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**
- **Public Policy**
- **University-Based Initiatives**
- **College Readiness Programs**

Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives

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PK-12 Public Education in Louisiana

April 2011

2011 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature
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

**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

**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

**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
- Authority to grant charters to schools throughout the state
- 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

**Local School District Superintendents**
- Created by the Louisiana Legislature pursuant to the Louisiana Constitution
- Governing bodies of the school district
- Able to levy local taxes to fund schools
- Authority to grant charters to school operators in their district

**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

**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
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.

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.
**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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington, DC</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit, MI</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City, MO</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayton, OH</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngstown, OH</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**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.

2010-2011 Governance Structure

Total: 88* Schools & 39,877 Students

Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) & Louisiana Department of Education
State Superintendent: Paul Pastorek

Recovery School District
Superintendent: Paul Vallas
23 Schools

BESE Authorized Charters
49 Schools

Orleans Parish School Board
Superintendent: Darrell Kilbert
16 Schools

23 RSD-run Schools

46 Type 5
RSD Charters

3 Type 2 Charters

4 OPSE-run Schools

12 OPSE Charters

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

Minimum Foundation Program (MFP)

- The primary source of state and local funding for schools in Louisiana is the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP).
- The Louisiana Constitution requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to annually develop and adopt a formula which determines the cost of a minimum foundation program of education in all public elementary and secondary schools as well as to equitably allocate the funds to parish and city school systems. Once BESE adopts the formula, the Legislature passes it by Concurrent Resolution without making changes to the formula.
- The MFP formula also includes factors that provide more funding for special classes of students (e.g., at-risk and special education students).
- State law requires that 70% of MFP revenues be spent for instructional purposes.

MFP Per Pupil by Parish

The map represents the per pupil funding from local and state sources for each parish in the state. Parishes receive varying levels of funding based on student population needs and local tax revenue.

Per Pupil Funding under the Minimum Foundation Program (2010-2011)

- Bottom fifth: $6,729 - $8,159
- 2nd fifth: $8,167 - $8,490
- 3rd fifth: $8,507 - $8,938
- 4th fifth: $8,954 - $9,247
- Top fifth: $9,350 - $10,474
Public schools in Louisiana receive funding from local, state, federal, and private sources.

- The local funding in the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) consists of property and sales taxes levied by the local school boards.
- The state funding in the MFP comes from an appropriation by the State Legislature.
- Once received by the local school district, it is up to the district to distribute funds to their individual schools based on a district determined formula.

* Title I – Improving the Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged; Title II – Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals; Title III – Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students; Title IV – Safe and Drug Free Schools; and Title V – Innovative Education Program Strategies
While the sources of funding are the same for the Recovery School District (RSD), the funding flows differently from local school districts across the state. The local property and sales taxes levied by the local school board flow through the board to the RSD in proportion to the number of students enrolled in RSD schools in that district, district-run and charter. Additionally, because many of the RSD charter schools are their own local education agency (LEA), state and federal education funds flow directly to those charter schools.
A Closer Look at School Funding in Louisiana

Variation in Funding and Spending Across Districts

MFP Funding

MFP funding varies greatly across districts. The Louisiana school district that is at the 95th percentile receives 39% more funding than the district at the 5th percentile.

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, 2010-2011 MFP Budget Letter

All Operating Expenditures (from all funding sources)

When revenue from all sources is considered, the variation across districts is even greater. The Louisiana school district that is at the 95th percentile spends 60% more than the district at the 5th percentile.

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, 2008-2009 Resource Allocation data

Louisiana Compared to the U.S.

Two national reports comparing school financing in states throughout the U.S. have been released recently. The major findings are below.

Education Week Quality Counts 2011

- Every year, Education Week (EdWeek) publishes this report, which focuses on education policies of states. A section of the report is dedicated to school finances.
- On school finances, EdWeek gives Louisiana a C-. The U.S. average is a C.
- The report looks at four measures of funding equity and four measures of spending. Louisiana’s ranking on the different measures varies significantly.
- For example, the report states that the average per pupil expenditure in Louisiana is above the national average (adjusted for regional cost differences and weighted for student needs). However, when individual districts are considered, only 28 percent of Louisiana districts are above the national average.

Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card

- The national report card was released by the Education Law Center in September 2010.
- This report evaluates only state funding formulas for distributing local and state revenue.
- The report card grades states’ funding formulas on four measures of fairness: funding level, funding distribution, effort, and coverage.
- Louisiana was one of four states that scored below average on all four measures of funding fairness.
PK-12 public schools in Louisiana receive a School Performance Score (SPS) based primarily on how well each student performs on the state’s standardized tests (LEAP, iLEAP, and GEE), as well as on drop-out rates and attendance. The scores range from 0.0 to either 236.4 or 266.7 depending on a school’s grade configuration.

Louisiana’s goal is that all schools have a school performance score of 120 or higher by 2014.

In the 2010 legislative session, the Louisiana Legislature passed Act 718, which provided for BESE to assign letter grades from A to F to schools and school districts to rate their performance. Schools that meet their growth target will receive a “+” in addition to their letter grade, while schools that decline in SPS will receive a “-.” The threshold between “D” and “F” will be increased to 75 for the 2011-2012 school year to conform with the raising of the Academically Unacceptable standard up to 75 for that year.

### BESE School Performance Score (SPS) Letter-Grade Scale

- **A:** 120 – 200
- **B:** 105.0 – 119.9
- **C:** 90.0 – 104.9
- **D:** 65.0 – 89.9
- **F:** 0 – 64.9

### 2009 and 2010 School Performance Labels for Louisiana

Fewer schools were Academically Unacceptable and many more schools earned three stars or higher in 2010 compared to 2009.
Beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, schools with an SPS below 64.9 will be deemed Academically Unacceptable. In the 2012-2013 school year, the bar will go up to 74.9. For the 2009-2010 school year, the state gave schools with an SPS between 60.0 and 74.9 the label Academic Watch.

**Academic Watch**

196 (15%) schools are only one or two years away from becoming Academically Unacceptable if they do not rapidly improve.

**Performance Labels for Schools Across Louisiana**

**A Low National Ranking**

Louisiana continues to rank between 44th and 50th in 4th and 8th grade English and Math on national tests of student achievement.

**2009 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Reading Rank</th>
<th>Reading District</th>
<th>Reading Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>229</td>
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<td></td>
<td>48</td>
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<td>District of Columbia</td>
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<td>Minnesota</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
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<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>47</td>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Achievement Gaps in Louisiana

Though the performance gap between White and African-American students has declined over the past decade, a significant achievement gap still exists in Louisiana.

Percentage of Students Scoring Basic or Above in English/Language Arts

The percentage of all students performing at the Basic or above level in all English/Language Arts standardized tests (LEAP and GEE) has increased from 50% to 67% between 1999 and 2010. In the same period, the difference between the percentage of White students and African-American students achieving at the Basic and above level declined from 34 to 23 percentage points.

Percent of Students Scoring Basic or Above in Math

The percentage of all students performing at the Basic or above level in Math on all standardized tests (LEAP and GEE) has increased from 41% to 68% between 1999 and 2010. In the same period, the difference between the percentage of White students and African-American students achieving at the Basic and above level declined from 38 to 27 percentage points.
Student poverty remains an important factor in student achievement. While it is not insurmountable, students from low income households may require additional effort and resources to achieve at the level of peers who are not low income.

2009-2010 Poverty Levels and School Performance in Louisiana

The relationship between free lunch eligibility and school performance scores in Louisiana K–8 schools

PERCENT OF A SCHOOL’S STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE LUNCH

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, 2010
**Recovery School District**

**What is the RSD?**

- During the 2003 Regular Legislative Session, the Louisiana Legislature passed Act 9 to create the Recovery School District (RSD). Following Hurricane Katrina, the Louisiana Legislature passed Act 35 to allow the RSD to more easily takeover schools in failing districts.
- The RSD is a school district administered by the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) and is designed to take over academically failing schools and turn them into successful schools.
- An academically failing school is determined by Louisiana’s statewide program of school accountability adopted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). School accountability in Louisiana is based on the Louisiana Educational Assessment Program (LEAP).
- Schools that do not meet the minimum academic standards for at least four consecutive years are eligible for state takeover. A school must have a School Performance Score (SPS) below 65 for the 2010-2011 school year and below a 75 for the 2011-2012 school year.
- Schools that are placed in the RSD must remain there for a minimum of five years. This length of time is meant to allow the schools to fully establish the instructional practices and expectations necessary for success prior to returning to the control of the local school board. All New Orleans schools in the RSD are currently in their fifth year.
- Currently there are 84 schools open under the RSD statewide. 69 of those schools are in Orleans Parish.

**School Districts Represented in the RSD**

The RSD is comprised of schools from Caddo, East Baton Rouge, Orleans, Point Coupée, and St. Helena Parishes.

**RSD and Local District Schools by Parish**

The graph represents the number of schools under the RSD and under the control of the local school board within each parish.
As of January 2011 the RSD has taken over more than 120 schools in four parishes – Caddo, East Baton Rouge, Orleans, Point Coupée and St. Helena.
A school transferred into the RSD must remain there for an initial period of five years, at the end of which BESE must decide whether the school will remain in the RSD, be returned to the transferring district, or closed. In December 2010, BESE adopted a policy to govern the possible return of schools to local control.

- Under the new policy, RSD schools (both direct-run and charter) that have an SPS of at least 80 (or at least 5 points above the AUS level if that level is raised above 75) for two consecutive years, beginning with the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years, will be eligible to choose whether to stay in the RSD or return to a local governing authority. Schools that do not meet the performance benchmark will remain in the RSD.

- This policy will enable a gradual reduction of the number of schools in the RSD as they return to local control. During each year from Year 5 to Year 10 in the RSD, certain schools will be eligible to chose and may return to local control, certain schools will be eligible to choose but may stay in the RSD, and certain schools will not be eligible to choose and will remain in the RSD.

- For the low-performing schools that remain in the RSD, failing charter schools may be subject to non-renewal, and failing direct-run schools may be retained with a new turnaround plan, phased out, or transferred to a new operator (charter or local district), who must apply to and be approved by BESE.

- At the end of each five year term, BESE must reconsider the status and governance of each school remaining in the RSD at that point.

### Timeline for RSD Schools

RSD schools in parishes that will reach the fifth year of their initial terms in the RSD in the following school years:

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orleans</td>
<td>East Baton Rouge</td>
<td>Caddo</td>
<td>St. Helena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Schools</td>
<td>4 Schools</td>
<td>2 Schools</td>
<td>1 School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point Coupée</td>
<td>1 School</td>
<td>East Baton Rouge</td>
<td>8 Schools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Performance Scores of Schools Under RSD Intervention

RSD Performance in New Orleans

- RSD direct run schools and RSD charter schools (authorized by BESE) have shown consistent improvement in School Performance Scores since 2007.

- Under Act 35, the RSD was allowed to take over schools that fell below the state average (86.2) and not just below 60. Thus, some RSD schools had a pre-takeover SPS above 60.

- Collectively, RSD schools in New Orleans grew from an SPS of 54.4 in 2009 to 60.6 in 2010. This increase of 6.2 points represented the second-best SPS growth in the state. The state average was 3.1.

- The values represented in the graph are average scores for the RSD charters and RSD-run schools.

Future Governance of New Orleans Schools

Recent public debate in New Orleans over the possible transfer or RSD schools to local control has also raised a discussion over possible changes to the structure of local control. A recent Cowen Institute commissioned public opinion poll revealed the complex feelings and desires of the New Orleans community. The survey’s findings included:

- 58% of New Orleans voters support the state’s decision to take over most New Orleans schools after Hurricane Katrina
- 47% of New Orleans voters oppose giving all schools to the RSD
- 70% of New Orleans voters oppose placing schools under mayoral control
- 59% of New Orleans voters oppose giving all schools back to the OPSB
- 70% of New Orleans voters support a new board that is elected citywide

Source: Cowen Institute, K-12 Public Education through the Public’s Eye: A Survey of the New Orleans Community, November 2010
Charter Schools

What is a Charter School?

- Charter schools are public schools operated by a non-profit organization under an initial five year contract (or “charter”) with either a local school board or the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). The non-profit organization may contract with a for-profit organization for day-to-day operations of the school.

- Charter schools are required to participate in the state accountability program and must meet certain achievement results in order to keep their charter.

- Charter schools are free from many of the rules and regulations that traditional public schools are subject to and have significant flexibility in the areas of hiring, budgeting, and instruction.

- Charter schools are subject to a 3-year review by their authorizer and a 5-year review to determine whether the charter will be renewed or revoked.

Charter School Governance

- Charter School Authorizer

  The authorizer is the entity that enters into a contract with the charter school operator. In Louisiana, only BESE and local school boards are able to authorize charter schools. Authorizers approve charters, monitor and hold schools accountable, and renew or end charters based on school performance and other factors (financials, legal).

- Charter School Operator

  The charter school operator is the organization that oversees the operation, finances, and administration of the charter school. It is generally led by a board which sets policy and hires a school leader to implement its policy and handle school operations.

- Charter School Leader

  The charter school leader is hired by the school’s operator to oversee the daily operations of the school, including budgeting, personnel, and curriculum decisions. The school leader may or may not also fill the role of principal.

Number of Charter Schools by Authorizer in Louisiana

- BESE: 10
- Orleans Parish School Board: 6
- E. Baton Rouge School Board: 2
- Jefferson Parish School Board: 72
Charter School Student Demographics

Percentage of Students by Ethnicity

The ethnicity of students in Louisiana charter schools is different from the ethnicity of students in charter schools nationally. However, students in Louisiana charter schools have ethnicities similar to the large urban districts where most are located.

Data on Louisiana students taken from the October 2010 state enrollment counts. National data from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2009-2010

Percentage of Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch

Nationwide and in Louisiana, students in charter schools are eligible for free and reduced lunch at a rate slightly higher than the general student population in traditionally operated schools.

Data on Louisiana students taken from the October 2010 state enrollment counts. National data from the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2009-2010
Charter School Types

Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE)

Local School Boards

Type 1 Charters
- Have a charter with a local school board
- Are new start-up schools
- Can only be operated by a non-profit entity
- May enroll students from anywhere in the district
- Receive funding through the MFP
- May have admissions requirements consistent with the school's role, scope, and mission

Type 2 Charters
- Have a charter with BESE
- Can be conversion or start-up schools
- Can only be operated by a non-profit entity
- May enroll students from anywhere in the state
- Receive funding through a general fund appropriation or through the MFP
- Do not receive any local funding
- May have admissions requirements consistent with the school's role, scope, and mission

Type 3 Charters
- Have a charter with a local school board
- Are conversion schools
- Can only be operated by a non-profit entity
- May enroll students from anywhere in the district
- Receive funding through the MFP
- May have admissions requirements consistent with the school's role, scope, and mission

Type 4 Charters
- Have a charter between a local school board and BESE
- Can be conversion or start-up schools
- Can be operated by a for-profit entity
- May enroll students from anywhere in the district
- Receive funding through the MFP
- May have admissions requirements consistent with the school's role, scope, and mission

Type 5 Charters
- Have a charter with BESE
- Are conversion schools
- Can only be operated by a non-profit entity
- May enroll students from anywhere in the district
- Receive funding through the MFP
- May not have any admissions requirements

Number of Charter Schools by Type in Louisiana

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, 2010
Location of Louisiana Charter Schools

 Charter School Locations, 2010-2011

Number of Charter Schools by City

- 1-2 Schools
- 16 Schools
- 61 Schools

Recently Approved Charter Schools

BESE recently approved 11 new charter schools for opening in the 2011-2012 school year. All but one of these schools, Lake Charles Charter Academy in Calcasieu Parish, are in East Baton Rouge or Orleans Parishes. Two of these schools are virtual schools.

Source: Louisiana Department of Education, 2010
Basic Facts About Louisiana Public School Facilities

- Number of Public Schools in Louisiana: 1,427
- Total State Public School Enrollment: 702,480
- State Funding Allocated for School Facilities: $0
- Louisiana School Facilities Assessment Conducted: none

Facilities Construction Expenditures Per Student

- Louisiana ranks among the states putting the least amount of funding into school facilities. In fact, Louisiana is one of only seven states in the country that does not dedicate state funding for public school maintenance, repair, or construction.
- On average, 88% of schools in Louisiana report a need to upgrade or repair buildings.
- Thirty-nine percent of schools in the state have at least one inadequate building and 50 percent of schools have at least one inadequate feature, e.g., roof, plumbing, HVAC.

Facilities spending in Louisiana was only 60% of the national average and trailed all other states in the region except for Mississippi.

In the decade before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, spending was even lower at 46% of the national average. Since then, federal recovery funds have enabled hurricane-impacted areas to increase facilities spending, but in other areas of Louisiana it is still very low.

Funds provided by FEMA to most hurricane-impacted areas were only sufficient to bring schools up to pre-disaster levels, which is inadequate for Louisiana schools that were entirely substandard before the disasters.

State Capital Spending on Pk-12 Facilities

Source: State Capital Spending on PK-12 Facilities, 21st Century School Fund, November 2010

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Why Are School Facilities Important?

Our educational facilities are an important investment because our children and teachers spend most of their day inside these buildings. Many research studies have shown that school facilities affect the outcome of student performance.

- **Teacher Retention:** Poor building conditions greatly increase the likelihood that teachers will leave their school – a troubling fact given the need for more and better teachers in most disadvantaged schools.

- **Cognitive Abilities:** Cognitive requirements for learning – motivation, energy, attention, hearing, and seeing – are affected by the physical surroundings where they take place.

- **Absenteeism:** Overcrowded schools lead to higher absenteeism for both students and teachers and have detrimental effects on children’s ability to learn and perform well.

- **Classroom Environment:** The amount of natural light, the indoor air quality, the temperature, and the cleanliness of schools and classrooms all impact student learning.


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Does the MFP Provide Funding for Facilities?

There is **NO capital funding built into the MFP.**

- 70% of MFP funding is required to be used for instructional purposes
- 30% of the MFP is used for all other expenses, including utilities, employee and retiree benefits, and student transportation

- The primary source of school funding is the MFP.
- The MFP formula does not dedicate funds to capital repair and maintenance.
- School districts must use the MFP to cover instructional expenses first. Instructional expenses are related to activities dealing directly with interaction between students and teachers and activities designed to improve teaching and the process of learning.

- All other expenditures covered by general funds must be paid for out of the remaining 30 percent of funds. This includes, among other things, administration of the school, services provided centrally (such as planning and evaluation), student transportation, and all expenses related to operating and maintaining the physical plant of schools (including repairs of buildings, upkeep of grounds, and security).
New Construction across the United States

The map below represents the percentage of total public school facilities funds spent on new public school construction in the United States. Louisiana is one of eight states that spent only 13-30% of these funds on new construction. The rest of the country spent between 31-77%.

- New Orleans offers a good example of the low percentage of recent school construction in Louisiana. The majority of New Orleans school facilities are 30+ years old. The poor state of facilities in Orleans Parish is not just the result of Hurricane Katrina, but is due to the age of the facilities and a statewide lack of funding to keep them in a suitable state of repair.
- The Recovery School District and Orleans Parish School Board developed a School Facilities Master Plan to rebuild or renovate the school facilities in Orleans Parish. The Master Plan was approved in late 2008 by both the Orleans Parish School Board and the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- The Master Plan proposes six phases of construction and renovation of schools with a combined cost of approximately $1.8 billion. A total of $1.84 billion has been secured from FEMA funds and 6 schools have been built or renovated thus far.
Louisiana Facilities Needs: $ Per Pupil

Estimated Amount of Facilities Needs on a Per Pupil Basis

A December 2008 study by the American Federation of Teachers identified the school infrastructure funding needs of states across the nation. Because some states lack statewide facilities assessments, they were matched with similar states that do have a usable assessment. Louisiana is matched with South Carolina because Louisiana has never conducted an assessment of school facilities across the state.

Based on this study, Louisiana needs the second highest amount ($10,070) of estimated funding per pupil for facilities in the nation after Hawaii ($18,373).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Per Pupil Need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>$18,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana, South Carolina</td>
<td>$10,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Alabama, Mississippi</td>
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<td>Ohio, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin</td>
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<td>West Virginia, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Georgia, Florida</td>
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<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>$2,855</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>$1,505</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Building Minds, Minding Buildings: School Infrastructure Funding Need, American Federation of Teachers (2008)

Inadequate Facilities

In 1996, the Government Accountability Office reported that schools with the greatest number of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch also reported the most inadequate buildings. Schools with 70% or more of their students qualifying for free or reduced lunch reported that 41% of their buildings were inadequate. Schools with fewer than 20% of their students qualifying for free or reduced lunch reported only 25% of their buildings as inadequate.

What is an Inadequate School Building?

Avoyelles High School in Avoyelles Parish and Bernard Terrace Elementary in Baton Rouge both have inadequate school facilities. Seventy-three percent of Avoyelles High students qualify for free or reduced lunch, and 81% of Bernard Terrace students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Their buildings are in severe disrepair. Avoyelles High was built in 1927 and survived the flood of 1928. These schools have overcrowded classrooms, crumbling fixtures, cracked paint, and out-of-date portables that cannot keep students warm in the winter.