

# Student Drug Testing Program

## Jefferson Parish, Louisiana

Presented to the

Office of National Drug Control Policy  
Developing a Student Drug Testing Policy

San Diego, California

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by

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# Drug Cases in Jefferson Parish

- ◆ Annually handle approximately 6,000 felony cases
- ◆ 40% of the 6,000 felony cases are drug cases
- ◆ Approximately 64% of adult male arrestees tested positive for drug use
- ◆ 53% of juvenile male arrestees tested positive for drug use

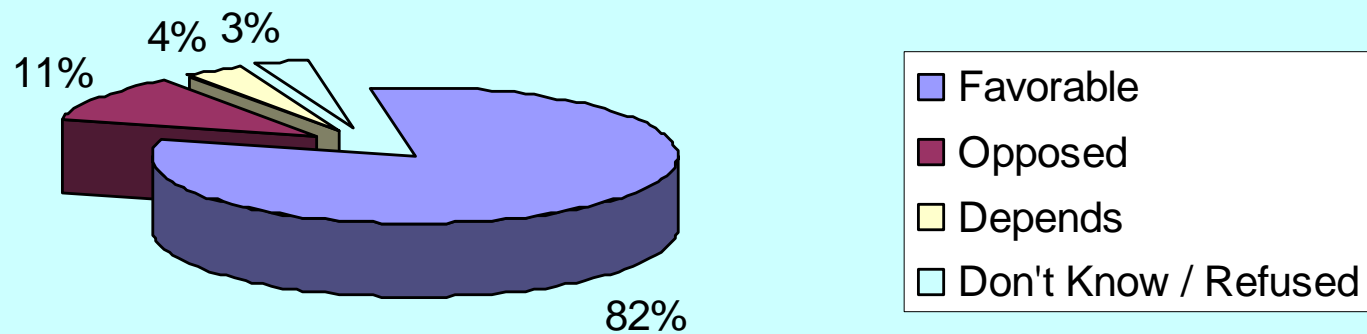
# Aggressive Prosecution

- ◆ Zero tolerance for drug offenses
- ◆ Target dealers and repeat offenders
- ◆ Established full-time Drug Prosecution Court
- ◆ Established Drug Probation Court

# Jefferson Parish Public Opinion Poll

(June 2000)

Do You Favor or Oppose Drug Testing of Jefferson Parish High School Students?



# Private Schools in Jefferson Parish

- ◆ In 2000, approached three private schools about adopting a drug testing program
- ◆ Obtained private funding to begin first year testing programs
- ◆ In second year, testing costs were included in tuition fees

# Expanding Drug Testing to Jefferson Parish Public Schools

(Impacting 24,000 students in 28 schools)

Discussions with:

- ◆ Business community
- ◆ Civic and community leaders
- ◆ School board members and administrators
- ◆ Parish government administrators

## Reason for Public Schools' Interest

- ◆ School system has a nationally recognized Safe and Drug Free Schools Program with comprehensive prevention strategies
- ◆ However, student surveys indicated significant levels of continued drug use

# 2002 'Communities That Care' Youth Survey (Jefferson Parish)

Average percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade students reporting the following lifetime behaviors:

◆	Drunk or high at school	15%
◆	Sold illegal drugs	10%
◆	Attended 'RAVE' party	12%
◆	Binge drinking (5 or more drinks per episode)	23%



# 2002 'Communities That Care' Youth Survey

(Jefferson Parish)

Average percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade students reporting lifetime use of the following drugs:

◆ Alcohol	69%
◆ Marijuana	34%
◆ Hallucinogens	8%
◆ Methamphetamines	5%
◆ Cocaine	3%

# Potential Funding Sources

- ◆ Federal grants:

  - U.S. Dept. of Health and Human  
Services, SAMHSA / CSAP

  - U.S. Dept. of Education

- ◆ Corporate sponsorship

- ◆ Private foundation monies

- ◆ Tuition fees in private schools

- ◆ Asset forfeiture funds

- ◆ Incorporate cost into public school budget

# Project Collaborators

- ◆ District Attorney

(grant administration / monthly advisory board)

- ◆ Jefferson Parish Public School System

(coaches, administrators, Safe and Drug Free staff, school board members and attorneys....)

- ◆ Prevention and Treatment Agencies

(Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Jeff. Parish Human Services Authority,  
Substance Abuse Services Alliance)

- ◆ University of New Orleans

(program evaluation)

# Mandatory Testing

- ◆ Seasonal testing of all high school athletes and students participating in strenuous extracurricular activities (cheerleaders, band, ROTC, etc.)
- ◆ Students who violate the district's substance abuse policy
- ◆ Expelled students who want to enter an alternative middle school (grades 6-8)
- ◆ 25% random follow-up testing

# Voluntary Testing

- ◆ All students in grades 6–12 (with consent of parent and student)

# Testing By Hair Analysis

- ◆ FDA approved technology
- ◆ Better screening tool - 90 day window of detection with minimum 90 day advanced notification & education provided
- ◆ Non-invasive
- ◆ Can't beat the test
- ◆ Successfully upheld in all court challenges

# Hair Analysis: Drug Panel

- ◆ Cocaine
- ◆ Opiates (heroin, morphine, oxycodone)
- ◆ Marijuana
- ◆ Amphetamines, MDMA, MDEA  
(Ecstasy, Eve, Intellect)
- ◆ PCP

# Students who Test Positive

- ◆ *Confidential interview* with student and parent by designated school staff member.
- ◆ Student receives a free substance abuse *assessment* from local agency.
- ◆ Student is referred for free *assistance/treatment* in the community.
- ◆ Student is not expelled or suspended from school. Temporarily excluded from sport or activity.
- ◆ Test results are strictly confidential and not part of student's academic record. No DA or law enforcement involvement.

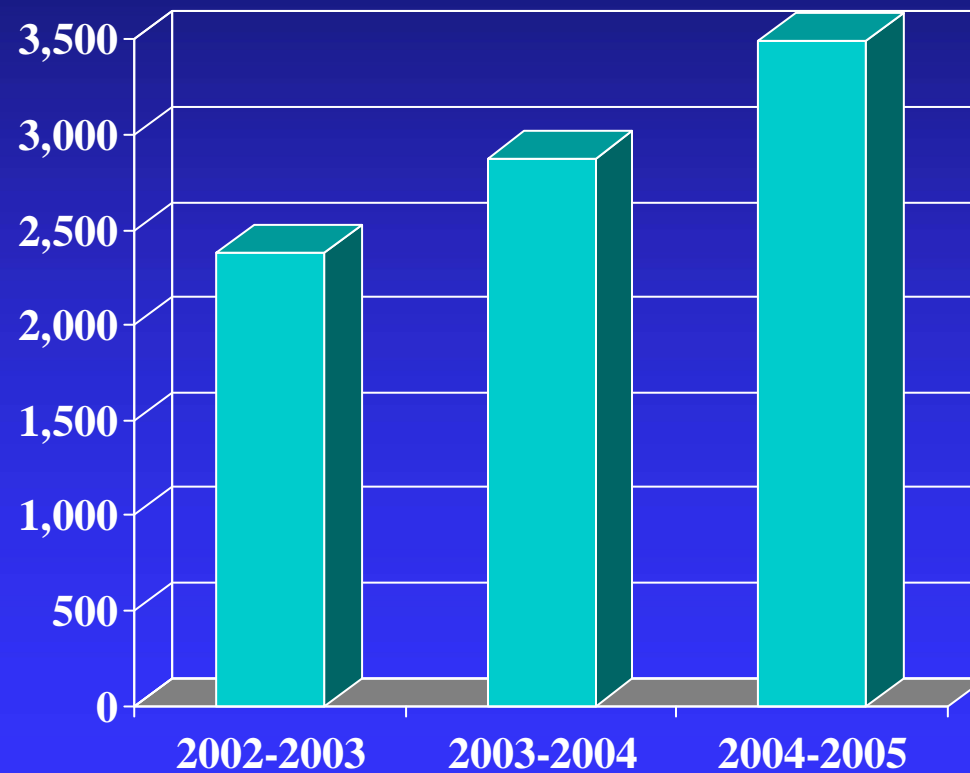
# Students' Rights to Contest Results

- ◆ If a student/family questions a positive test result, the report is reviewed by a Medical Review Officer (MRO) who makes the determination of validity.
- ◆ If the student/family still challenges the results, a second hair sample is collected and tested.
- ◆ If retest is positive, the family pays. If negative, the program pays.
- ◆ No successful retest challenges

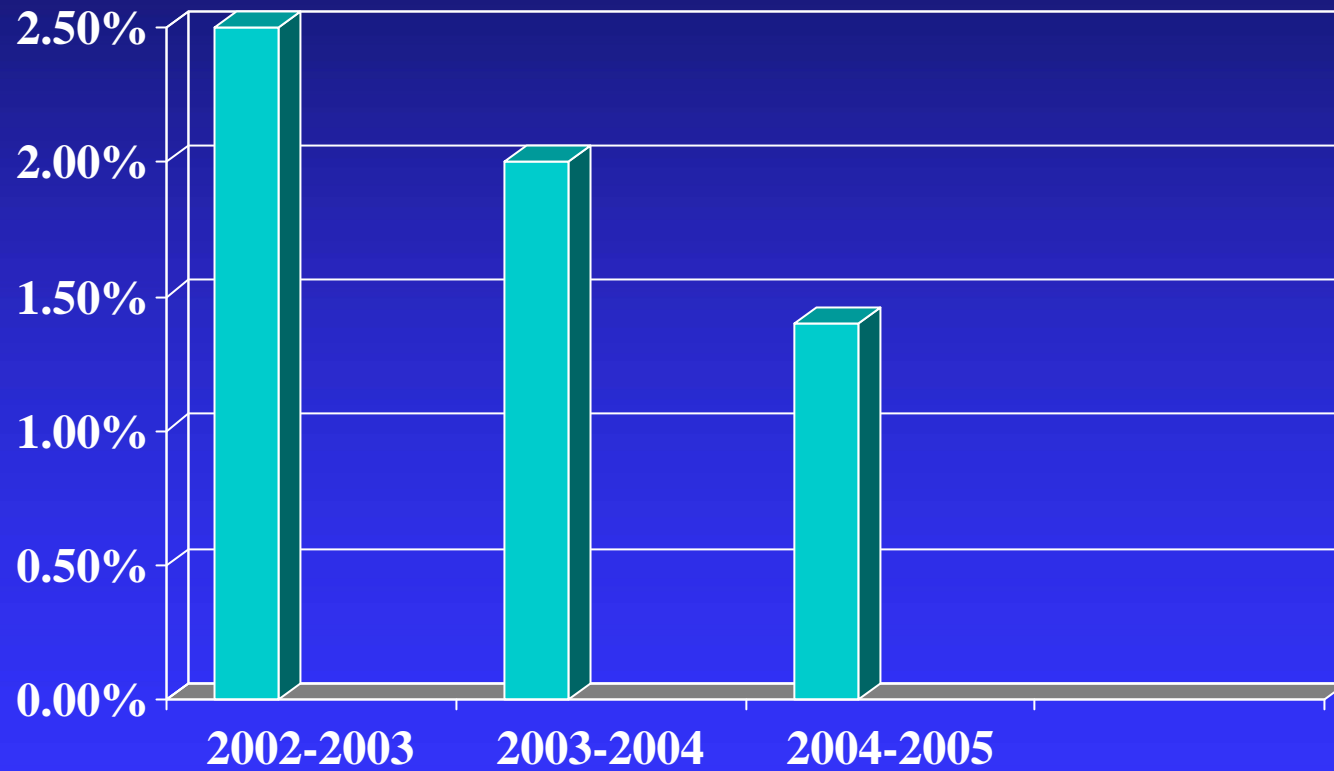


# MANDATORY TESTING DATA

## Number of Students Tested



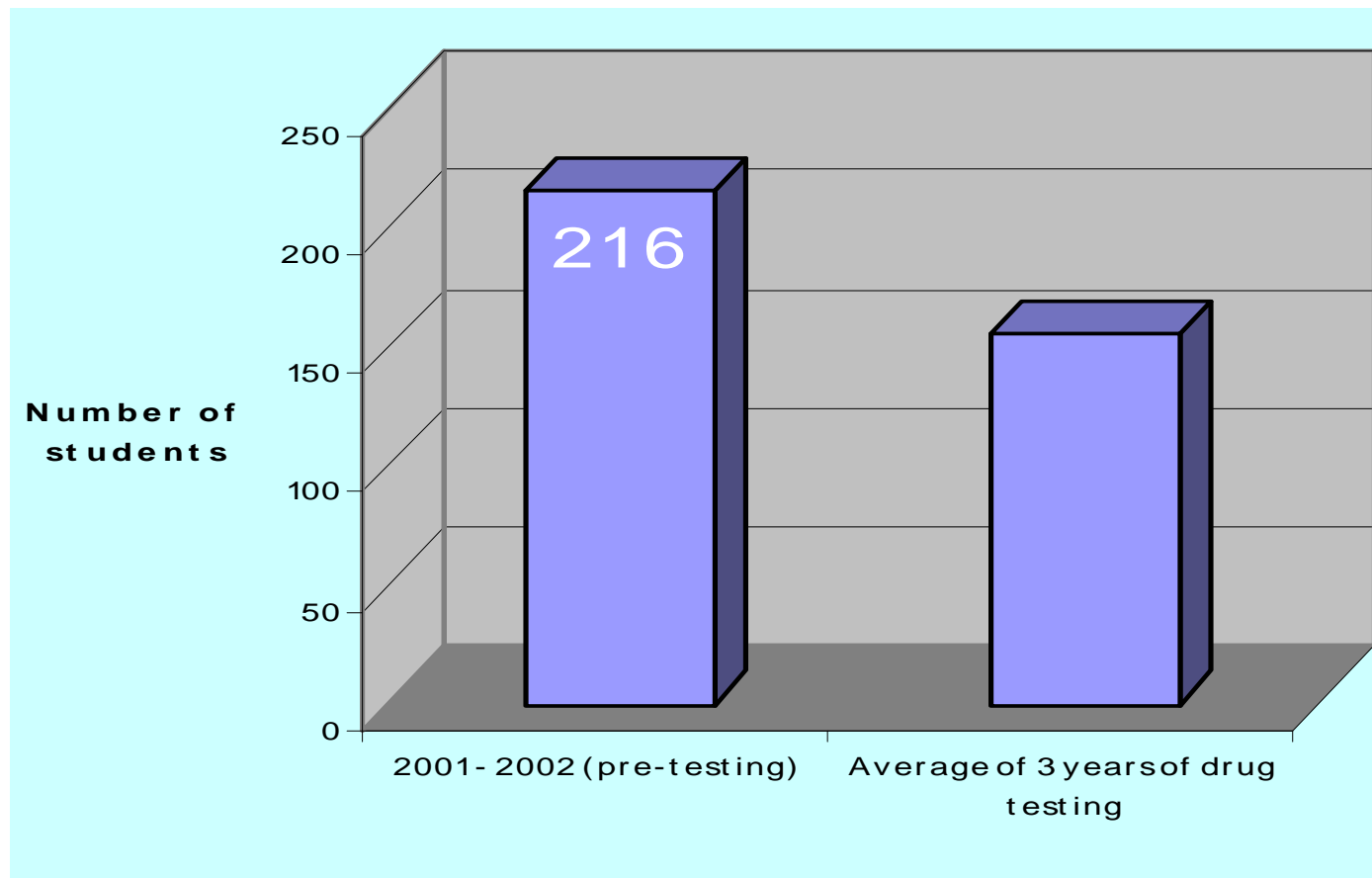
# POSITIVE RATES



# Impact of Student Drug Testing on Participation in Activities

- ◆ Increased participation in extracurricular activities
- ◆ Dispels argument that drug testing discourages participation in activities

# Substance Abuse Policy Violators



# Program Evaluation

- ◆ 96% of those interviewed (faculty and students) indicated that the program was beneficial to the school.
- ◆ 75% of the students reported discussions with parents about drugs were stimulated by program participation.
- ◆ 89% of the school personnel stated that they would support drug testing for **all** students.
- ◆ Public school system incorporated cost of drug testing into school budget.

# Caring Communities Youth Survey

- Average percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade students reporting the following lifetime behaviors:

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2004</u>
Drunk or high at school	15%	11%
Sold illegal drugs	10%	5%
Attended “RAVE” party	12%	9%
Binge drinking <small>(5 or more drinks per episode)</small>	23%	20%

# Caring Communities Youth Survey

- Average percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grade students reporting lifetime use of the following drugs:

	<u>2002</u>	<u>2004</u>
Alcohol	69%	65%
Marijuana	34%	23%
Hallucinogens	8%	3%
Methamphetamines/Ecstasy	5%	4%
Cocaine	3%	2%

# Caring Communities Youth Survey

## Regional Comparisons

Between 2002 and 2004, the average percentage of students reporting past **30-day use of marijuana** decreased more in Jefferson Parish than any other region in the state.



# Program Obstacles

- ◆ 1<sup>st</sup> year:  
124 students of 1,459 had insufficient hair – addressed by random urine screens
- 2<sup>nd</sup> year:  
Changed policy to “No hair, no play”
- ◆ Low number of volunteers

# Strategies to Increase Voluntary Testing

- ◆ Student Drug Free Cards
- ◆ Parent Advocates
- ◆ Media Program

# Student Drug Free Cards

- ◆ Discounts at local businesses
- ◆ Hiring preferences

# Parent Advocates

- ◆ One per school
- ◆ Promote student drug testing
- ◆ Network with other parents
- ◆ Paid small stipend through USDE grant

# Media Program

- ◆ Student Billboard Contest
- ◆ Public Service Announcements