

TULANE HULLABALOO

THE EYES AND EARS OF THE TULANE COMMUNITY

VOLUME CXIII NO. 26 APRIL 26, 2018

Tulane community alters landscape of NOLA public education

BY CAM LUTZ, LILY MILWIT & MATT SALETTA

SENIOR STAFF REPORTERS & ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

For the first time in a decade, citywide school performance has dropped in New Orleans, according to a recently released State of Public Education Report by Tulane's Cowen Institute.

The Cowen Institute is a Tulane-sponsored entity formed "to advance public education and youth success in New Orleans and beyond," according to the institute's website.

It is one of several Tulane-affiliated programs, offices and initiatives broadly aimed at supporting public education in the New Orleans area. These include the Education Research Alliance, the Tulane Teacher Preparation and Certification Program, the Center for Public Service and Upward Bound.

"I think as a world-class research institution and as one of the largest employers in the city, Tulane has a really important role to play in advancing education," Amanda Hill, executive director of the Cowen Institute, said.

Dubbed "The Experiment" by journalists and education scholars, the current education system in New Orleans was designed in response to the perceived shortcomings of the pre-Katrina education system. Now, almost all schools are charters – publicly funded and privately managed.

Tulane has refrained from endorsing any particular education policies in New Orleans. There is a perception, however, that Tulane and its affiliates are pro-reform. According to Associate Professor of Political Science J. Celeste Lay, this perception does not hold up to reality.

"[Tulane] does not have a position on charter schools or on elected governments or any of these topics with regard to the politics and the coalitions that make up the proponents and the opponents of this system," Lay, who teaches a course called "The Politics of Education Policy," said. "Tulane has tried very much to be on the outside of this system. That's politically a good strategy for Tulane, to not be affiliated with either side."

Instead of getting involved in the politics of policy, Tulane engages with education stakeholders primarily by providing research and student volunteers at local schools.



The New Orleans Charter Science and Mathematics High School (top) and Samuel J. Green Charter School (bottom) are located near Tulane in Uptown. Tulane-affiliated initiatives work with these and other local schools to advance education in the city.

JOSH JESSIMAN | PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

NOLA public school students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds



Public school students nationwide from economically disadvantaged backgrounds



EDUCATION 2