



NEW SCHOOLS FOR NEW ORLEANS

Excellent public schools for every child in New Orleans.



EXCEPTIONAL HUMAN CAPITAL
HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS
+ REFORM-DRIVEN ENVIRONMENT

DRAMATIC GAINS IN ACHIEVEMENT

NEW SCHOOLS FOR NEW ORLEANS

(NSNO) is a nonprofit organization committed to our vision of **excellent public schools for every child in New Orleans.**

We work to achieve this vision by:

- Attracting and preparing talent to teach and lead in our city's public schools
- Launching and supporting open-enrollment public charter schools
- Advocating for accountable and sustainable high-quality public schools in New Orleans

New Orleans public schools are becoming a national model for urban education reform. NSNO is working alongside other key education organizations, governing institutions, and community groups to ensure that the transformation of New Orleans schools is powered by great people and resources.

our theory of change

EXCEPTIONAL HUMAN CAPITAL

HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

+

REFORM-DRIVEN ENVIRONMENT

DRAMATIC GAINS IN ACHIEVEMENT

EXCEPTIONAL HUMAN CAPITAL

Teachers: Fund teachNOLA, the New Orleans-focused initiative of the national nonprofit The New Teacher Project, to offer opportunities for talented individuals to teach in charter schools.

Leaders: Subsidize half of New Leaders for New Schools resident salaries for leaders placed in charter schools.

REFORM-DRIVEN ENVIRONMENT

Strategy: Identify needs and connect providers with practitioners to fill gaps in effective reform.

Outreach: Collaborate with aligned partners to promote excellent schools for all.

Advocacy: Subsidize policy work at the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools.



**NSNO
INVESTS IN
EXCELLENCE**

HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

Launch & Support: Incubated new schools with intense training year called the NSNO Founder Fellowship program. This included leadership, organizational, and operational training, as well as recruiting and hiring support, and continued support after start-up of leadership staff on culture and curriculum.

Data-Driven Instruction: Subsidize data-driven instructional practices from 1.) the Achievement Network, which aligns a school's scope and sequence, then provides training to adjust instruction based on the results of interim testing, and 2.) the STEP program, which assesses early literacy acquisition.

Governance: Support effective governance practices by offering resources and training, and funding the launch of The High Bar in New Orleans.

Expansion: Scale up operations of charter schools and management organizations adding grade levels, and charter management organizations opening additional campuses.

Leadership Recruitment: Support charter boards seeking new school leadership or management.

Closure: Support boards who make the difficult decision to shut down underperforming charter schools.

“New Orleans is making school reform history, and NSNO has been a tremendous ally in the struggle to give every child in the city a top-quality education.”

PAUL G. VALLAS
SUPERINTENDENT
RECOVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

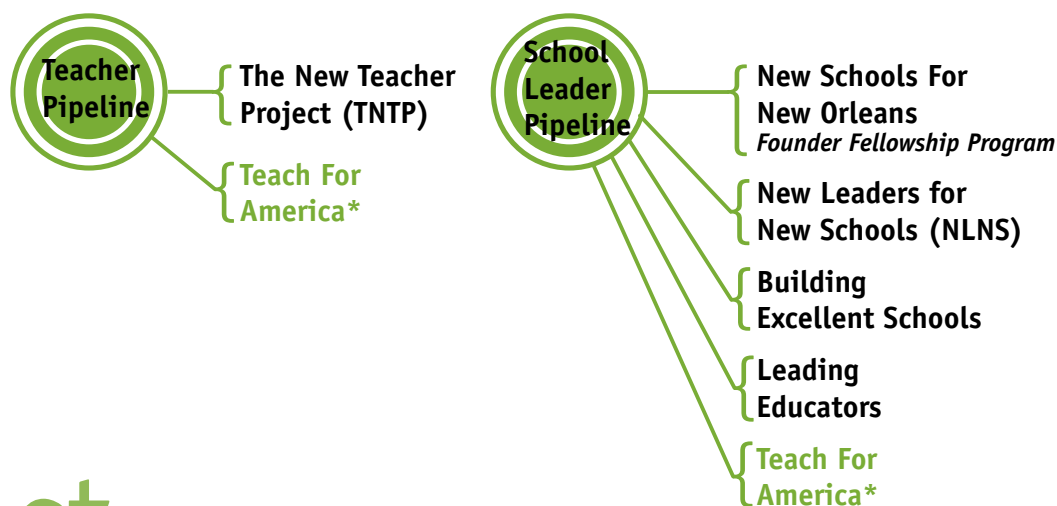


HUMAN CAPITAL FLOWING TO NEW ORLEANS

Excellent teachers and school leaders drive student achievement. NSNO's role is to recruit and nurture that human capital in schools that are focused on excellence.

HUMAN CAPITAL drives school reform, and NSNO has put a priority on identifying, recruiting and training some of America's brightest educators. **NSNO is ensuring a critical mass of high-quality teachers and school leaders for public schools in New Orleans through:**

- **direct funding of The New Teacher Project (Tntp) to run teachNOLA.** Tntp has worked with more than 200 school districts and is a nationally-recognized authority on new teacher recruitment and hiring
- **subsidize salaries of New Leaders for New Schools (NLNS) residents who teach in charters.** NLNS aims to ensure high academic achievement by training outstanding leaders and supporting the performance of the urban public schools they lead at scale.
- **collaborating with strategic allies, including Building Excellent Schools and Teach For America.** These organizations work to achieve excellent urban charter schools by cultivating the talents of the nation's most promising future teachers and leaders.
- **support the expansion of Leading Educators** to provide training for middle level school leadership positions.



*NSNO partners with but does not fund Teach For America.

our impact

TeachNOLA, run by Tntp, attracted more than **2,000** applications and placed **85** teachers in 2009. A total of **420 teachNOLA teachers have been placed in New Orleans schools** since 2006. Currently, **190** teachNOLA teachers serve in charters and **65** are in traditional schools. For the 2009-2010 school year, **91%** of New Orleans public schools have a teachNOLA teacher on staff.

NLNS's first cohort of 7 started in June 2007 and has grown to a community of **23 New Leaders currently serving some 8,000 students** in Greater New Orleans. NLNS is providing needed leadership in **12** schools in New Orleans, comprising 6 traditional schools and 6 charter schools. Two of these schools, Arthur Ashe Charter School and Sylvania F. Williams School, demonstrated **breakthrough gains** in proficiency scores last year.

NSNO's Founder Fellowship program brought **12 school leaders to New Orleans** since our inception in 2006.



LINDSAY ENTERS

TEACHER

LAFAYETTE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

NSNO INVESTMENT AREA:

EXCEPTIONAL HUMAN CAPITAL

• TEACHNOLA

A teacher drawn to reform

Milwaukee native Lindsay Enters fell under New Orleans' spell when she signed on for post-Katrina rebuilding work with AmeriCorps. Deciding to stay, she connected with **teachNOLA, the NSNO-supported recruiting and training initiative of The New Teacher Project (TNTP)**. After completing an intensive training, Enters entered the classroom in the fall of 2007 as a second-grade teacher. Her teachNOLA advisor, Ana Menezes, proved to be a powerful role model for Enters, who graduated from the University of Wisconsin in social work and Afro-American studies. "She helped me envision what a great teacher could be, from how to set up the classroom to the language of teaching," says Enters.

Enters threw herself into teaching. Her goal: to create "critical thinkers who read fluently, enjoy learning and are inspired." She challenged her students to read 20,000 pages for the year; when they easily reached that goal, Enters realized she underestimated what high expectations can accomplish. Her experience as a teachNOLA Fellow deeply shaped Enters' attitude toward teaching—now, she says, "I feel I can walk into any classroom and produce results."

In August 2009, Enters moved to Lafayette Academy, taking charge of a first-grade class. Impressed by the charter school's strong leadership, Enters finds herself surrounded by people able and willing to help her strengthen her craft. "I change every day," she says of her teaching style. "I'm constantly trying to improve." What hasn't changed is her commitment to teaching. "I want to be teaching for a long time, and I want to be teaching here in New Orleans."



AQUA STOVALL

PRINCIPAL

ARTHUR ASHE CHARTER SCHOOL

NSNO INVESTMENT AREA:

EXCEPTIONAL HUMAN CAPITAL

- NEW LEADERS FOR NEW SCHOOLS
- FIRSTLINE NETWORK
- ACHIEVEMENT NETWORK

A results-focused principal

Aqua Stovall knew New Orleans would be a challenge — which is exactly why she asked to be placed here as part of **NSNO Human Capital partner New Leaders for New Schools' principal training program**. Stovall completed a residency as assistant principal of the early elementary program at KIPP McDonogh 15. Hands-on experience prepared her to take the reins in 2008 as principal at Arthur Ashe Charter School, a member of the FirstLine Network. FirstLine is a charter management organization with proven success in student achievement, whose current expansion is being **funded by NSNO**.

Stovall's initial priority was to infuse Ashe with a sense of community spirit. That meant building a safe and orderly learning environment. But it also meant challenging students to believe that college could and should be in their plans. To ensure this wasn't an empty aspiration, Ashe developed a data-driven intervention program for targeted assistance. In 2009, **NSNO began incubating the Achievement Network (ANet)** in New Orleans, providing Stovall with tools to close gaps in learning, along with support she can tap for ideas on how best to help a struggling student.

She credits her teachers with tireless work and notes with gratitude that they regularly give up their own time to help students catch up. The extra effort has paid off handsomely. At the end of Stovall's first year, **Ashe recorded the city's sharpest improvement on the state's accountability tests, with an overall increase of 28%**. The numbers matter less to Stovall than the fundamental shift in the students' view of themselves. "They see the academic gains from last year and their mindsets have changed," says Stovall. "They really believe they will go to college."


“Public school performance in Louisiana is improving, and high-quality charter schools have undoubtedly contributed to our progress. NSNO is a key player in setting and raising the bar for excellence.”

PAUL PASTOREK
SUPERINTENDENT
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS CAN CLOSE THE GAP

Public schools that are autonomous, highly accountable and provide educational options for all families are critical components to academic excellence. NSNO's role is to incubate and support schools that are aligned with our vision of excellence for all.



HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS In the 2009-2010 school year there are 88 public schools open in New Orleans, including 37 traditional schools and 51 charter schools. **The majority of public school students, 61 percent, are enrolled in charters.** NSNO is proud to have provided support to over **90 percent** of New Orleans charter schools with **proven best practices** that will enhance student performance and **help create high-performing schools citywide.**

our impact

96% of charter school boards in New Orleans have accessed **NSNO's GOVERNANCE resources**

NSNO has recruited and trained **more than 250 individuals to serve on charter school boards.** Charter boards are integral to academic excellence, and we continue to build capacity for boards through NSNO-funded governance consultants. We are currently incubating The High Bar, who will provide expert guidance **based on proven best practices** of the highest-functioning charter boards in the country.

54% of charter schools in New Orleans have accessed **NSNO's EXPANSION resources**

NSNO continues to build capacity to proven operators by supporting the launch of ReNEW CMO and the expansion of FirstLine Network, which will create **4 new results-focused charter schools for the 2010-2011 school year.** NSNO also provides **funding for the expansion into high school of 3 schools**—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School, New Orleans College Preparatory Charter School, and Sophie B. Wright Charter School.

36% of charter schools in New Orleans have accessed **NSNO's DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTION resources**

NSNO provides **funding for schools** to utilize the services of nonprofit **Achievement Network** and the University of Chicago's **STEP program**, which provide schools with data-driven assessment of student performance. Utilizing data to drive curriculum is a best practice that national studies have connected to **significant growth in test scores.**

18% of charter schools in New Orleans have accessed **NSNO's LAUNCH AND SUPPORT resources**

NSNO is proud to have offered our Founder Fellowship program, which **helped launch 10 charter schools** that are relentlessly working to close the achievement gap and that will ultimately serve **nearly 10% of all public school students in New Orleans.** NSNO's direct support team, drawing on practices developed in the front ranks of the reform movement, provides **cutting-edge guidance** in areas ranging from school operations to curriculum and culture development.

6% of charter schools in New Orleans have accessed **NSNO's LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT resources**

NSNO offers assistance to schools whose boards decide to transition into new school leadership or management.



SCI ACADEMY

PRINCIPAL/FOUNDER

BEN MARCOVITZ

NSNO INVESTMENT AREA:
HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

- DIRECT SCHOOL SUPPORT
- CHARTER BOARD GOVERNANCE
- NSNO FOUNDER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

A school on the rise

Ben Marcovitz topped off his master's degree from Harvard by entering **NSNO's year-long Founder Fellowship program** for new school leaders. He then set his sights on one of the most demanding tasks imaginable: to take high schoolers who are five, even six, years behind and ready them for college in four years. "The prevalent belief is that it's easier to help kids when they're younger," Marcovitz says. "I think it's a failure of adults to believe that older kids can't turn their education around."

As part of **NSNO's intense incubation year**, Marcovitz traveled the nation, steeping himself in the practices of schooling's best and brightest. The result: New Orleans Charter Science and Math Academy — a.k.a. Sci Academy — where he is principal and school founder.

Even though Marcovitz was an experienced educator, having taught in New Orleans and Boston public schools, he felt he was "doing the semi-impossible" as he welcomed Sci Academy's inaugural ninth-graders in 2008-9. "Culturally, the school got off to a solid start," says Marcovitz, "but the instructional programs weren't strong enough. We went to work on that and became the school that we are now." In a spectacular year-end finish, Sci Academy scored second in math and tops in English among the 70 New Orleans schools in the Recovery School District. And below-level readers improved at an average of three to four grade levels in six months.

Now in its second year, Marcovitz notes that the gap to the highest-performing schools remains wide. Catching up is a motivating challenge: "I think that we are narrowly proving that students in an open-enrollment setting in New Orleans can perform as high or higher than their peers in selective schools."



ALLEN SQUARE

BOARD MEMBER

PRIDE COLLEGE PREP

NSNO INVESTMENT AREA:
HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

- DIRECT SCHOOL SUPPORT
- STEP PROGRAM
- CHARTER BOARD GOVERNANCE
- NSNO FOUNDER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

A dedicated citizen

Business consultant Allen Square was living in Dallas when he got wind of the ambitious school reform effort under way in his native New Orleans.

A product of New Orleans public schools, Square had gone on to Tulane University, followed by the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, and achieved success as an electrical engineer and business executive. He began digging into school reform issues, liked what he saw, and after moving back to the city in 2008, decided to get directly involved. He made himself available as a potential charter school board member by joining the **NSNO Board Bank**. New school founder Michael Richard inspired Square to work with his charter school, Pride College Prep.

There's satisfaction in bringing business expertise to bear on school governance. Equally important to Square is the way boards can impact student achievement: "We try our best to remove all obstacles so that the real work can occur inside the school."

Square's enthusiasm for chartering does not blind him to the challenges ahead, among them financial sustainability, making sure the charter system is accessible to all students, and continuing to build more diversified boards and faculties.

"That's why I'm involved," said Square, who estimates that as board chair, he devotes 30 percent of his time to Pride College Prep. Chartering, in Square's view, has allowed communities to look across color lines as they attack the achievement gap. And the influx of a diversified talent pool is, he believes, "terrific for our city."

REFORM-DRIVEN ENVIRONMENT

NSNO and our partners have helped achieve the most **reform-friendly consensus** of any city in the nation; in addition to this advocacy work, NSNO strategically anticipated crucial missing pieces needed for effective reform, and successfully played a **connecting role** to bring education service providers and practitioners together to advance school performance.

To address the need for better curriculum tools, NSNO took the role of...

INTERMEDIARY by reaching out to and subsidizing the cost of Achievement Network, data-driven strategy experts.

ACHIEVEMENT NETWORK, now established in New Orleans serving **10 schools citywide**, plans to expand to 18 schools in 2010-2011 school year.

To fill the communication gap between schools and families, NSNO took the role of...

INCUBATOR by collaborating with partners to fund the start-up Parent Organizing Network.

PARENT ORGANIZING NETWORK, now a significant source of information for all public school families, has distributed **over 50,000 Parents' Guide to Public Schools** since 2007.

To better serve Special Ed students, NSNO took the role of...

CONNECTOR by providing seed funds for a skilled national provider with proven results to open a New Orleans office.

SPECIAL ED COOPERATIVE, now an indispensable resource of the Louisiana Association of Public Charter Schools, is in its second year **providing expert guidance** to New Orleans charters.

our impact

At the district level, we have fought successfully for a performance-driven, decentralized system with a greater proportion of charters than any in the nation.

At the state level, we have helped to adjust the charter authorization process for a greater focus on quality, and we've helped ensure New Orleans' schools eligibility for additional financial resources.

Nationally, we have championed the city's public school reform movement in media including *Time* magazine, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and at conferences and presentations in such places as Harvard Business School and NewSchools Venture Fund.

NSNO's advocacy efforts have played a significant role in aligning policy makers around an aggressive reform agenda. We have also helped to create an environment for proven education providers to connect their effective strategies and resources to schools focused on excellence. Our challenge is to **build on this reform-aligned environment to close performance gaps for good.**



URIAH SMITH

STUDENT, MAYS PREP

NSNO INVESTMENT AREA:
REFORM-DRIVEN ENVIRONMENT

- ADVOCACY
- DIRECT SCHOOL SUPPORT
- STEP PROGRAM
- NEW LEADERS FOR NEW SCHOOLS
- FOUNDER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

A school and student transformed

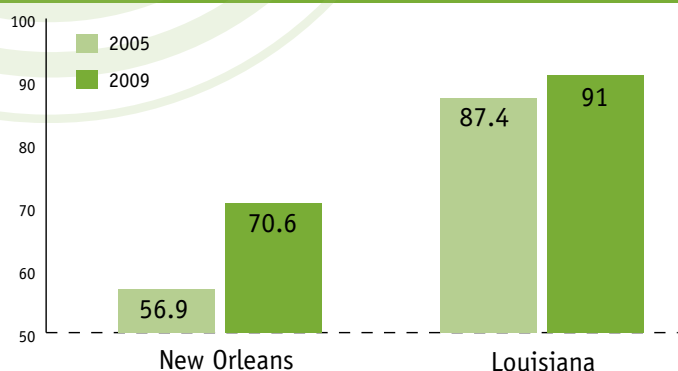
With behavior problems keeping her from excelling in kindergarten, a little girl named Uriah Smith was struggling — but then so was her school. It had fallen below state minimums and by law had to be reorganized. To the rescue: Benjamin E. Mays Prep, **one of four NSNO-incubated charter schools** that in the past year have begun pioneering a new paradigm for reform through gradual transformation. Instead of taking over the entire failed school, Mays Prep absorbed the pre-kindergarten through second grades — Uriah's included. The remaining grades will be absorbed one at a time over the next six years.

Mays Prep is not only transforming a school, it has transformed Uriah's schooling experience, says her mother, Kimberly Calvey. She's being exposed to a culture of heightened expectations. "Uriah has a whole team that supports her and our family," says Ms. Calvey, who gets regular phone calls and notes from teachers and administrators. She attributes her daughter's improved performance in part to Mays Prep's more structured school day. Another change for Ms. Calvey is that she feels welcome at the charter school and drops by regularly for faculty conferences. The news about Uriah is encouraging. "She's making great progress," says **New Leaders for New Schools-trained Principal Duke Bradley**, whose vision is *every student, college-bound*.

The high expectations don't end at the schoolhouse door. "We've taken a tip from the school," Ms. Calvey reports. "We have a responsibility chart at home and Uriah and her brothers and sisters get stickers for finishing their homework and doing their chores." Uriah still has her tough days, Ms. Calvey concedes, but there's been a big change: "She's excited about school now."

DRAMATIC GAINS IN ACHIEVEMENT School performance in New Orleans has improved considerably since NSNO was founded. Due to dramatic gains in achievement, the number of failing schools in New Orleans has been significantly reduced. In 2005, only 37% of Orleans Parish schools were performing at the state's minimum level of academic acceptability. **Today that number is 58% - an increase of 21 percentage points.**

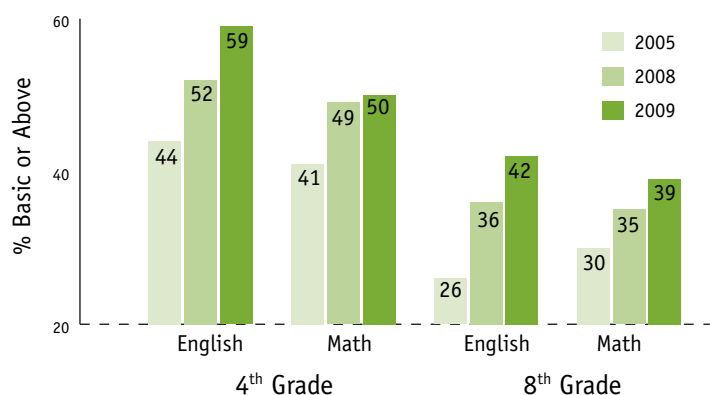
DISTRICT PERFORMANCE SCORES



SINCE 2005, DISTRICT SCORES HAVE TRIPLED THE STATE'S OVERALL GROWTH

New Orleans is the most improved area in the state, and our rate of progress is significantly higher than other school districts in the state. From 2005 to 2009, the state's average only increased by 3.6 percentage points, while the District Performance Score for **New Orleans schools more than tripled the state's growth**, going from 56.9 in 2005 to 70.6 in 2009, an increase of 13.7 points.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH AND MATH

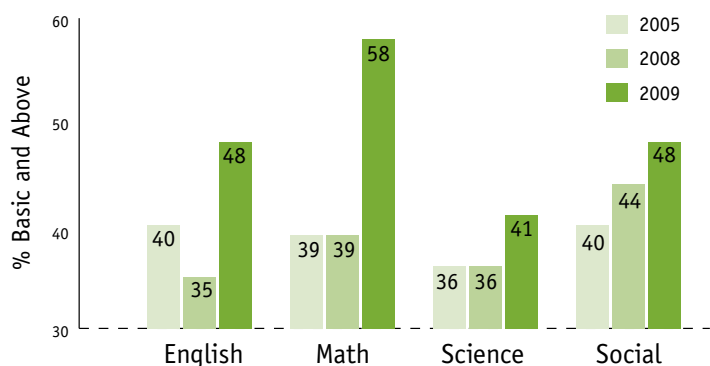


MATH AND ENGLISH SCORES SHOWED SIGNIFICANT GAINS IN THE PAST YEAR

For 4th graders, while the state gained only 3 percentage points in English, and actually lost 2 points in Math, **New Orleans improved 7 percentage points in English and improved 1 percentage point in Math.** For 8th graders, the results are even more inspiring: before the state took over the schools, New Orleans grew a mere 3 percentage points; in the 2008-2009 school year, we grew 6 percentage points.

GRADUATION EXIT EXAMS

(10th-11th Grades, first time test takers)



89% OF NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC SCHOOL SENIORS GRADUATED IN 2009, COMPARED TO 79% PRE-KATRINA

From 2008 to 2009, New Orleans GEE scores grew more than the state in all subjects, especially in English, where the state scores increased by 4 percentage points while New Orleans scores increased by 13 points; and in Math, where the state scores increased by 8 points while **New Orleans scores increased by an amazing 19 percentage points.**

NSNO will continue to work collaboratively with partners throughout New Orleans to ensure that our city's schools continue this trajectory toward excellence, radically altering the life outcomes for thousands of underserved children, and forever changing urban education in America.

THOUGH GREAT STRIDES HAVE BEEN MADE,

we still have a long way to go—more than one in three schools is still failing, more than half of our 8th graders are not performing on grade level, and too many 9th graders will not graduate from high school.

We must remain relentless in our commitment to quality schools for all students. With test scores increasing, it is our duty as citizens of New Orleans to continue this great momentum and push for much higher levels of success.

The work of New Schools for New Orleans is rooted in national best practices and consistent reevaluation of the education landscape in New Orleans. As the landscape evolves, our services adapt to more deeply support performance gap-closing schools, but our core ideology remains strong:

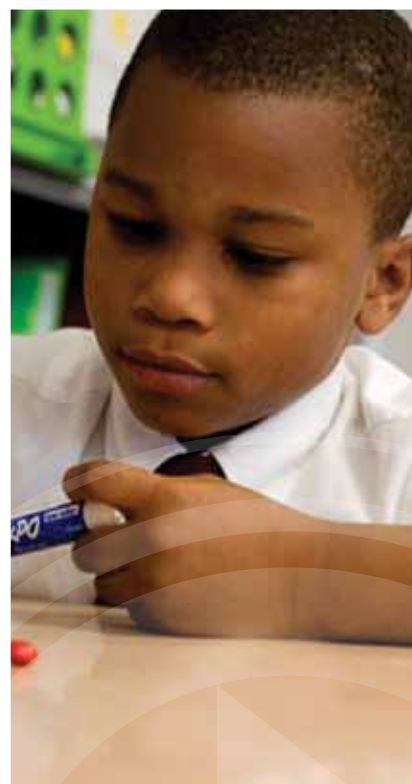
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HIGH-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

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REFORM-DRIVEN ENVIRONMENT

DRAMATIC GAINS IN ACHIEVEMENT



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newschoolsforneworleans.org

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ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY

All of the photos in this report were taken at the organizations supported by NSNO. All students depicted are directly served by these organizations, and all photos were taken with their permission. Special thanks to all those who helped to make this possible.

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