

Tulane University to Host Math and Science Institute for Elementary School Teachers

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Tulane University and the New Orleans Recovery School District have received a grant to develop and host an intensive summer institute for third and fourth grade math and science teachers July 14-31. At the institute, Tulane faculty will work with elementary teachers to improve their content knowledge and develop new teaching and learning strategies.

Fifty-four third and fourth grade teachers have been accepted into the tuition-free institute where they will work with college-level scientists and mathematicians to increase their subject matter knowledge and conceptual understanding of mathematics and science as defined by the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum. Institute participants will focus on their teaching skills through the use of laboratory equipment and workspace, computing facilities, libraries, and other resources available through the university. The teachers will then commit to eight days of additional training over the school year, receiving twenty total days of instruction and earning graduate credit through Tulane's School of Continuing Studies. The institute will take place at Tulane's uptown campus and other venues.

The summer institute, called NOLA SMILE Institute (for Science and Mathematics, Inquiry, Learning and Exploring), is Tulane's latest endeavor to make education more progressive and effective in New Orleans. Tulane has worked toward the improvement of public education in the past few years, most visibly by partnering with a K-12 school post-Katrina, and with the creation of the Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives to support the transformation of public education in New Orleans.

At the NOLA SMILE Institute, teachers from public schools as well as charter, parochial and private schools will be represented. In fact, the development of the original NOLA SMILE proposal involved the Recovery School District administration,

school leaders from the Recovery District Schools, Lusher Charter public school, the New Orleans Archdiocese, and private school Isidore Newman.

NOLA SMILE is administered by the Recovery School District and Tulane's Teacher Certification Program, with support from the Tulane School of Science and Engineering, the Tulane School of Continuing Studies, the Tulane Center for Public Service, and the Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives. A representative from the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-Wave Observatory, a facility in Livingston, La. dedicated to the detection of cosmic gravitational waves and the harnessing of these waves for scientific research and James MacLaren, a physicist and dean of the Newcomb-Tulane College, provided guidance in the development of the proposal.

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