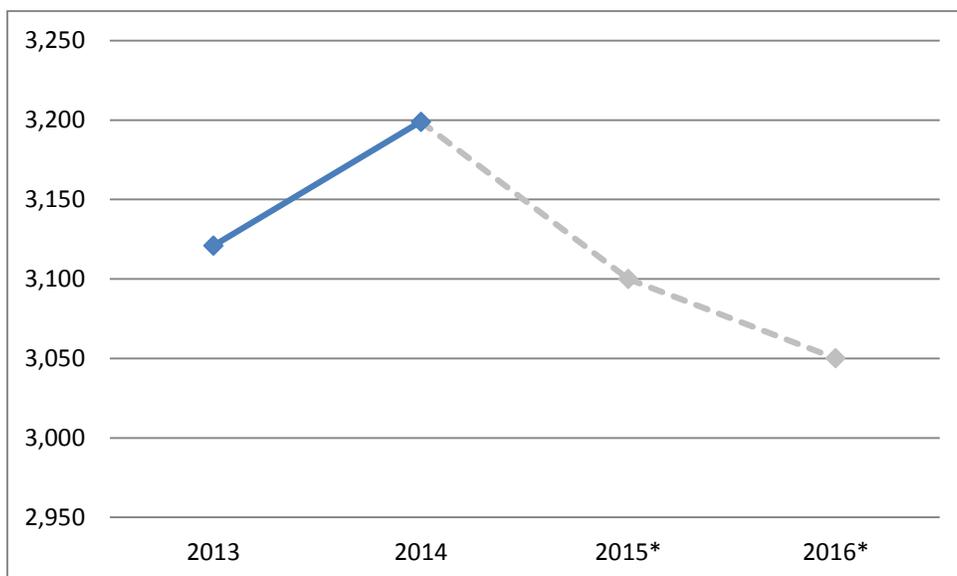
Caddo Parish Juvenile Services Department, special communication, no double-count referrals

A recent journal article from researchers at Michigan and Texas A&M looks at reasons for high school dropout over the past half century using seven nationally representative studies from 1955 to 2002 (Doll et al. 2013).[xxxii] They follow a framework that classifies reasons for dropping out of school as push, pull, or falling out factors. Push factors include "tests, attendance and discipline policies, and even consequences of poor behavior." Pull factors include "financial worries, out-of-school employment, family needs, or even family changes such as marriage or childbirth," or illness. Falling out of school "occurs when a student does not show significant academic progress in schoolwork and becomes apathetic or even disillusioned with school completion."

In studies from the 1950s to the 1980s students report most often that they were pulled away from school, often by work or family (60 percent in 1955). In the most recent study, these and other pull factors were the cause for dropout for only 37 percent of those who left school. Push factors were the most common cause, at 49 percent, and falling out factors were the cause for 14 percent. The top three ranked reasons (and overall frequency percentage) were: "missed too many days of school" (43.5), "thought it would be easier to get a GED" (40.5), and "was getting poor grades/failing school" (38). Two of these are push factors (GED is a pull factor). Possible explanations according to the authors include the higher bar for students beginning with the standards movement and changing societal expectations as more individuals now complete high school.

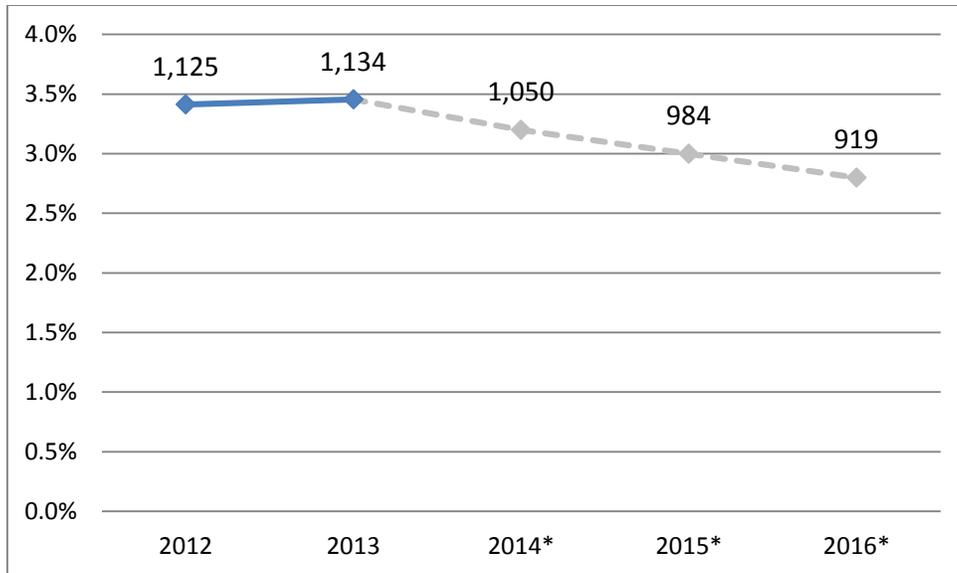## Indicator 12. Annual student dropout rates for all grades in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2014-2016

Louisiana Department of Education, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level data weighted by parish K-12 enrollment
Data: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/data-center

According to the state Department of Education, 1,134 students dropped out of school in the metro area in 2013. The research summarized above suggests that reasons for dropout are no longer primarily related to work and family, but are increasingly related to policies or student disinterest. By keeping 70 additional students per year in school, the local dropout rate can be reduced below 2.5 percent by 2018.

Indicator 13. Idleness ages 16-19 in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2014-2016

American Community Survey 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
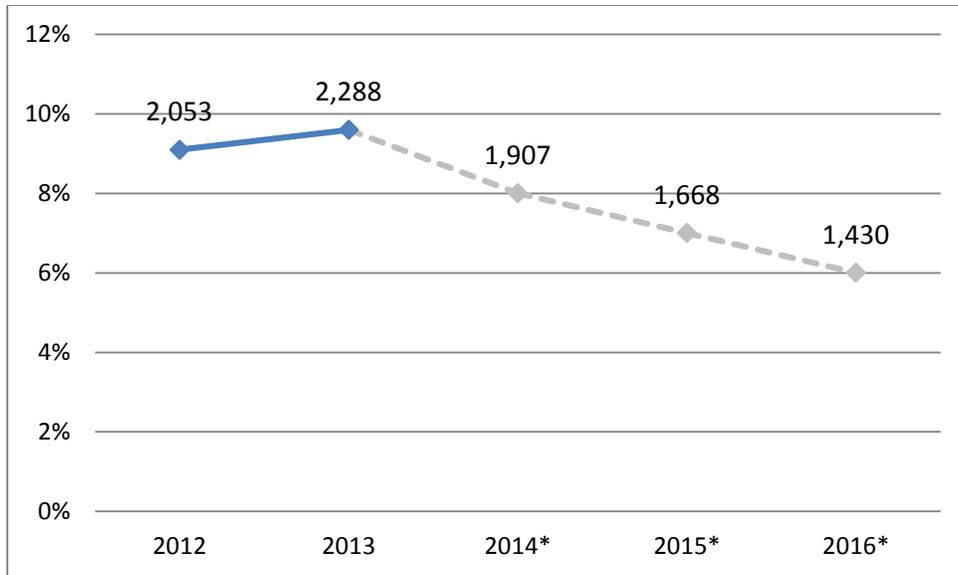
Those who drop out of school for reasons other than paid work are more likely to become idle – not in school and not in the labor force (employment status definitions are discussed below). Some teenagers who are idle and not involved in a family activity such as caring for an infant or an aging relative may inspire towards delinquent behavior. More than 2,000 metro residents age 16-19 are idle.

Shreveport Police Department arrests age 17 and under for part 1 and part 2 crimes, with goals for 2015 and 2016

Shreveport Police Department Annual Crime Report
Data: http://shreveportla.gov/index.aspx?NID=1107
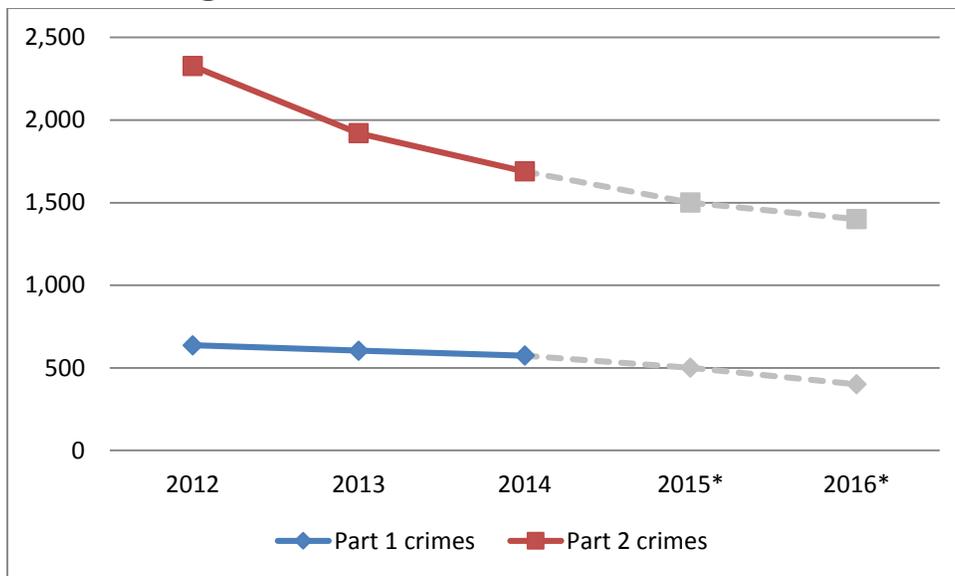
Truancy and idleness can create the conditions that sometimes result in youth criminal activity. The Shreveport Police Department participates in the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program and releases arrest and other statistics annually to the public. Arrests are classified as part 1 or part 2 according to type of crime. Part 1 includes serious violent crimes and some types of theft (burglary, automobile, and larceny), with larceny-theft, or common stealing, accounting for more than half of part 1. All other arrests for age 17 and under are for part 2 crimes (75%), which are far more common than part 1 crimes. Part 2 includes mostly "other assault," discussed below. Of course, not all crimes end in an arrest and not all crimes are reported to the police.[xxxiii]

Indicator 14. Shreveport Police Department arrests age 17 and under for theft and other assault, with goals for 2015 and 2016

Shreveport Police Department Annual Crime Report
Data: http://shreveportla.gov/index.aspx?NID=1107
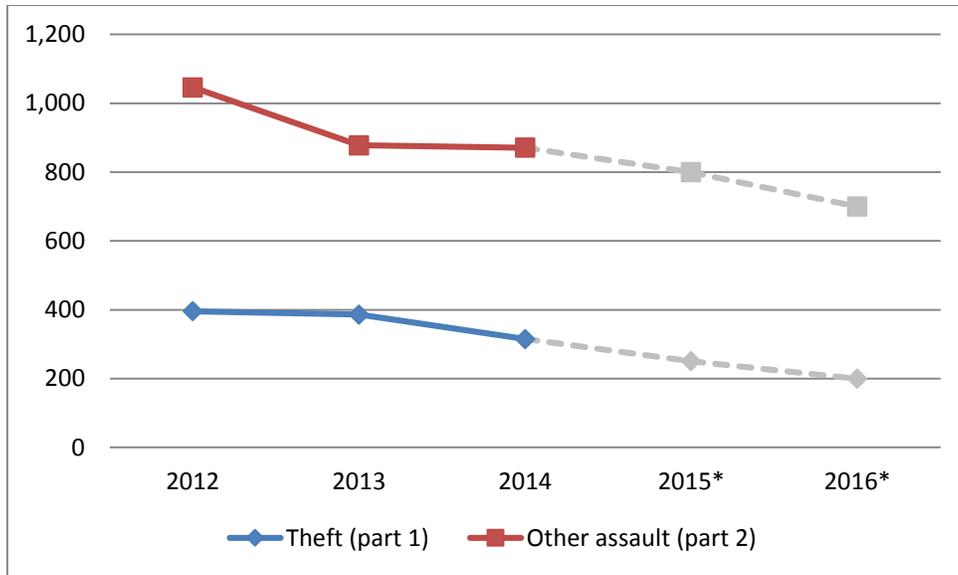
The category "other assault" does not include any of the serious violent crimes greatly feared by the public that are contained in part 1. The Shreveport Police Department reports 871 such arrests for age 17 and under in 2014, almost a third of all "other assault" arrests for any age. Much of it is likely ordinary fighting, as some of these arrests may have resulted from the 2,289 calls for service the department received about fights in 2014.[xxxiv]

Indicator 15. Cohort graduation rate in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2015 and 2016
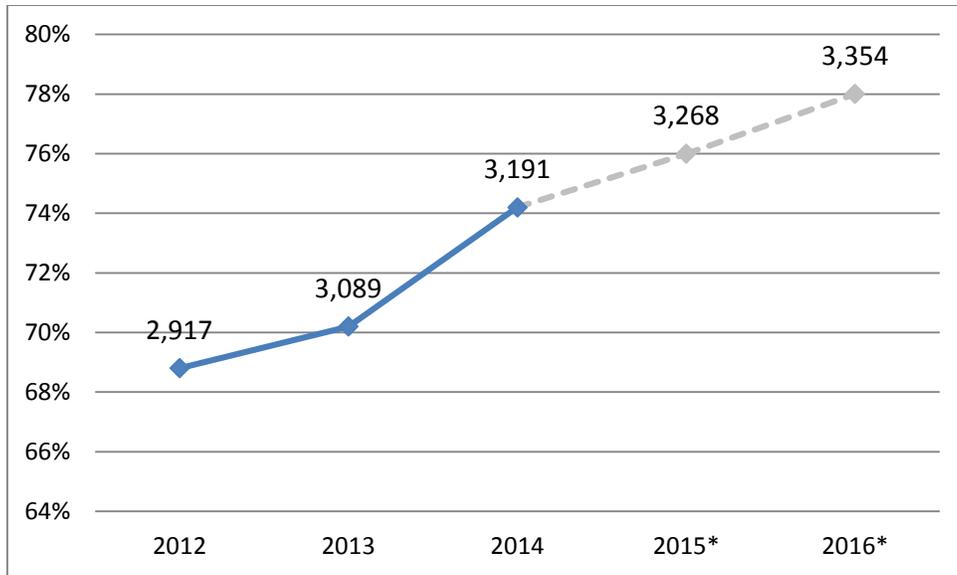
Louisiana Department of Education, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level data weighted by parish 12th-grade enrollment
Data: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/data-center

The conditions discussed above (suspension, truancy, dropping out, idleness, and crime) make graduating high school on time less likely. As some of these factors have declined, the cohort graduation rate has increased. Almost three out of four students who began high school four years ago graduated with their cohort in 2014. This is an improvement from just 69 percent in 2012. A one percent increase in this measure represents about 43 students.

Indicator 16. Average ACT score in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2015 and 2016
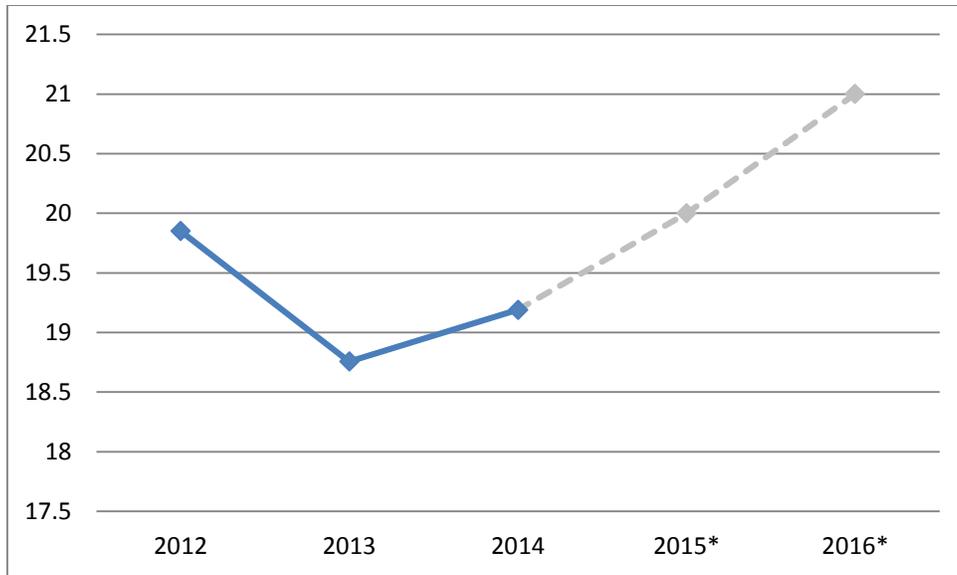

Louisiana Department of Education, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level data weighted by parish 12th-grade enrollment
Data: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/data-center

Beginning in 2013, the state Department of Education began requiring all high school juniors to take the ACT. The decline in the average ACT score in 2013 mostly represents the addition of ACT scores from students who would not otherwise take the test. This improved in 2014 to 19.2, meeting the state average. Step Forward aims to see this measure increase to 20, and then to the current national average of 21. Awards for TOPS (Taylor Opportunity Program for Students), now in its 26th year, begin at an ACT of 17 (TOPS Tech).[xxxv]

Workforce Development

Considering the "cradle to career" orientation of Step Forward, workforce development is the final step in a linked process of child and youth development in preparation for success in college and career. It is also the aim from the beginning. The knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for economic success in our time must be developed over many years in the home, in the school, in the workplace, and so on. Through these interactions with others an individual builds up human capital, and some of it is represented by various credentials. Human capital formation is part and parcel of workforce development.[xxxvi] Having discussed various population-level measures for the other areas of focus – early childhood education, early literacy, and youth civic development – attention is now given to indicators of metro Shreveport-Bossier City workforce development. The first step on this path is enrolling in postsecondary school.

Indicator 17. Enrolled in college first fall after high school graduation, metro Shreveport-Bossier City, with goals for 2015 and 2016

Louisiana Department of Education, author's calculation of metro annual averages based on parish-level data weighted by parish total high school graduates
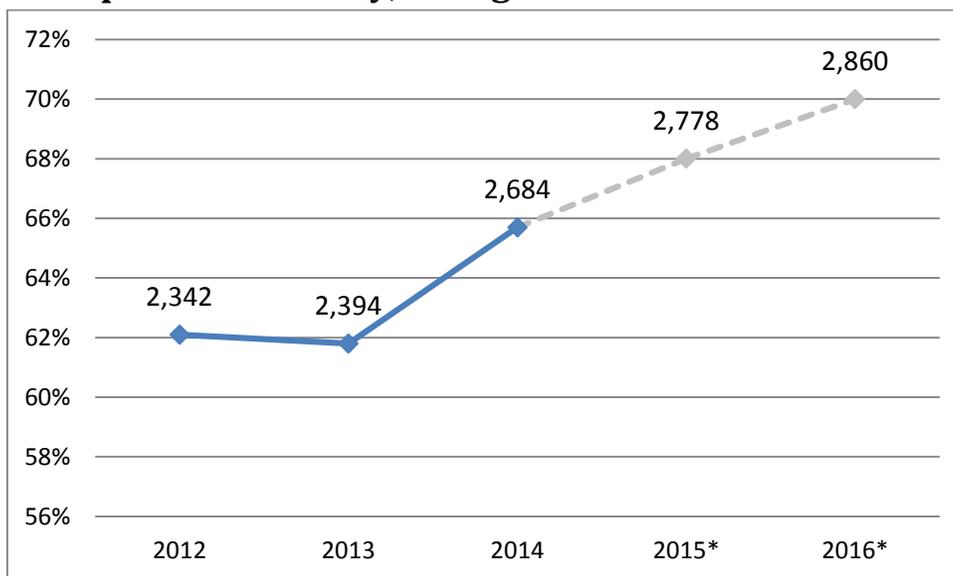Data: http://www.louisianabelieves.com/resources/library/data-center

According to the state Department of Education, about two-thirds of metro high school graduates are going directly into college the following fall. This is an increase over previous years, and each percent increase from here would take about 41 additional students.

Indicator 18. Enrolled in college or graduate school age 18-24 in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, ACS 1-year and 5-year estimates, with goals for 2015 and 2016

American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
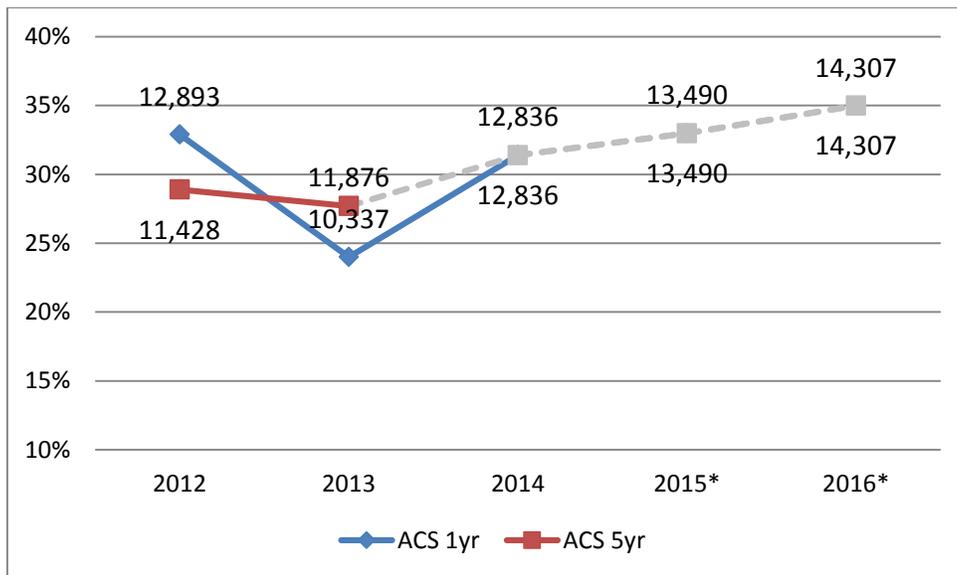
Many high school graduates who do not enroll in college go directly into the labor force (and some do both). Some enroll in college later. Of all metro residents age 18-24, about 30 percent are enrolled in postsecondary school. A one percent increase in postsecondary enrollment would represent about 400 individuals.

Total enrollment at two-year colleges in metro Shreveport-Bossier City (SUSLA, NLTC, BPCC), with goals for 2015 and 2016

Louisiana Board of Regents, author's calculation
Data: http://www.regents.la.gov/page/data-and-publications
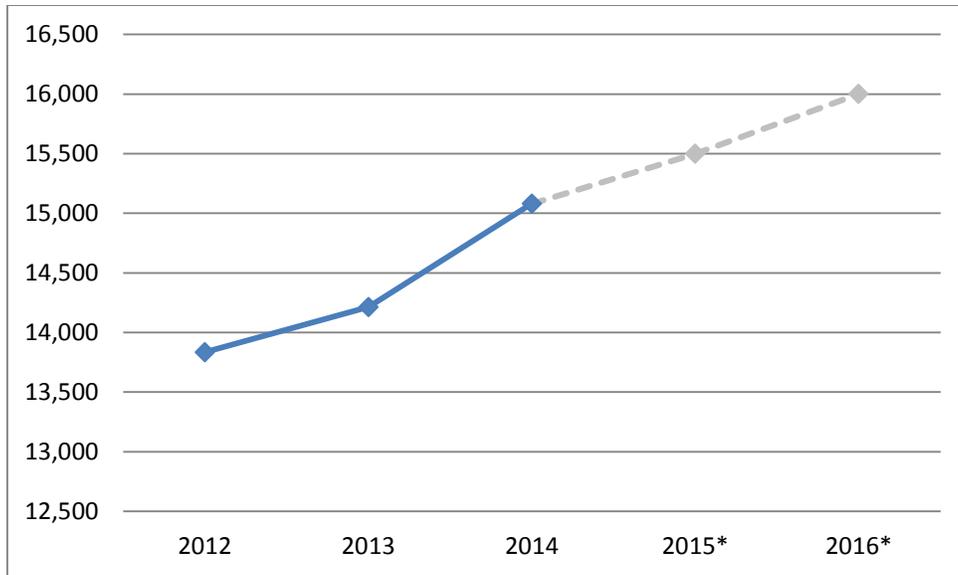
Enrollment at two-year colleges continues to grow and is one of the strengths of the area. We all stand to benefit a great deal by encouraging young people to pursue education beyond high school. The chart above shows the overall enrollment increases and includes all ages. According to data compiled by the Louisiana Board of Regents, 15,081 students are enrolled in our three two-year colleges (Southern University in Shreveport, Northwest Louisiana Technical College, and Bossier Parish Community College). Of these 15,000 college students, 9,607 (64%) are age 24 and under.

The total number of certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees granted by the three two-year colleges in our metro area increased by more than 300 last year, to 2,374.

Indicator 19. Enrollment at two-year colleges age 24 and under in metro Shreveport-Bossier City (SUSLA, NLTC, BPCC), with goals for 2015 and 2016

Louisiana Board of Regents, author's calculation
Data: http://www.regents.la.gov/page/data-and-publications
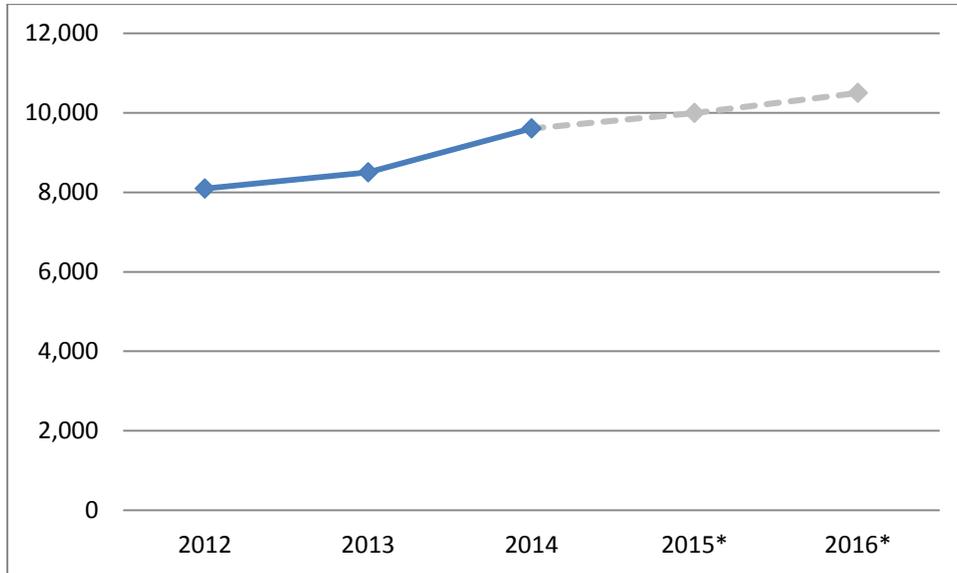
Indicator 20. Certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees granted at two-year colleges in metro Shreveport-Bossier City (SUSLA, NLTC, BPCC), with goals for 2015 and 2016

Louisiana Board of Regents, author's calculation
Data: http://www.regents.la.gov/page/data-and-publications
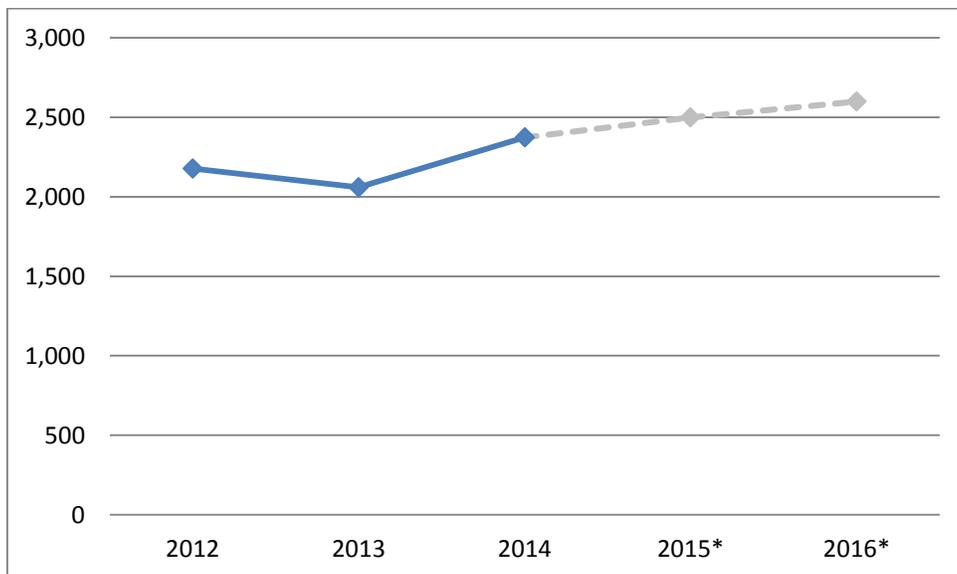
The Census now releases on an annual basis local microdata for use by local researchers, coast to coast. These "public use microdata samples" (PUMS)[xxxvii] correspond to Census geographies called "public use microdata areas" (PUMAs).[xxxviii] Using microdata many local statistics can be created which are not available in the conventional summary tables available through the Census factfinder website, numerous as they are.[xxxix] This can be done for Caddo, Bossier, and Webster parishes together, but not for DeSoto Parish (6 percent of total metro population), which is irretrievably delineated into another PUMA along with several other parishes south and southeast of the metro area. Still, individual- and household-level sociodemographic data for (a sample of) 94 percent of the metro population add a tremendous resource to the community toolkit.

An immediate example of this is demonstrated by the difference between the Associate's degree and the educational attainment category "some college" in the figures below. An estimated 4,558 18-24-year-olds in 2013 had an Associate's degree or above, 11 percent of all persons in that age range. A one percent increase in percent with an Associate's degree would take about 400 additional college graduates. "Some college" adds to this all persons who spent any time in college and did not receive a degree, including those who are enrolled students, reaching a total of about 45 percent of the 18-24 year olds in our area (19,037). This increases as a larger share of the age range enrolls in or graduates from college. The microdata provide information about how many in the "some college" group are actually college graduates with Associate's degrees. The microdata will be applied to other topics below.

Associate's degree or above age 18-24 in Caddo, Bossier, and Webster parishes, with goals for 2014-2016
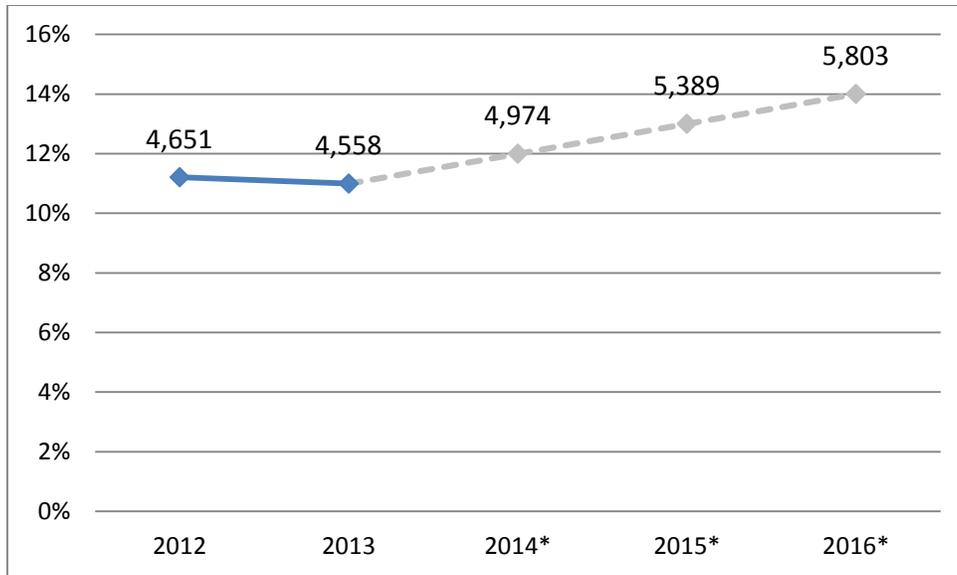
American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) 5-year estimates, author's calculation
Data: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/pums.html

Indicator 21. Some college or above age 18-24 in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, ACS 1- and 5-year estimates, with goals for 2015 and 2016

American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
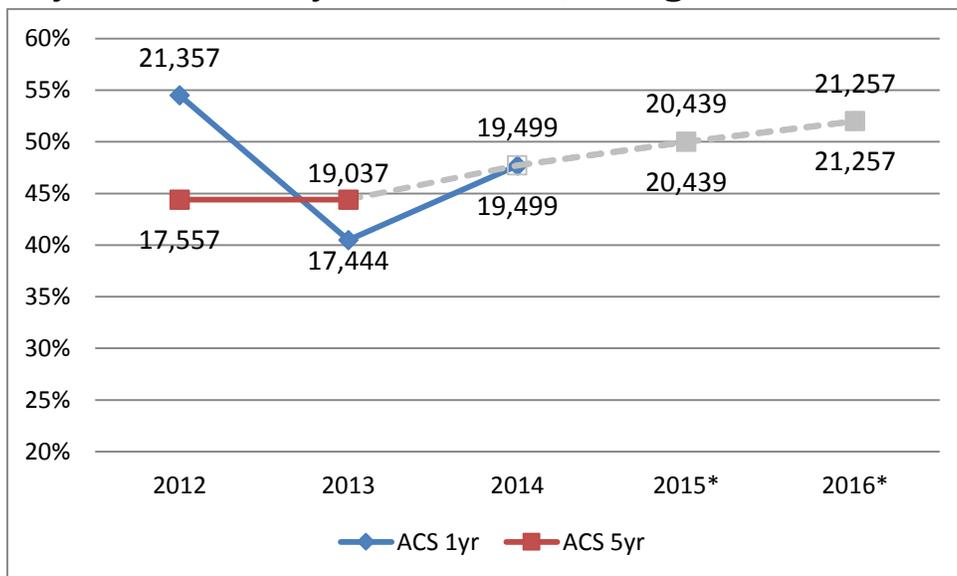
Consider the Census ACS subject definitions of "labor force," "employed," and "unemployed."[xl] The labor force consists of civilians classified as employed or unemployed plus members of the Armed Forces. Those who are not in the labor force are generally students, homemakers, seasonal workers interviewed in an off season who were not looking for work, institutionalized people, and people doing unpaid family work less than 15 hours during the "reference week."

Indicator 22. In labor force age 20-24 in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, ACS 1- and 5-year estimates, with goals for 2015 and 2016

American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
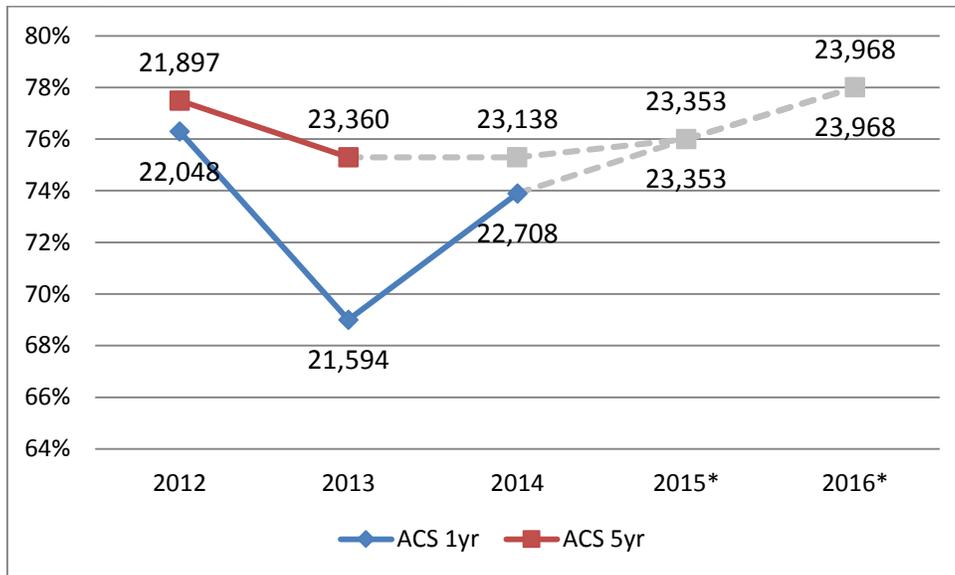
Of the 31,000 persons ages 20-24 in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, 23,000 (75%) are in the labor force. Of those in the labor force, 18,500 are employed and 4,500 are unemployed. Many of the remaining 9,000 ages 20-24 are among the 9,607 students age 24 and under who are enrolled in two-year colleges.[xli] The rest – not in the labor force and not enrolled in school – are idle.

Indicator 23. Employed ages 20-24 in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, ACS 1-year and 5-year estimates, with goals for 2015 and 2016

American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
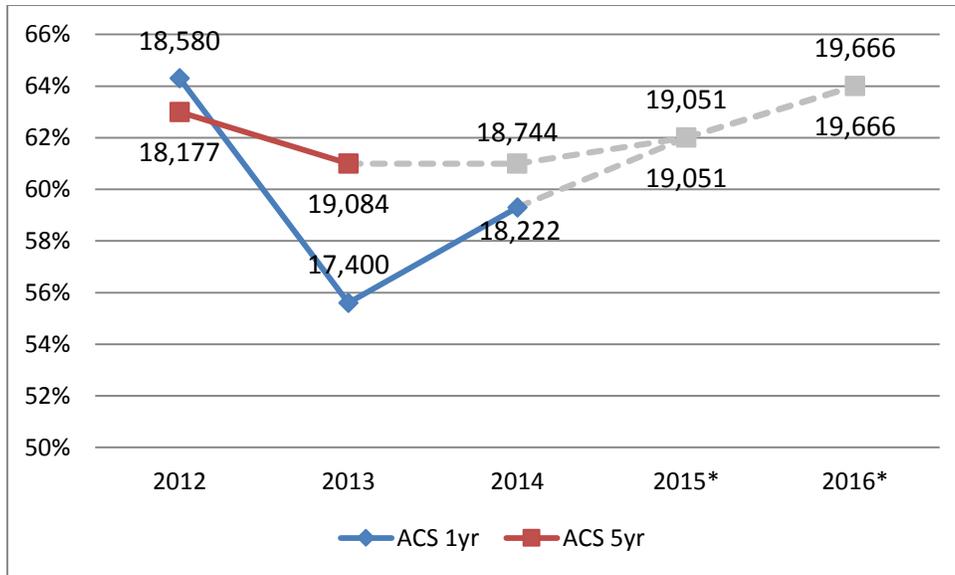
Employed is a category that includes those who did any work at all as paid employees, worked in their own business or profession, worked on their own farm, or worked 15 hours or more doing unpaid family work during the reference week; or were with a job but not at work due to illness, bad weather, industrial dispute, vacation, or other personal reasons. About 60 percent of metro residents in their early 20s are employed, and each additional percent increase represents about 300 individuals.

Indicator 24. Unemployed ages 20-24 in metro Shreveport-Bossier City, ACS 1-year and 5-year estimates, with goals for 2015 and 2016

American Community Survey 1-year and 5-year estimates
Data: http://factfinder.census.gov/
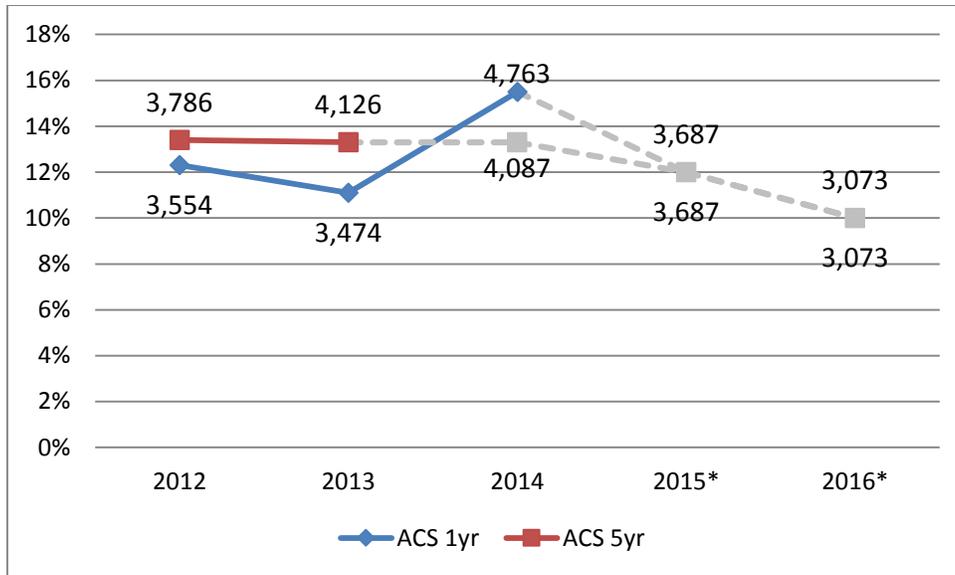
Unemployed is a category that includes those who were neither "at work" nor "with a job but not at work" during the reference week, and were actively looking for work during the last four weeks, and were available to start a job.[xlii] About 14 percent of those in their early 20s are unemployed, and this does not appear to be improving at the moment. In order to achieve an unemployment rate below 10 percent, 1,000 additional individuals must join the workforce.

Indicator 25. Average annual wage and salary income age 18-24 civilian employed in Caddo, Bossier, and Webster parishes, with goals for 2014-2016
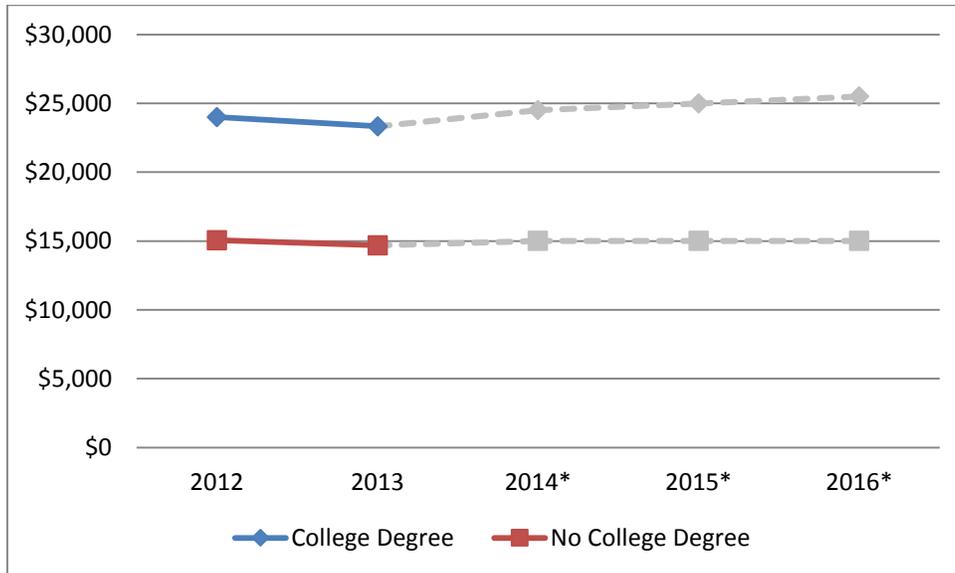
American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) 5-year estimates, author's calculation, CPI adjusted to 2013
Data: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/pums.html

The ACS microdata discussed above can also be used to calculate the average annual incomes for specific groups – for example, ages 18-24 with and without a college degree (Associate's and above). The average annual income from wages and salaries for the metro civilian employed population ages 18-24 in 2013 was $15,997.80. For those with a college degree, this average was $23,328.32 and for those without a college degree (high school or below), $14,682.08. Based on current poverty thresholds, the average college educated 18-24-year-old in metro Shreveport-Bossier City can support two children and remain above the poverty line.[xliii] Without a college degree, an average employed 18-24-year-old is not in poverty, but will surpass the poverty threshold with the addition of only one person, adult or child. In other words, many employed young single parents are not at poverty level when they are educated, but those without a college degree likely are below poverty level.

Idleness ages 18-24 in Caddo, Bossier, and Webster parishes, with goals for 2014-2016
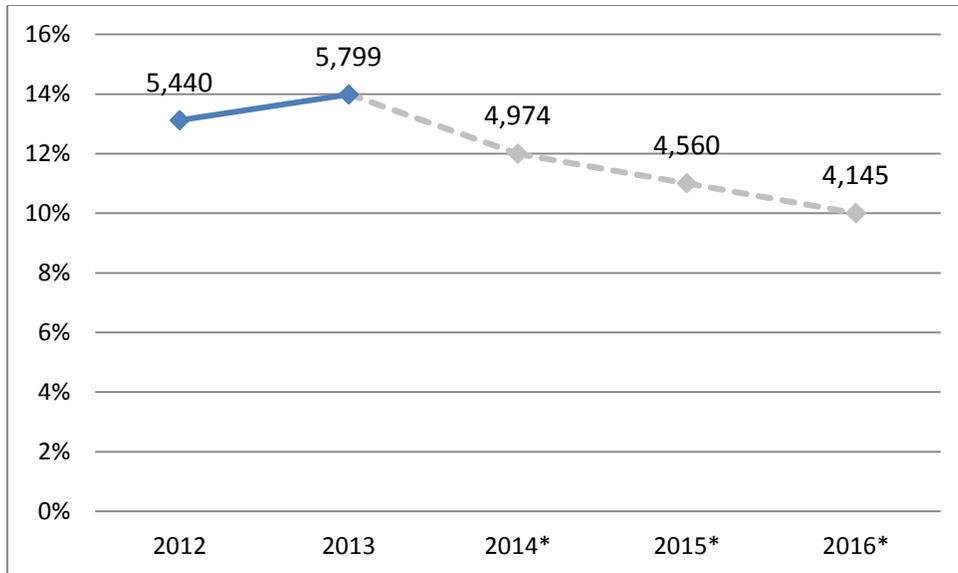
American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) 5-year estimates, author's calculation
Data: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/pums.html

This final figure shows idleness among those ages 18-24 using the ACS microdata, as this estimate is not available in the summary tables and this age range is relevant to Step Forward's workforce development goals. There are over 5,000 idle adults in their late teens and early 20s in the metro area (not including DeSoto). Directing several hundred toward school and work each year can reduce this idleness rate to below 10 percent by 2017.

Next Steps

The Step Forward initiative is actively engaged on a number of fronts. Action plans for Early Childhood, Early Literacy, Youth Civic Development, and Workforce Development have been developed. Carrying out these plans by leveraging community resources through collaborative action has already begun.

The project is always seeking community volunteers to assist and contribute to these important efforts. Your involvement can make a difference. Community-wide grass-roots involvement is in fact critical to achieving such population-level change. If you are committed to improving educational opportunities for our area's children, we would like to hear from you.

In the meantime, we will remain committed to sharing data indicators, and we will continue to engage in continuous evaluation of our efforts to improve the status of our community's children, from cradle to career.

Notes

i The Census numbers in this introduction are American Community Survey 5-year estimates for years 2009-2013 and ACS 1-year estimates for 2014.

ii http://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/regional/gdp_metro/gdp_metro_newsrelease.htm, CPI inflation adjusted by the author.

iii National and state poverty rates for comparison, 2009-2013: 13.5, 13.8, 14.3, 14.9, 15.4 (U.S.), and 18.4, 18.1, 18.4, 18.7, 19.1 (LA), from ACS 5-year estimates.

iv Mining includes: Oil and gas extraction; Mining, except oil and gas; and Support activities for mining. From MSA Business Patterns, available here: http://censtats.census.gov/cgi-bin/msanaic/msasect.pl.

v From 211 to 328 total mining establishments, according to MSA Business Patterns. For comparison, the number of total establishments in all industries increased 13 percent over the same period (from 8,809 to 9,957).

vi From 1,432 to 5,624 paid employees according to MSA Business Patterns. For comparison, the number of paid employees in all industries increased 7 percent over the same period (from 149,116 to 159,902).

vii From $97,688,066.71 annual payroll in 2005, according to MSA Business Patterns, CPI inflation adjusted by the author. For comparison, total annual payroll in the area increased by 11.4 percent over the same period (from 5.2 billion to 5.8 billion dollars).

viii A more reliable but less recent figure is 18.5 percent or 80,188 individuals below the poverty level, according to 2013 ACS 5-year estimates discussed further below.

ix According to the most recent 2013 ACS 5-year estimates, these figures are 27.7 percent or 29,921 (under 18 years) and 11 percent or 6,353 (65 years and over).

x Because the populations of Webster Parish alone and metro Shreveport-Bossier City (Caddo, Bossier, and DeSoto in 2012) are distributed differently along many characteristics discussed in this report, the addition of the new parish to the area in 2013 causes almost all numerical values to increase, while causing only some of the percent values to increase. Because of this, it is even possible that a percent value falls as a numeric value rises, but only between the years 2012 and 2013, because of the addition of the new parish.

xi In this report, data for whites includes only non-Hispanic whites. Census data on race is based on self-identification. More information on how the Census classifies race here:

http://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html, and Hispanic origin here: http://www.census.gov/topics/population/hispanic-origin/about.html.

xii Du Bois, W. E. B. 1903. The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches. Chicago: A. C. McClurg.

xiii Wilson, William Julius. 1978. The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions. University of Chicago Press.

xiv Management, business, science, and arts occupations include: management, business, and financial occupations (e.g. financial managers, education administrators, accountants, tax preparers); computer, engineering, and science occupations (e.g. information security analysts, database administrators, architects, petroleum engineers, chemists and materials scientists, economists); education, legal, community service, arts, and media occupations (e.g. social workers, clergy, lawyers, teachers, artists, musicians, writers); and healthcare practitioners and technical occupations (e.g. dentists, physicians, nurses, clinical laboratory technologists and technicians, paramedics). More information here: http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/code_lists/2014_ACS_Code_Lists.pdf.

xv ACS 1-year estimates for Black or African-American unemployment rates since the recession (2009-2014): 11.3, 14.3, 9.7, 13.2, 9.5, and 9.1 percent.

xvi Educational attainment categories include: Less than ninth grade; ninth to 12th grade, no diploma; Regular high school diploma; GED or alternative credential; Some college, no degree; Associate's degree; Bachelor's degree; and Graduate or professional degree. More information available here: http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/subject_definitions/2014_ACSSubjectDefinitions.pdf.

xvii Author's calculation using ACS 5-year estimates 36.8 percent (2009) and 41.9 percent (2013).

xviii Tocqueville, Alexis de. 1838. Democracy in America. London: Saunders and Otley.

xix American Community Survey general information available here: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/about.html.

xx More information available here: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/guidance/estimates.html.

xxi Center for Disease Control and Prevention vaccine information available here: http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/imz-basics.htm.

xxii Center for Disease Control and Prevention childhood obesity information available here: http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/defining.html.

xxiii Poverty definitions used by the Census Bureau including those used for the American Community Survey available here: https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/methods/definitions.html.

xxiv The income definition used in the ACS poverty calculation is "total income," which includes: wage and salary income; net self-employment income; interest, dividends, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); public assistance or welfare payments; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and all other income. Receipts from the following sources are not included as income: capital gains, money received from the sale of property (unless the recipient was engaged in the business of selling such property); the value of income "in kind" from food stamps, public housing subsidies, medical care, employer contributions for individuals, etc.; withdrawal of bank deposits; money borrowed; tax refunds; exchange of money between relatives living in the same household; gifts and lump-sum inheritances, insurance payments, and other types of lump-sum receipts: http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/subject_definitions/2014_ACSSubjectDefinitions.pdf.

xxv The sum of those under 6 years with income to poverty ratios: under .50 (8,161), .50 to .74 (3,175), and .75 to .99 (2,023). These estimates do carry margins of error (+-4,750 total). Such is the nature of sampling statistics. Using the margins of error, we find that the lower bound of the confidence interval for metro Shreveport-Bossier City child poverty in 2014 is 23.3 percent and the upper bound is 49.2 percent. The current estimate of 36.3 percent falls in the middle of this interval.

xxvi This is a rough estimate as not all children in poverty are in families of four.

xxvii Hart, Betty and Todd R. Risley. 1995. Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experiences of Young American Children. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

xxviii Anderson, Richard C., Paul T. Wilson and Linda G. Fielding. 1988. Growth in Reading and How Children Spend Their Time Outside of School. Reading Research Quarterly, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 285-303.

xxix According to the state's fall 2013 DIBELS report. A current list of research publications related to DIBELS assessments available here: https://dibels.org/papers/DIBELS_references_2013.pdf.

xxx http://www.parcconline.org/about

xxxi Because the denominator used by the state to construct this measure is "the number of students with consecutive promotion from kindergarten through fourth grade," and not total fourth graders, what this actually measures is the share of "on time" fourth graders who are "on level," and not the share of all fourth graders who are both "on time and on level."

xxxii Doll, Jonathan Jacob, Zohreh Eslami and Lynne Walters. 2013. Understanding Why Students Drop Out of High School, According to Their Own Reports: Are They Pushed or Pulled, or Do They Fall Out? A Comparative Analysis of Seven Nationally Representative Studies. SAGE Open, October-December 2013:1-15.

xxxiii Perhaps as much as half of all crimes nationwide go unreported, according to data from the National Crime Victimization Survey, administered by the Census for the Bureau of Justice Statistics annually since 1973: http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=dcdetail&iid=245.

xxxiv If calls for service about fights and arrests for "other assault" are similarly distributed across age categories, a back-of-the-envelope calculation finds: 2,289*.32=732 calls for age 17 and under fights, which likely involve two or more individuals each and end in an arrest less than half of the time (call it a wash?), arriving at 732 age 17 and under arrests for fighting, near to our 871 other assault arrests.

xxxv http://www.osfa.state.la.us/MainSitePDFs/QualifyingforTOPS_QnA.pdf.

xxxvi Athreya, Kartik B., Urvi Neelakantan and Jessie Romero. "Expanding the Scope of Workforce Development," Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond Economic Brief, available here: https://www.richmondfed.org/publications/research/economic_brief/2014/eb_14-05 (Views expressed in this article are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond or the Federal Reserve System).

xxxvii Public Use Microdata Sample information available here: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/pums.html.

xxxviii Public Use Microdata Area reference maps (Caddo PUMAs 22 00100, 22 00101 and Bossier and Webster PUMA 22 00200) available here: https://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/maps/2010puma/st22_la.html.

xxxix Unfortunately, PUMA geography does not perfectly correspond to all metropolitan area geographies. Metropolitan area geographies are county-based, while public use microdata area boundaries cut through highly populated counties or group together less-populated counties to achieve a

population threshold of 100,000 per area. For the purposes of our analysis many PUMAs in a county can be aggregated, as in the case of Caddo, but many counties in a PUMA cannot be disaggregated, as in the cases of Bossier and Webster; and DeSoto, Claiborne, Bienville, Lincoln, Red River, Sabine and Natchitoches (PUMA 22 00300).

xl American Community Survey employment status subject definitions available here: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html.

xli Some of these 9,000 plus students undoubtedly are under age 20 or live outside the metro area.

xlii Examples of job seeking activities from the American Community Survey subject definition of unemployed include: registering at a public or private unemployment office, meeting with prospective employers, investigating possibilities for starting a professional practice or opening a business, placing or answering advertisements, writing letters of application, and being in a union or professional register.

xliii Poverty thresholds by size of family and number of children for 1978-2014 available here: https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/.