

JULY 2007



# Frequently Asked Questions

About the Recovery School District



Rebuilding New Orleans through Education.



## ■ **What is the Recovery School District?**

The Recovery School District is a special state school district administered by the Louisiana Department of Education. Created by legislation passed in 2003, the RSD is dedicated to turning underperforming schools into successful schools. Five schools in New Orleans were transferred to the RSD before Hurricane Katrina. As a result of legislation passed in November 2005, another 107 low-performing schools in New Orleans were transferred to the Recovery School District.

## ■ **How will the RSD make public schools in New Orleans better?**

We are committed to laying the groundwork for a world-class public education system in Orleans Parish and are committed to the following principles:

- **Student Achievement:** Promoting success for every student
- **Quality Leadership:** Providing quality leadership at all levels
- **Working Together:** Developing a strong model of parental and community collaboration and creating a new model for education in Orleans Parish
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Ensuring transparency regarding RSD processes and practices and accountability at all levels
- **Equal Access and Equity:** Ensuring equal access to resources for all schools and students and equity in the provision of all course offerings, programs, and services
- **Relationship with New Orleans Public Schools and the Orleans Parish School Board:** Developing a collaborative relationship with the Orleans Parish School Board to ensure that all students in Orleans Parish have the opportunity to receive a high quality education

## ■ **How many public schools are open now?**

Fifty-eight public schools have opened in New Orleans in the two years since Hurricane Katrina, which is about half of the pre-Katrina number. These schools are a mix of traditional public schools and public charter schools. In the 2006-2007 school year, 39 public schools were in the Recovery School District.

## ■ **When will more schools be reopened?**

Approximately 21 new schools will open for the 2007-2008 school year. We are working hard to ensure that school facility renovation projects around the city are finished by August to meet demands. Some of these facilities will be modular school facilities, a short-term solution that will allow us to accommodate the growing population of students while we continue our rebuilding efforts.

## ■ **Will the district have enough teachers?**

We are working hard to ensure that we will have more than enough teachers for the upcoming school year. The RSD has embarked on a national recruiting campaign that includes recruiting trips to several cities, a new web site ([WhyYouTeach.org](http://WhyYouTeach.org)), and television, radio and print advertising. We are encouraging displaced New Orleans teachers to come home and we are also looking for talented certified and Highly Qualified teachers from around the country who want to relocate to the city to help make a difference in the lives of our children.

## ■ **Will the public schools be able to accommodate all returning students?**

Yes, we will accommodate all students who return to public schools in Orleans Parish. We will ensure that all schools have the staff and resources to serve children with all learning needs, especially children who require special education.

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## How can I have a say?

Community involvement will be a major aspect of the planning process. Planners will schedule a series of forums with various communities in each of the 13 planning districts. Planners will assemble a community advisory board and conduct city-wide meetings facilitated by AmericaSpeaks, which will also work with outreach teams in Atlanta, Baton Rouge, Dallas and Houston.

## When will new schools be built?

Working with the Orleans Parish School Board, we have selected the firms to develop a long-term facilities master plan that will provide a blueprint to guide future school renovations and new construction. Development of this long-term plan is slated for completion in January 2008.

## How can I help get schools ready?

- The RSD is looking for volunteers to help landscape, paint, setup classrooms, etc. Please contact RSD Volunteer Coordinator Troy Peloquin at 504-872-0614 or [troy.peloquin@rsdla.net](mailto:troy.peloquin@rsdla.net).

## Will transportation be available for my child to get to school?

Yes, we will provide transportation to all students who do not live within one mile of the school they are attending.

## What kinds of employment opportunities are available with RSD schools?

We are seeking a large pool of Highly Qualified applicants who want to:

- make a difference in the lives of the children of New Orleans
- help build an outstanding public education system
- share in a once-in-a lifetime opportunity

Applications are now being accepted for:

- principals and assistant principals
- teachers (including special education teachers)
- other school staff (for example, counselors, social workers, and secretaries)

Now is the time to apply. Please visit [www.whyteach.org](http://www.whyteach.org) to complete an application or call the LDE toll-free number (877-453-2721) and have an application mailed to you.

Minimum requirements include:

- Appropriate Louisiana Teacher Certification or evidence of eligibility to be appropriately certified by the LDE
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) "Highly Qualified"
- Compliance with the State of Louisiana policy for drug testing and background checks

## What is the RSD doing to help students who

### need additional academic support?

Extended day and summer-school programs will be offered to all students who need additional academic help.

### are still healing from trauma and loss?

Our schools will have dedicated guidance counselors and other support services, such as health clinics, to help students and staff.

### are not currently attending school?

Families with children who are not currently attending school should call the toll-free hot line at 877-453-2721 for help with selecting and enrolling their children in public schools. We will work with community groups to identify children who need to enroll in school and will help find places for them.

## What about the Orleans Parish School Board?

The OPSB has 17 public schools under its authority. It also owns the school buildings and other assets of all the public schools in Orleans Parish. We will work collaboratively with the OPSB in the rebuilding process.



**Stay Informed &**

**... Have Your Say!**

Visit the NOLA public schools  
web site for updates  
and more information.

[www.nolapublicschools.net](http://www.nolapublicschools.net)

Call the RSD toll-free help line.

**1-877-453-2721**



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