

Recognizing and Celebrating Excellence

Each year, we recognize great teachers and leaders at our national conference through the NIET District Award of Excellence for Educator Effectiveness and the NIET Founder's Award. These surprise awards celebrate success in strengthening classroom teaching and student outcomes.

2022 NIET District Award of Excellence for Educator Effectiveness Winner

Ascension Public Schools

Louisiana

Ascension Public Schools' focus on educator excellence and student progress was celebrated with the awarding of the NIET District Award of Excellence for Educator Effectiveness and \$50,000. Ascension, which is located southeast of Baton Rouge, serves 24,000 students, 48% of whom are minority and 55% are categorized as economically disadvantaged. Ascension Parish expanded its partnership with NIET in 2011 to start a turnaround zone with eight schools. These schools fully implemented the TAP System, and because of the significant gains in student growth, the district expanded their partnership with NIET to all 31 schools in the district. Ascension has intentionally integrated NIET structures that accelerate educator impact, and scaled those systems across the district to elevate every school to ensure every child is taught by a highly effective teacher. In addition to continued student growth, Ascension has also grown more than 35 of their educators to become assistant principals and principals



by implementing a career teacher pipeline with support from NIET structures and best practices.

In 2021, students in Ascension scored among the best in state assessment tests, with the highest percentage of students scoring at the levels of mastery and advanced in all grades and subjects. The district also consistently outperformed the state in grades 3 through 8 ELA, math, and social studies in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2021. Additionally, the graduation rate for Ascension grew from 88.7% in 2019

to 91.1% in 2020, far surpassing the state graduation rate of 84%.

By implementing TAP structures and processes, Superintendent David Alexander says Ascension has created a supportive environment where educators want to work. "Teachers want to come to Ascension Public Schools because they believe they can grow as teachers," said Alexander. "They know that they're going to be in a collaborative environment and that they're going to get the support they need."