

Challenges Still Ahead for Public Schools

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The Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives at Tulane University has released the 2010 State of Public Education in New Orleans report, which offers a set of successes that schools have achieved over the past two years and key challenges that still face public education in New Orleans.



The Cowen Institute has published its third report on the State of Public Education in New Orleans. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Overall, the report concludes that the system of public schools in New Orleans continues to improve even as it faces a number of major challenges.

It notes improved school culture and increased expectations, stronger focus on improving instruction and student learning and progress on facilities planning and construction.

The third such report published by the institute, it also points out schools' challenges in the quality, maintenance and control of facilities, financial sustainability of public education and governance of the system of schools.

The report is based on available quantitative data, interviews with education leaders and surveys of New Orleans voters and public school parents.

Designed to help policymakers, educators, parents, nonprofit organizations and the community at large understand how public schools in New Orleans have progressed over time, the report also compares the city's schools to others around Louisiana and the U.S.

In addition to explaining how the current system emerged after Hurricane Katrina, the report gives detailed information on student demographics, facilities, finances, student achievement data by school and survey results from a recent public opinion poll on school governance.

A copy of the executive summary and the full report can be found on the [Cowen Institute website](#).

The Cowen Institute will hold a briefing on the report for members of the Tulane community at 5 p.m. on March 18 at Freeman Auditorium in the Woldenberg Art Center. Guest speaker will be Michael Schwam-Baird, assistant director for research of the institute.