

Voters Support State Takeover of Schools

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A new opinion poll by the Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives shows New Orleans voters and parents of public school students strongly support the state of Louisiana's decision to take over schools after Hurricane Katrina, and most parents now give their child's school favorable marks.



Sophie B. Wright Charter School is one of the New Orleans public schools focused on excellence for its fourth- through eighth-grade students. (Photo by Alicia Duplessis Jasmin)

The institute, based at Tulane University, sampled opinions about education reforms and the future direction of public schools. No previous survey has delved this deeply into opinions about school reform and governance since Hurricane Katrina, institute officials said.

The [report](#) reveals several key findings, including that parents are willing to pay more in taxes for better public schools.

When parents were asked to grade their child's school, most parents (63 percent) gave their child's school a grade of A or B. In addition, 75 percent of parents felt that it was important that their child be able to enroll at their neighborhood school.

Of the voters surveyed, 66 percent support the state's decision to take over schools after Hurricane Katrina and support school choice.

Regardless of who holds the office of mayor, the majority of those polled believe overseeing public education should not be part of the job — 74 percent of voters favored the creation of a new school board to be elected citywide.

The survey on which the analysis is based was conducted from Nov. 3rd–14, 2009, by Market Research Insight on behalf of the [Cowen Institute](#). The sample population consisted of 600 randomly selected registered voters in Orleans Parish.

The Cowen Institute is an action-oriented think tank that advances solutions through policies, programs and partnerships to eliminate the challenges impeding the success of K-12 education. It serves as a clearinghouse for Orleans Parish public schools to access the myriad experts and resources available at Tulane.

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