

# Case Study

## Jefferson Chamber Foundation Academy

JEFFERSON PARISH, LOUISIANA

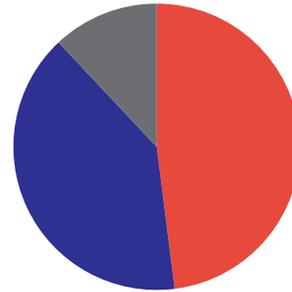
### Can a blended learning program help nontraditional students overcome obstacles and earn a high school diploma?

**Challenge:** A school wants to ensure that at-risk students graduate from high school prepared for college, career, and life.

**Solution:** A small year-round high school uses Edgenuity courses to help make graduation possible in three years, rather than the traditional four years of high school.

**Outcome:** The school helps students graduate in 2.75 years.

### School Demographics



■ African American	48%
■ Caucasian	40%
■ Hispanic	12%
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Low Income:	72%

## Background

Founded in 2010, the Jefferson Chamber Foundation Academy (JCFA) serves a small subset of the students of Jefferson Parish School District. Jefferson Parish is the second most populous parish in Louisiana, with the largest public school system in the state.

JCFA's two campuses, East Bank and West Bank, are designed to provide rigorous, innovative schooling to students who have struggled to succeed in the traditional high schools of the district (West Bank) and around the state (East Bank). Seventy-two percent of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. More than 230 of the district's most challenged students attend the school, which works to educate and graduate students at their own learning pace. Students interview for placement at the school, which runs from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., five days a week, and has 12 full-time faculty members. All coursework is online, with the exception of reading remediation and life skills.



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Millie Harris, Executive Director - Jefferson Chamber Foundation Academy

## Commitment to Rigorous Curriculum

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Students who attend JCFA have been at risk for most of their school years, either because of a lack of engagement with past curricula or because traditional educational models don't work for them. "Some struggle with the longer school day, some struggle with the formal teaching-learning relationship, some simply struggle," says Millie Harris, Executive Director of the Academy. "The goal of JCFA is to accommodate them however is necessary to ensure not simply their success, but their success within a rigorous curriculum."

Since its inception, the Academy has used Edgenuity as its online curriculum. The reasons for that choice are myriad, says Harris. "First, the interface is terrific—very user friendly and easy for the students to engage with. But really, it's about the standards and rigor of the Edgenuity curriculum. That's what we committed to when we started the school—a complete, rigorous curriculum. Edgenuity gives us that."

Success at JCFA is measured in traditional ways: credit attainment, matriculation, and graduation. The Louisiana state tests are 25 percent of the course grade. "These are kids who would likely not have graduated if they remained in a traditional high school," Harris says. "We're proud to have graduated more than 130 students. Our graduation rate is 60 percent—which is a big success for the school and the district." What's more, because of the way Edgenuity supports every student at his or her own learning pace, the average JCFA student graduates in 2.75 years. "Edgenuity facilitates that individualized instruction, giving teachers a good look at what the kids need, and keeping students moving at a pace that isn't sped up or slowed down by other students in the classroom."

JCFA couldn't succeed without its network of committed teachers, each of whom spends significant time with individual students. "These kids need individualized instruction and attention," says Harris. "They have multiple nonacademic barriers to success—jobs, children, some are caregivers to others in the family, some have been in the juvenile justice system. They need one person focusing on them and helping them. Edgenuity is managing the moment-to-moment work and leaving teachers free to do the hard work of teaching."