



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

December 10, 2012

Mr. Patrick Dobard
Superintendent
Recovery School District
1615 Poydras St., Suite 1400
New Orleans, LA 70112

Mr. Stan Smith
Superintendent
Orleans Parish School Board
3520 General DeGaulle
New Orleans, LA 70114

Dear Superintendents Dobard and Smith:

Over the past year, I have been pleased to see the collaboration between the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) and the Recovery School District (RSD). With the two systems working together, I have every confidence that the decisions being made for our children are more transparent, more inclusive of community input, and ultimately, better for the children of New Orleans. It is no wonder that test scores, graduation rates, and college readiness in New Orleans are at record levels.

One of the most important aspects of cooperation between your two systems is the opportunity for eligible RSD schools to choose to return to the Orleans Parish School Board. This process is an important one, as it signals that schools in the RSD have fully accomplished their goal of turning around and achieving significant academic progress. We should celebrate the opportunity as a success for the city and its children.

Having schools return to the OPSB from the RSD is an opportunity to further the progress made in the area of fiscal and operational responsibility. The OneApp enrollment system and the School Facilities Master Plan are significant steps in the right direction and have marked high points in your collaboration.

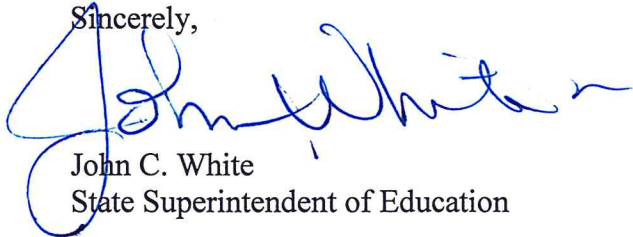
In order to sustain our progress on fiscal and operational responsibility, I strongly urge that enrollment and facilities decisions regarding schools that opt to return from the RSD to the OPSB remain in place as part of their plans for return. Were schools to opt out of those citywide plans, so much effort to establish true equity for children and strong fiscal responsibility in the management of schools would be wasted.

Louisiana Believes.

It is thus my intent as State Superintendent to recommend to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) that it approve only plans for return that preserve previously made enrollment and facilities determinations regarding such schools.

It is my hope that OPSB and the RSD will continue to work together this year and next to further the great work that has been done in New Orleans to improve the educational outcomes for all students. I thank you for your extraordinary efforts together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John C. White", with a large, stylized initial "J" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John C. White
State Superintendent of Education

cc: Ms. Penny Dastugue, President, BESE
Mr. Chase Roemer, Vice-President, BESE
Mr. James Garvey, Secretary/Treasurer, BESE
Ms. Holly Boffy, BESE Member
Ms. Kira Orange-Jones, BESE Member