



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 5, 2015

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***National Association of Charter School Authorizers
Commends RSD Action to Deny Charter School's Renewal***

Charter schools are about more than just test scores. They also have an obligation to treat all students fairly and appropriately and to spend public money properly. Most charter schools do just that, but the evidence indicates that New Orleans' Lagniappe Academies has not.

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) commends the Louisiana Recovery School District (RSD) and Superintendent Patrick Dobard for acting to deny the renewal of the charter of Lagniappe Academies. We know that closing schools can be rending for everyone involved. But when it comes to children's futures, it is worth the immediate hardship. Strong "authorizers"—the entities created by law to approve, monitor, and if necessary, close charter schools—know how to support the school community to make sure no child falls through the cracks in the transition to another school.

One of RSD's core responsibilities as an authorizer is to protect the interests of students enrolled in charter schools. The RSD's evaluation of Lagniappe Academies uncovered a lengthy list of disturbing practices indicating that Lagniappe has not been meeting the needs of their special education students.

The RSD is acting responsibly as the school's authorizer by monitoring each charter school's practices and by taking appropriate actions when schools falter. Many authorizers around the country fulfill their responsibilities as the RSD has done. Yet many others do not.

The best opportunity to improve the overall quality of the nation's charter schools is to improve the quality of authorizing. Some states, like Louisiana, are getting this right. They devote sufficient attention and resources to charter school authorizing. However, other states still do not devote sufficient attention to this important work.

There are many excellent charter schools around the country serving children exceptionally well. Yet weaknesses remain. If we are to achieve our shared goal of giving all children the opportunity to attend a quality school—be it a public charter school or traditional public school—we need to ensure that every charter school has a good authorizer, like the RSD.

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) is committed to advancing excellence and accountability in the charter school sector and to increasing the number of high-quality charter schools across the nation. To accomplish this mission, NACSA is the only organization in the nation working to improve the policies and practices of authorizers—the organizations designated to approve, monitor, renew, and, if necessary, close charter schools. NACSA provides professional development, practical resources, consulting, and policy guidance to authorizers. It also advocates for laws and policies that raise the bar for excellence among authorizers and the schools they charter.

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