



NSNO Community Newsletter

We are excited to send you all the 2nd Edition of New Schools for New Orleans's Community Newsletter! We have revamped our website to make more resources available to you and we are pleased to announce that a coalition of statewide education advocates filed a legislative package on March 31st!

Please feel free to respond to me directly with your thoughts and questions at renita@nsno.org. If you received this newsletter as a forward and would like to be added to the mailing list please click [here](#).

NOT TOO LATE TO APPLY FOR SCHOOL: An Update on the Common Application Process

Wednesday, March 19th, marked the deadline for submission of the Common Application. On Monday, March 31st, all schools that received applications that outnumbered available seats held school lotteries. And **RIGHT NOW**—April 1st through April 4th—schools are notifying parents of acceptances or places on waitlists.

If you are a local community member and have applied for admission to a public school in New Orleans, you **must enroll** your student(s) in **one, and only one**, school **by April 11th**. If you have not yet applied for admission to public school in New Orleans **it is not too late**. Simply contact the school of your choice and ask how to apply. To learn more about public schools in New Orleans, and to read helpful hints about how to select the right school for your child, please visit www.nolaparentsguide.org.

Important Legislation Filed

With the support of Representatives Don Trahan and Jim Tucker and Senators Ann Duplessis and Ben Nevers, a coalition of education advocates across the state have submitted proposed legislation to support our collective public education reform work. The pending legislation seeks to:

- streamline funding for charter schools;
- buttress high accountability standards for all charter schools;
- create a consistent oversight process for all BESE-authorized charters; and,
- provide flexibility for teachers and other district employees to choose their most preferred working environment.

The complete text of all filed bills can be found at www.legis.state.la.us. Follow the link to "2008 Regular Session Information" where you can type the bill number, committee or author. If you are interested in gaining a more in-depth understanding of these bills, please e-mail renita@nsno.org.

Recently filed bills related to our work:

- HB 321, 349, 463, 626, 655, 718, 813, 962, 1054
- SB 127, 169, 266, 632

BESE Requests Feedback

The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) has published a document, entitled the "Charter Board Bulletin". The Bulletin is a critical document for all involved in charter school work to read, as it reiterates all the responsibilities and regulations currently imposed by law on all Louisiana charter schools.

Moreover, the Bulletin educates the **public at large** about :

- the oversight responsibilities of BESE;
- the charter school application and evaluation processes;
- charter school governance structures and responsibilities; and,
- charter school funding, fiscal responsibilities, enrollment and staffing.

BESE is requesting public feedback on this document from any interested person. If inclined, please submit written comment to Nina Ford, State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, P.O. Box 94064, Capitol Station, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064 **by 4:30PM on May 9, 2008**.

Local News Outlets Discuss Charter School Efforts in Student Recruitment, Paul Vallas' Plan for High School Redesign in RSD Schools, and the State's Evaluation of New Orleans Charter Schools

Times Picayune Sarah Carr, *Signs of Change*

"On neutral grounds and billboards, with music and handshakes, charter schools spread the word about their services for New Orleans children".

Click here for the full article: <http://www.nola.com/education/t-p/index.ssf?/base/news-4/1205560224234150.xml&coll=1>

Times Picayune Sarah Carr, *Specialty High Schools in the Works*:

"New Orleans' largest school district plans to reshape its high schools, partly by introducing specialty programs in areas such as public safety or health at each of the schools".

Click here for the full article: <http://www.nola.com/education/t-p/index.ssf?/base/news-4/1205991621247670.xml&coll=1>

The Louisiana Weekly, Dr. Andre M. Perry, *A Timely Return?*

Local education expert, Dr. Andre Perry, discusses the upcoming evaluation of some New Orleans charter schools by the state authorizer.

Click here for the full article: http://www.louisianaweekly.com/weekly/news/articlegate_pi230080324k

Again, thank you for your continued interest in transforming public education in New Orleans. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or comments.

Renita Thukral
Advocacy and Policy Director
(504) 274-3644
renita@nsno.org

The mission of New Schools for New Orleans is to achieve excellent public schools for every child in New Orleans by attracting and preparing talent to teach and lead, launching and supporting open-enrollment public charter schools, and advocating for accountable and sustainable high-quality public schools.

To ensure that you continue to receive emails from us, add renita@nsno.org to your address book today.

To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#).

Questions or comments? E-mail us at renita@nsno.org or call 504-274-3644

Newsletter Spotlight

- **Common Application Process—Update**
- **Legislation Filed**
- **BESE Requests Feedback**
- **Recent Press**
- **New Website—New Schools for New Orleans**

RELATED LINKS

- [New Schools for New Orleans](#)
- [New Orleans Parents Guide to Public Schools](#)
- [Louisiana State Legislature](#)
- [Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education](#)
- [Freakonomics Blog](#)
- [Recovery School District](#)
- [Orleans Parish School Board](#)

NEW NSNO WEBSITE

New Schools for New Orleans Launches NEW Website

New Schools for New Orleans invites you to view our newly revamped website at www.nowschoolsforneworleans.org

Check out the Resources page, for information that anyone interested in public education can access. An *Operations Guidebook* and *Legal Handbook* can be found here. These guides are great resources for charter school leaders and board members.

Don't forget to visit the event calendar to learn about upcoming application deadlines for our partner programs, citywide charter board trainings, and more!

RECENT PRESS

The New York Times' Freakonomics Blog tackles a tough question: How Can the Achievement Gap Be Closed?

New York Times Stephen J. Dubner, *How Can the Achievement Gap Be Closed?*

"The black-white gap in U.S. education is an issue that continues to occupy the efforts of a great many scholars." Closing the achievement gap—a social justice imperative—is clearly a local issue as well as a national one. This article gathers a group of people "with wisdom and experience in this area" to discuss best methods for closing the achievement gap.

Click here for the full article: <http://freakonomics.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/03/18/how-can-the-achievement-gap-be-closed-a-freakonomics-quizum/>