

The Recovery School District: Louisiana's Accountability System

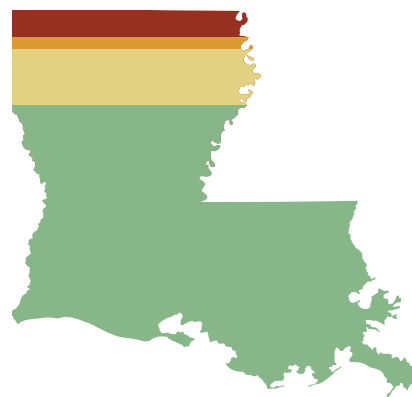
How A School Becomes Eligible for the Recovery School District

A school is considered **Academically Unacceptable (AUS or "failing")** if its state-assigned **School Performance Score is below 60.0 out of more than 230, which will be raised to 75.0 by 2012.** The SPS is primarily based on a school's scores on state standardized tests. If a school receives an SPS below 60.0, it means that more than 60 percent of its students are not passing state standardized tests (LEAP, iLEAP, and GEE) or performing at grade level.

A school is found eligible for RSD takeover according to BESE Bulletin 111 if any of the following conditions are met:

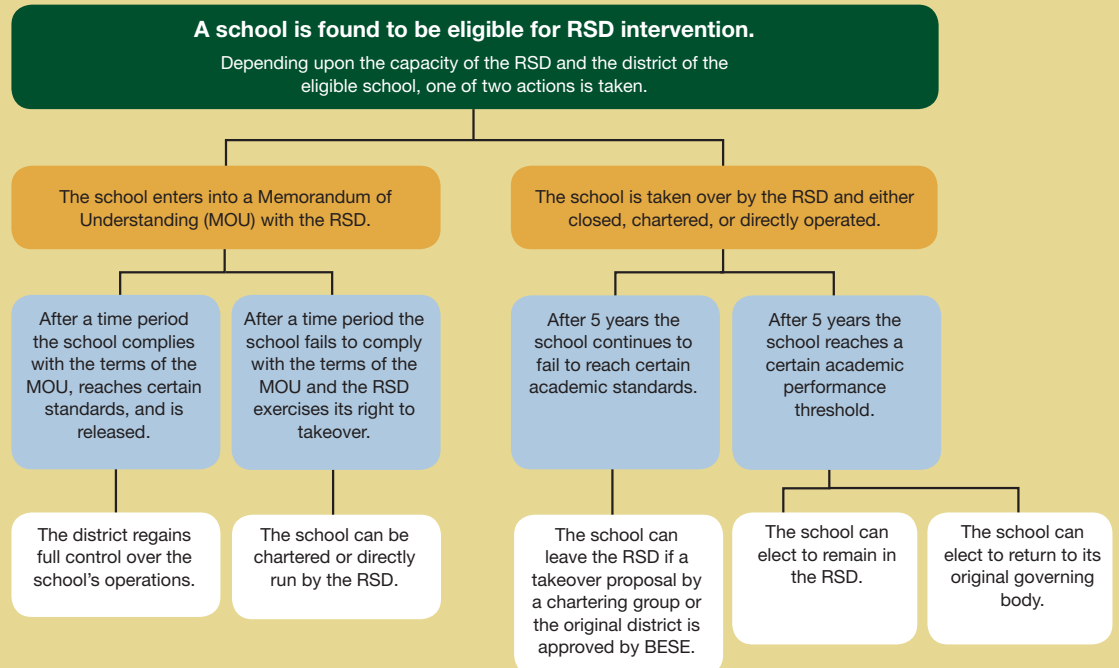
- 1 The local education agency fails to submit a reconstitution plan for a school in AUS Year 4 to BESE for approval.
- 2 A school's reconstitution plan is submitted to BESE but is deemed unacceptable.
- 3 A school and/or LEA fails to comply with the terms of a BESE approved reconstitution plan.
- 4 A school is labeled AUS for four consecutive years.

There are currently about 200 schools statewide that could be eligible for RSD intervention in the next 4 years. This means that more than one-quarter of Louisiana schools could be under RSD control within four years.



- 131 schools taken over by the RSD
- 25 schools under RSD MOU
- 200 schools possibly eligible for RSD intervention
- 924 schools not considered AUS

What Happens When a School is Found Eligible for the Recovery School District

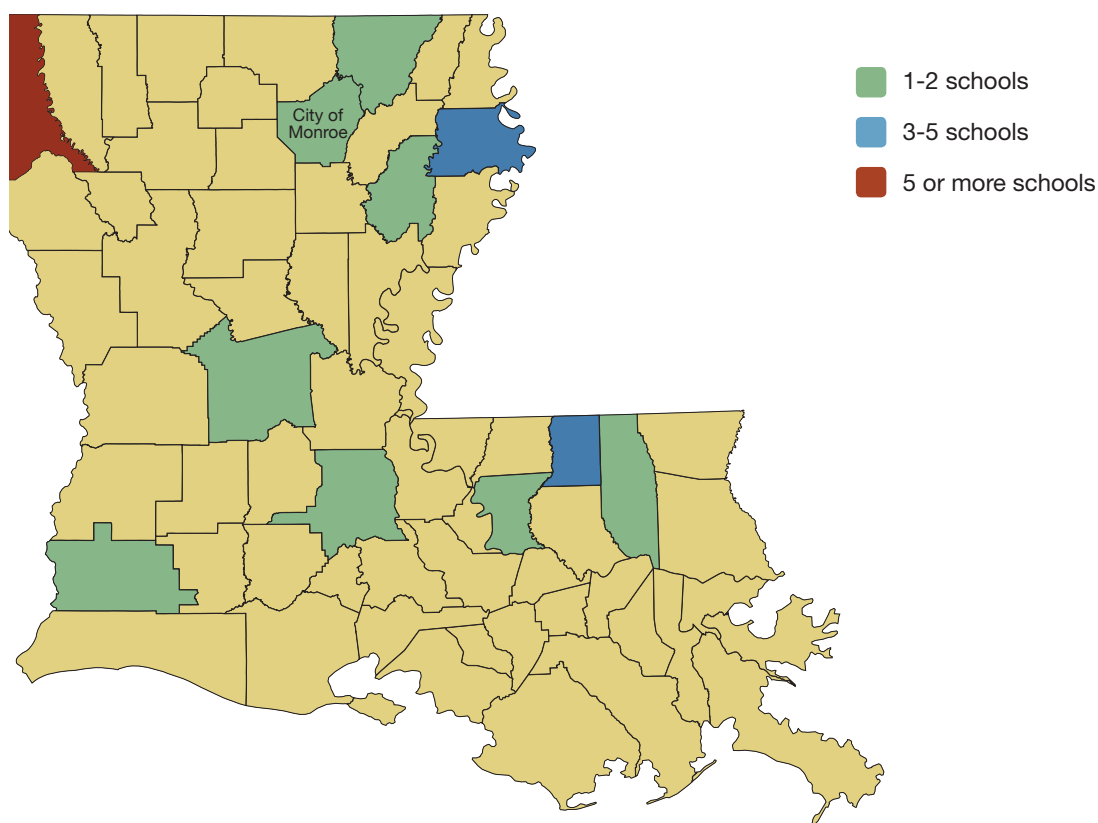


What is an MOU?

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a binding agreement between a local school district and the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) that outlines necessary actions that must be implemented at a failing school in order for it to avoid placement in the RSD. The district must comply with the recovery plan set forth in the MOU within the first year or the LDE may exercise the option of placing the school in the RSD. The threat of takeover lends credibility to the MOUs.

Beginning in the 2009-2010 school year, the RSD put 25 schools in 11 districts under MOUs. No additional schools were placed under an MOU for the 2010-2011 school year.

Parishes with schools placed under an MOU



The Performance of Schools Under RSD MOU

- Overall, all schools under MOU improved an average of 7.7 points in a single year. In comparison, the average SPS growth statewide was 3.1 points.
- Nineteen schools improved an average of 7.9 SPS points.
- Six schools declined an average of 7.2 SPS points.

In one year, five schools under MOU were able to exit AUS status. Despite seeing performance gains, four of these schools declined to be released from their agreements.

The Recovery School District After Five Years in New Orleans

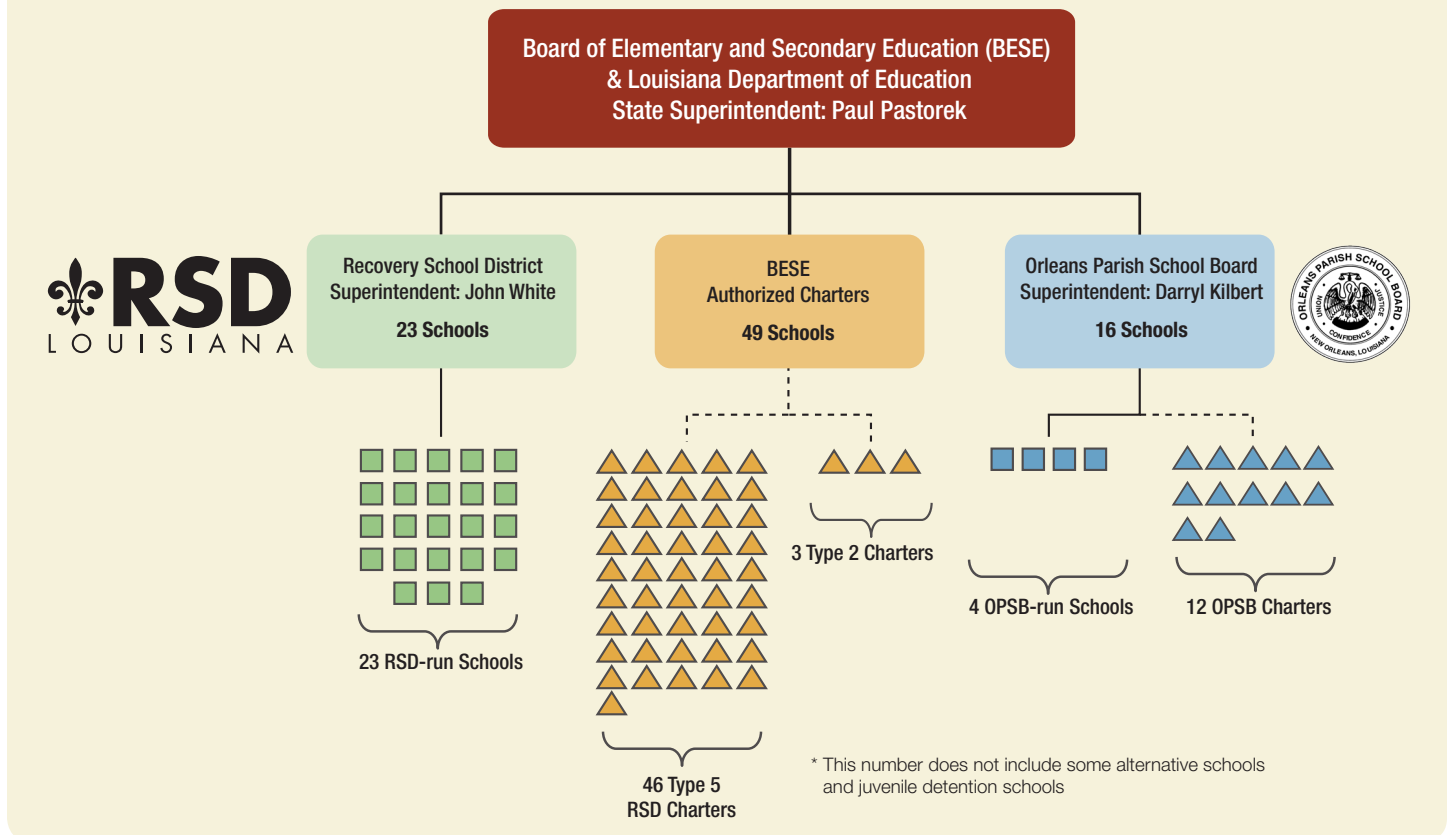
From 2004 through 2005, the RSD took over 115 schools from the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB). It has not taken over any additional schools in New Orleans since that time. Due to a declining student population, currently, only 69 schools under the RSD are open today. Some are directly operated by the RSD while others are Type 5 charters – those schools that were schools initially operated by the OPSB but were taken over by the RSD and chartered or which opened as new charter schools under RSD auspices. Charter schools are

public schools operated by a non profit organization under a contract with an authorizer, in this case, BESE. Charter schools are free from many of the rules and regulations that traditional public schools are subject to in the areas of hiring, budgeting, and instruction.

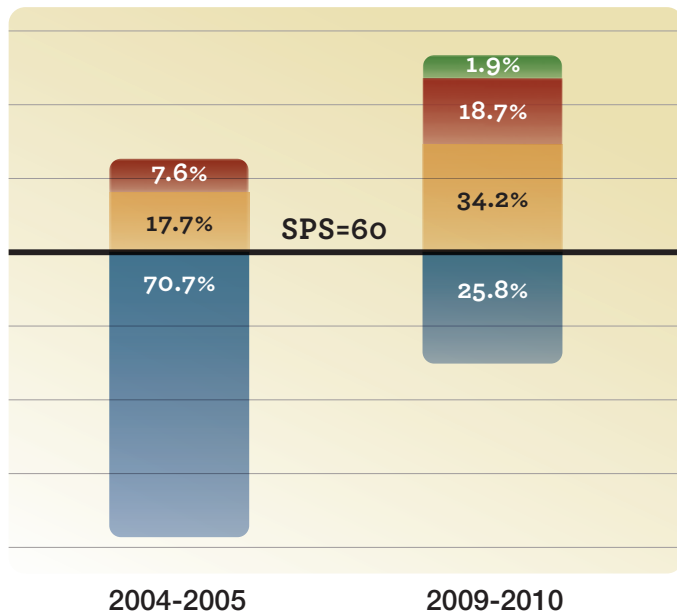
The RSD is tasked with turning around the underperforming schools that it takes over from local districts. It has done this in New Orleans primarily by turning these schools over to independent charter school operators.

2010-2011 Governance Structure

Total: 88* Schools & 39,877 Students



Change in the Percentage of Students Attending Failing Schools in 2004-2005 and 2009-2010



Source: Louisiana Department of Education, 2004, 2005, and 2010

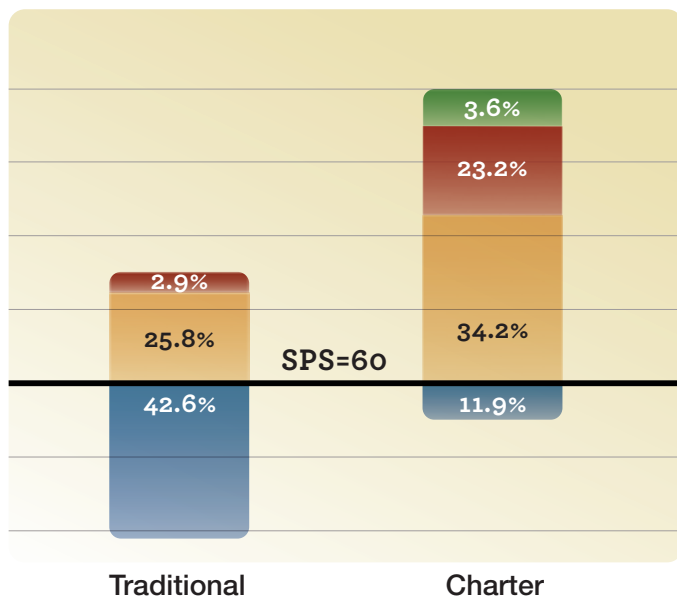
The data presented in this chart shows that the percentage of students attending failing schools in Orleans Parish has fallen drastically since the 2004-2005 school year. Among schools taken over by the RSD in New Orleans, 70.7 percent of students attended schools with an SPS below 60 based upon October 2004 enrollment and the SPS of the school at the time of takeover. That percentage fell to 25.8 percent for the 2009-2010 school year.

- SPS 100 and above
- SPS 75 to 99.9
- SPS 60 to 74.9
- SPS Below 60

4.5% of students in schools taken over by the RSD in New Orleans through 2005 attended schools without an SPS score. This number excludes those students who attended schools taken over prior to Act 35, who are assumed to have attended a school with an SPS below 60. Act 35 allowed the takeover of schools with SPS scores below the state average, which was above 60. 19.3% of students enrolled in RSD-run and charter schools attended schools without an SPS score in 2009-2010.

Currently, 23.5% of students are enrolled in RSD schools that had an SPS below 60 in 2010, fewer than in 2009. This could mean that students are choosing to leave lower-performing schools for higher-performing ones or that lower performing schools are closing.

Percentage of Students Attending Failing RSD-Run and RSD Charter Schools in 2009-2010



Source: Louisiana Department of Education, 2010

Interestingly, it has predominantly been the RSD charter schools that have driven these gains. This chart shows data from RSD direct-run schools and RSD Type 5 charter schools for the year 2009-2010. While nearly half of those attending RSD-run schools, 42.6 percent, were enrolled in schools that were failing, this is only true for 11.9 percent of those enrolled in RSD charter schools in 2009-2010.

- SPS 100 and above
- SPS 75 to 99.9
- SPS 60 to 74.9
- SPS Below 60

31.4% of students in RSD-run schools attended schools without an SPS score. 9.2% of students enrolled in RSD charter schools attended schools without an SPS score.