

The New Orleans i3 Project: 2011 and 2012 i3 Award Eligibility and Selection Criteria

➤ Introduction

Since 2005, changes in the education system citywide have dramatically reduced the percentage of academically unacceptable schools in New Orleans from 62% to 17%. The proliferation of schools, managed by high-performing charter organizations, has played a significant role in this evolution. The remaining 17% comprise the city’s most persistently low-performing schools.

The goal of The New Orleans i3 Project “*Scaling the New Orleans Charter Restart Model*,” a joint effort between New Schools for New Orleans (NSNO) and the Recovery School District (RSD), is to create additional opportunity and choice in public education for all New Orleans children, families and communities. For the 2011/12 school year, i3 funds will be awarded to charter operators with leaders experienced in leading high-performing schools and charter management organizations (CMOs) with a proven track record of success to turn around the remaining, persistently low-performing public schools (traditional and charter). It is projected that by 2016, and as a result of the implementation of the i3 Grant, the percentage of academically unacceptable schools in New Orleans will be reduced to less than 5%.

The i3 grant specifies award amounts based on the number of schools a high-performing charter organization currently operates (see chart below). *All awards must be tied to the turnaround of an academically unacceptable school.* Each turnaround school must maintain an open enrollment policy for all students residing in Orleans Parish and may not expel students based on academic performance.

i3 Award Amounts - Based on Charter Operator Size/Type	
Type A - New Operators – Proven school leadership not currently operating a school	\$800,000-\$1 million
Type B - Existing Operators/CMOs-Currently operating fewer than 5 schools	\$800,000-\$1 million
Type C - Existing Operators/CMOs-Currently operating more than 5 schools	\$338,000

**See Investing in Innovation i3 Eligibility 2011 School Openings for full detail on award criteria.

➤ **i3 Award Selection Criteria and Process**

All i3 award applicants must participate in a rigorous and intense i3 award selection process. The process provides for evaluation and scoring based on both a written application and assessment via in-person interviews on the following criteria:

- School Design, Curriculum and Instruction, Leadership Experience and Competencies
- Organizational Structure, Staffing, Recruitment and Professional Development
- Community Engagement, Student Enrollment and Retention
- Governance, Operations and Finance

All i3 award applicants MUST also meet the absolute requirements outlined below. While these are necessary and currently represent a significant portion of the i3 Award Selection Criteria, they are not sufficient on their own as selection tools.

Absolute Requirements to be Eligible for i3 Awards	
Absolute Requirement 1 (Type A, B and C Awards)	Applicant must present a financially viable business model for school operations.
Absolute Requirement 2 (Type A, B and C Awards)	Applicant schools opened under i3 must serve student populations where at least 65% qualify for free or reduced lunch.
Absolute Requirement 3 (Type B and C Awards)	<p>Only operators that achieve a statistically significant effect size of .1 or higher in reading or math (with neither reading nor math being statistically significant and negative) are eligible to apply for an i3 award. For operators operating more than one school, ALL schools operated must achieve a statistically significant effect size of .1 or higher in reading or math (with neither reading nor math being statistically significant and negative) for the operator to be eligible to apply for an i3 award.</p> <p><i>** In order to conduct the effect size assessment, all current charter schools must a) have at least one full year of student testing data available under the current operator, and b) have students with at least two years of state testing data available.</i></p>

The effect size, an absolute requirement, makes up 50% of existing operators' (Type B and Type C) selection score and must be met prior to i3 award application. The remaining 50% for B and C types is based on points earned on the written application and interview portions of the i3 selection process. New operators' (Type A) selection scores are based 100% on points earned on the written application and interview portions of the i3 selection process.

➤ Effect Size Defined

Effect size measures a particular school's ability to impact student learning in reading or math. To determine which operators are eligible for i3 awards for 2011 school openings, NSNO and the RSD used three years of test data (2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10) to determine each school's effect size and each charter operator's eligibility to apply for i3 awards. Effect size is determined by evaluating an operator's ability to impact current students' achievement in reading and math vs. similar growth of a student in a traditional district-run school. This comparison is based on a scientific matching of students to more accurately identify the particular charter schools' contributions to student learning.

Because this assessment uses data over 3 years, effect size measures the amount of achievement growth over time (vs. the fixed snapshot of Student Performance Score used by the Louisiana Department of Education).

2011 Effect Size Ranges Defined	
.01 to .03	Students achieving at an <u>average level</u> for that subject vs. the district average.
.04 to .06	Students achieving at a <u>slightly above average level</u> for that subject vs. the district average.
.07 to .09	Students achieving at an <u>above average level</u> for that subject vs. the district average.
.1 to .14	Students achieving at a <u>well above average level</u> for that subject vs. the district average.
.15 to .19	Students achieving at a <u>high level</u> for that subject vs. the district average.
.2 and above	Students are achieving at a <u>superior level</u> for that subject vs. the district average.

***See Effect Size Evaluation Methodology for an understanding of "district average."*

➤ Effect Size – i3 Eligibility

To be eligible for an i3 award, applicants must demonstrate a well-above-average ability to impact student achievement. Only operators of schools that achieve the absolute requirement of effect size in the recent federally mandated evaluation – a statistically significant effect size of .1 or higher in reading or math (with neither reading nor math being statistically significant and negative) – are eligible to apply for an i3 award. For operators operating more than one school, *ALL* schools operated must achieve a statistically significant effect size of .1 or higher in reading or math (with neither reading nor math being statistically significant and negative) for the operator to be eligible to apply for an i3 award.

Effect size is not used by the RSD, Louisiana Department of Education or any other governing body for charter authorization or performance designation.

➤ Effect Size Evaluation Methodology

To prepare the list of 2011/2012 charter schools meeting the i3 absolute requirement of effect size, Stanford University's CREDO (Center for Research on Education Outcomes) obtained student test data (iLEAP, LEAP and GEE) for all New Orleans public school students attending grades 3-9 from the Louisiana Department of Education. These scores from 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 years were used to create two growth periods: 07/08 to 08/09 and 08/09 to 09/10. Only students who had scores for two consecutive years were included in the assessment.

To eliminate discrepancies between student backgrounds and equalize students across disparate school conditions, CREDO used student data to create virtual "exact match" students from traditional district-run schools for students in every charter school in New Orleans. Students from the traditional district-run schools were considered for the exact match population only if they currently attend a public district school that "feeds" the applicable charter school. (Meaning students have transferred from these traditional district-run schools to the charter being matched.) Exact match criteria included each student's achievement level at the start of the test period, student background, and other factors.

Once the match populations were generated for each charter school, the academic growth for the entire comparison population (all match populations) was averaged to create a "district average." The district average then served as the benchmark against which each New Orleans charter school was measured.

Each charter school's average academic growth scores for math and reading were compared over the two growth periods noted. The difference recorded between the charter school's average and the district average reflects each school's effect size for each subject. Scores are then given a statistical significance based on the number of students included in the comparison and their distribution of scores.

While this methodology comprehensively measures effect size for the purposes of determining i3 eligibility, it is limited in that it does not account for schools only serving students in grades K-3. Louisiana students take state tests starting in the 3rd grade. Without two full years' worth of test data, a school's effect size cannot be measured. *As a result, operators of current charter schools serving only grades K-3 or with only one tested grade are not considered eligible to apply for i3 awards because they are unable to meet the absolute requirement of effect size.*

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