



For Immediate Release

Media Contacts:

Amy Mahfouz Argenti, amahfouz@tulane.edu; 504-377-6181

Nash Molpus (On-site contact); nmolpus@tulane.edu; 504-905-2669

- - MEDIA ADVISORY - -

**Senator Cheryl Gray Evans and Representative Karen Carter Peterson
Embark on 2nd Annual Statewide Facilities Tour**

November 11, 2009 —New Orleans - - As part of a statewide tour of school facilities, State Sen. Cheryl Gray Evans (D-District 5-New Orleans) and Rep. Karen Carter Peterson (D-District 93-New Orleans) along with the Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives at Tulane University, will visit four schools in East Baton Rouge and Lafayette Parishes on **Thursday, November 12**. Since the 2007 legislative session, Gray Evans and Carter Peterson have worked to improve school facilities for all children in Louisiana. This tour is designed to highlight the need for state funding for better school buildings.

During the 2009 Regular Legislative Session, Senator Gray Evans and Representative Peterson introduced two bills to help local school districts secure funds from the state to partially match local funds dedicated solely to school facilities—Senate Bill 90 and House Bill 689. The legislature passed the School Facilities Fund and Governor Jindal signed the School Facilities Fund into law. It is now Act 226. Senator Gray Evans and Representative Peterson plan to introduce additional measures in the next legislative session that would provide support to local districts for school facilities. Louisiana is ranked fourth lowest among all states when it comes to providing state and district funding for school facilities. Forty-one states provide funding for school facilities – Louisiana does not.

What: State Sen. Cheryl Gray Evans, State Rep. Karen Carter Peterson and the Cowen Institute along with Superintendents from the schools and other dignitaries will embark on a tour of the school facilities given by school Principals.

When/Where:

East Baton Rouge Parish

10:00am Istrouma High School; 3730 Winbourne Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70806
Speakers and Participants include: Superintendent John Dilworth, Principal Linda Lewis, School Board Member W.T. Winfield, Rep. Bodi White, the Louisiana Department of Education and the Louisiana Federation of Teachers.

11:00 am Bernard Terrace Elementary School; 241 Edison Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70806
Speakers and Participants include: Superintendent John Dilworth, Principal Demetric Dunbar, School Board Member W.T. Winfield, Rep. Bodi White and the Louisiana Federation of Teachers

Lafayette Parish

3:00 pm Green T. Lindon Elementary; 603 Avenue B, Youngsville, LA
Speakers and Participants include: Superintendent Burnell Lemoine, Principal Gina Cahee, Rep. Rickey Hardy, Sen. Nick Gautreaux, Mark Herbert from U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu's office and The League of Women Voters of Lafayette

4:00 pm L. J. Alleman Middle School; 600 Roselawn Boulevard, Lafayette, LA
Speakers and Participants include: Superintendent Burnell Lemoine, Principal Kathy Aloisio, Parish President Joey Durel, Sen. Nick Gautreaux, Rep. Rickey Hardy, Mark Herbert from U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu's office and the League of Women Voters of Lafayette

***PHOTO and ON CAMERA OPPORTUNITY:** Legislators will be available for comment and photos. Taking photos or film of students is prohibited.

“Louisiana is the fourth lowest in the country for state funding that is provided for school facilities. We must do better for the students of Louisiana. All students deserve the basic right to be in safe learning environment that provides the tools that will allow our students to compete in an information driven society. I will continue to work to ensure that our students are allowed every opportunity to excel” said Senator Cheryl Gray Evans.

“Our Superintendents, principals, teachers and students are doing the best they can to teach and learn in school facilities that are unbearable,” said Representative Karen Carter Peterson. “The state of Louisiana, like 41 other states, needs to provide funding for good buildings where students learn. Anything less than a top notch facility for our students is unacceptable.”

The Cowen Institute is an action-oriented think-tank that actively addresses the issues impeding student achievement by designing and advancing innovative, high-impact policies and programs. It also serves as a clearinghouse for charter and traditional public schools in Orleans Parish to directly access the myriad of experts and resources available at Tulane. Our work is focused on four key areas: Applied Research, Public Policy, University-Based Initiatives, and College Readiness Programs. For more information please visit <http://education.tulane.edu> and our web page on facilities at <http://www.coweninstitute.com/our-work/public-policy/facilities/>.

###