



2011 Regular Session  
of the Louisiana Legislature

# PK-12 Public Education in Louisiana

April 2011



**The Scott S. Cowen Institute  
for Public Education Initiatives  
at Tulane University**

The Cowen Institute is an action-oriented think tank that informs and advances solutions – through policies, programs, and partnerships – to eliminate the challenges impeding the success of K-12 education in New Orleans and beyond. It also serves as a clearinghouse for K-12 public schools in New Orleans to directly access the myriad of experts and resources available at Tulane University. Our work is in the following key areas:



**Applied Research**



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# Table of Contents

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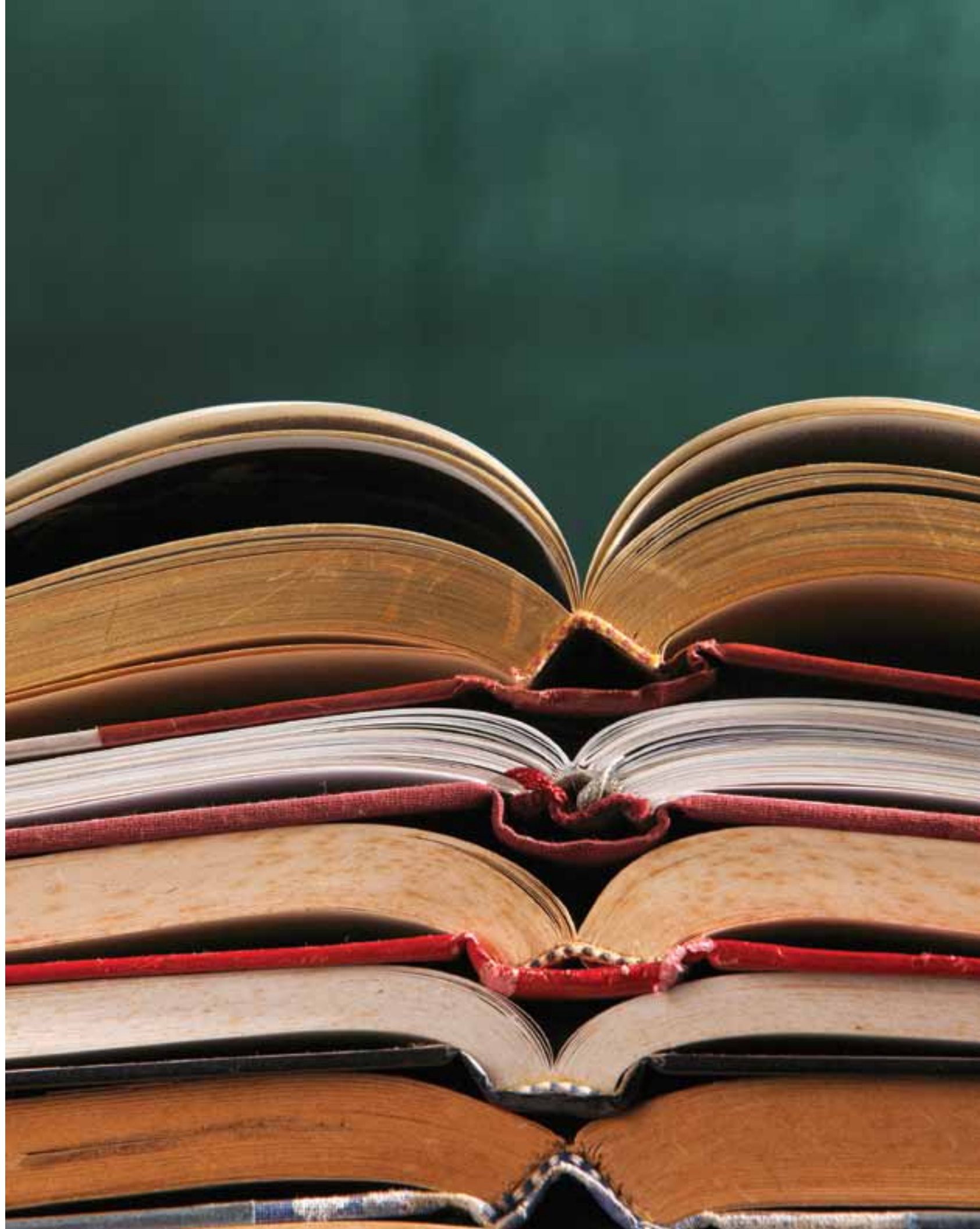
1	Louisiana PK-12 Education: Governance, Demographics, and Enrollment . . . . .	1
2	Public School Funding . . . . .	5
3	Public School Performance . . . . .	9
4	Recovery School District . . . . .	13
5	Charter Schools . . . . .	17
6	Public School Facilities. . . . .	21

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# Louisiana PK-12 Education: Governance, Demographics, and Enrollment

## Local & State Governance Organization Chart

### Louisiana Legislature

- Drafts and passes laws related to public education in the areas of accountability, curriculum, and school district employment requirements
- Gives corporate power to local school boards and grants them the right to levy taxes
- Appropriates money for the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) to fund K-12 public education across the state

### Basic Facts About Louisiana Public Schools

- Student Enrollment: 702,480
- Number of Schools: 1,427
- Grades Served: PK-12
- Percent Receiving Free or Reduced Lunch: 66%
- Charter School Enrollment: 37,030

### State Board of Elementary & Secondary Education (BESE)

- Established by the Louisiana Legislature at the Constitutional Convention of 1973
- Acts as administrative policy-making body for elementary and secondary public schools
- Comprised of eleven members, eight elected from single-member districts and three appointed by the Governor
- Responsible for preparing the MFP, approving teacher certification, adopting policies for student assessment, and adopting operating standards for schools
- Authority to grant charters to schools throughout the state

### Local School Boards

- Created by the Louisiana Legislature pursuant to the Louisiana Constitution
- Governing bodies of the school district
- Able to levy local taxes to fund schools
- Bound by policies set by BESE, including mandatory participation in the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP)
- Policy-setting bodies for local school districts
- Elected by citizens of the district
- Authority to grant charters to school operators in their district

### State Superintendent of Education

- Appointed by BESE
- Mission is to recommend and implement policy in accordance with applicable legislation, the Louisiana Constitution, and the policy set forth by BESE
- Responsible for directing and overseeing the Louisiana Department of Education

### Local School District Superintendents

- Hired by local school boards to oversee the administration and operation of districts
- Responsible for implementing the policy set by the board(s)
- Subject to qualifications set by BESE

### Louisiana Department of Education

- Manages, budgets, and allocates funds from federal appropriation and the MFP to districts and programs
- Provides ancillary educational services, such as those related to nutrition, drug-free schools, transportation, and adult education
- Establishes a statewide curriculum and standards and administers the student assessment and school accountability system





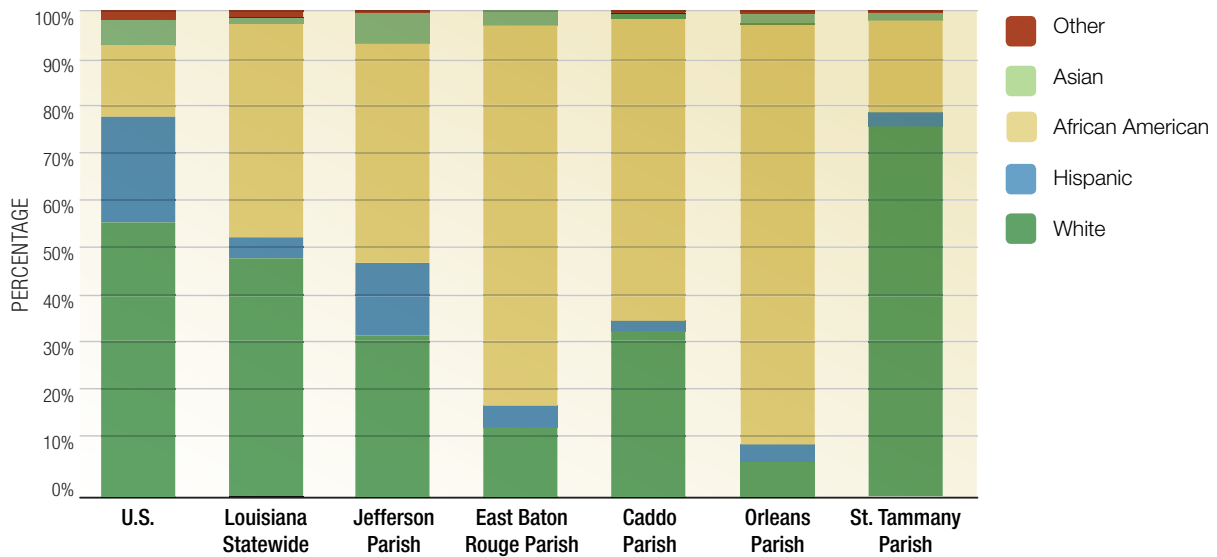
# 2010-2011 Student Demographics

(for the United States, Louisiana, and the five largest local school districts)

## Percentage of Students by Ethnicity

While ethnic minorities make up less than 50% of public school students across the U.S., they are the overwhelming majority in most of the largest local school districts in Louisiana.

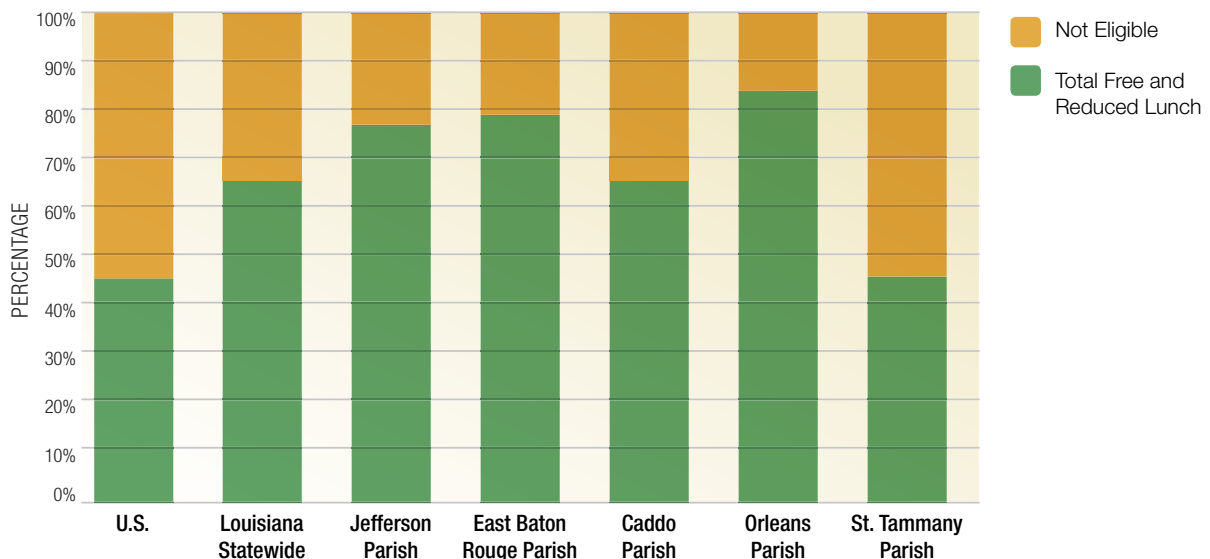
Data on Louisiana students taken from the October 2010 state enrollment counts. National data from the 2008-2009 school year from the National Center on Education Statistics, Common Core of Data. Data on Orleans Parish includes Orleans Parish School Board, Recovery School District district-run and charter schools, and Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Type 2 charter schools.



## Percentage of Students by Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility

Nationally, 45% of public school students are eligible for free and reduced lunch. Across Louisiana and most of the state's largest school districts, this percentage is considerably higher.

Data on Louisiana students taken from the October 2010 state enrollment counts. National data from the 2008-2009 school year from the Institute of Education Sciences, National Center on Education Statistics. Data on Orleans Parish includes Orleans Parish School Board, Recovery School District district-run and charter schools, and Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Type 2 charter schools.



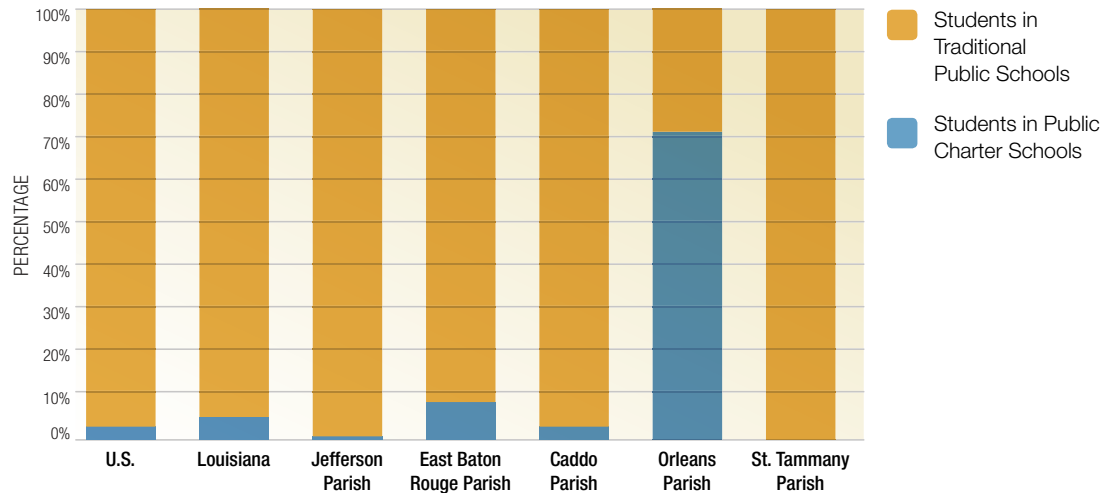
# 2010-2011 Student Enrollment

(for the United States, Louisiana, and the five largest local school districts)

## Charter School Enrollment

### Percentage of Public School Students Enrolled in Charter Schools Versus Traditional Public Schools

Nationally and statewide only a small percentage of public school students attend charter schools. However, Orleans Parish has the highest rate of charter attendance of any district in the nation at 71%.



Data on Louisiana students taken from the October 2010 state enrollment counts. National data from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools for the 2009-2010 school year. Data on Orleans Parish includes Orleans Parish School Board, Recovery School District district-run and charter schools, and Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Type 2 charter schools.

### Districts with the Largest Proportion of Public School Students Enrolled in Charter Schools

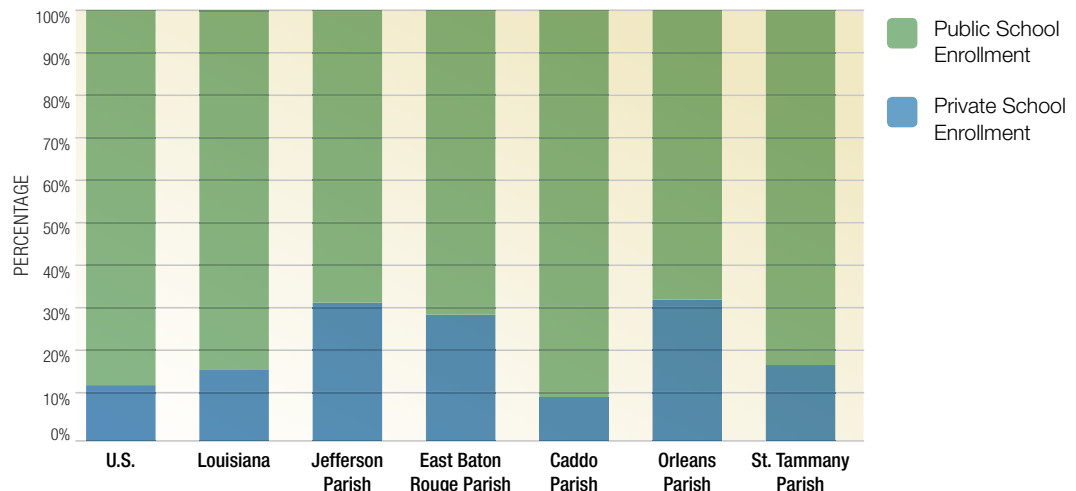
- |                    |     |                    |     |                   |     |
|--------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| 1. New Orleans, LA | 71% | 3. Detroit, MI     | 32% | 5. Dayton, OH     | 27% |
| 2. Washington, DC  | 36% | 4. Kansas City, MO | 29% | 6. Youngstown, OH | 26% |

Source: New Orleans data from the Louisiana Department of Education, 2010. National data from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2008.

## Private and Parochial School Enrollment

### Private and Parochial School Enrollment as a Percentage of Total K-12 Enrollment

Nationwide, private school enrollment is approximately 11% of total K-12 enrollment, while in Louisiana it is nearly 15%. In Orleans and Jefferson Parishes, more than 30% of PK-12 students are enrolled in private schools.

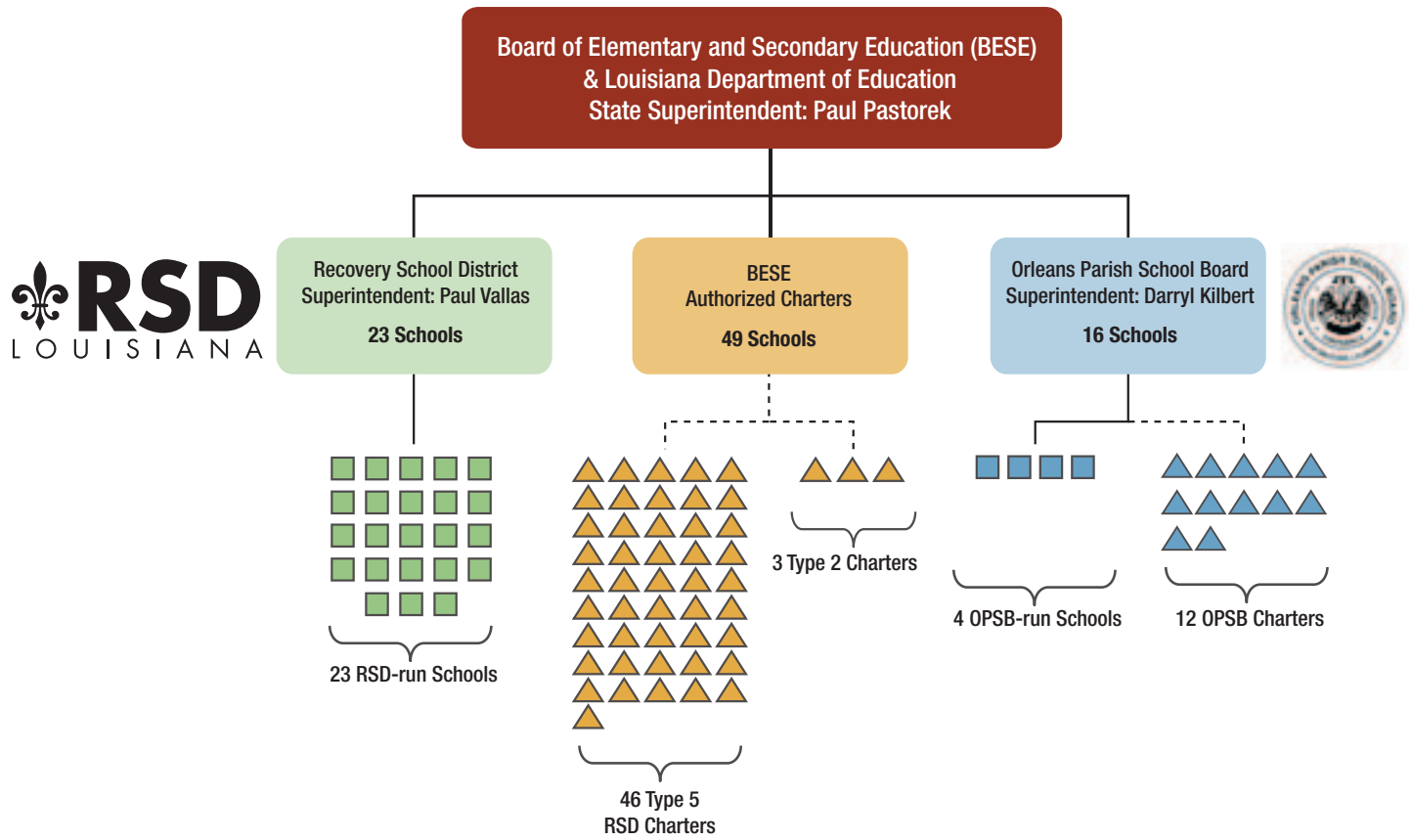


Data on Louisiana students from the Louisiana Department of Education, 2010. National data from the 2007-2008 school year from [www.schooldatairect.org](http://www.schooldatairect.org). Data on Orleans Parish includes Orleans Parish School Board, Recovery School District district-run and charter schools, and Board of Elementary and Secondary Education Type 2 charter schools.

# Public Education Governance in Orleans Parish

## 2010-2011 Governance Structure

Total: 88\* Schools & 39,877 Students



\* This number does not include alternative and juvenile detention schools.  
Source: Louisiana Department of Education, October 2010