



1991 Minnesota passed the first state charter school law.

1990s the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation invested for innovation in charter schools and education management companies. Congress funded competitive federal grants to states/local districts for school innovations.

1993 Congress established Ameri-Corps, with Teach for America one of its several programs.

1993-94 Congress funded competitive grants for school innovations.

1995 Congress' support for charter schools began with authorization of the Public Charter Schools Program (PCSP) under U.S. Dept. of Education, and continues through the present.

1998 Congress passed Charter School Expansion Act, adding "mature" charter schools as eligible for grants as models to disseminate successful practices.

1995 Act 192 of the Louisiana Legislature established a pilot charter school program for up to 8 volunteer schools.

1997 Act 477 of the Louisiana Legislature allowed all school districts to participate in the charter school "experiment;" capped the state total at 42 schools; defined Types 1-4 charter schools and set the governing structure and regulation of those charter schools; established the Charter School Start-Up Loan Fund with no-interest loans under BESE for Types 1 and 2 charter schools.

2002 Congress reauthorized ESEA, "No Child Left Behind," with focus on school reform through accountability, i.e. high-stakes testing.

2002-03 school year 39 states and Washington D.C. had charter school laws in place. There were >2,700 charter schools operating nationally,

2003 the legislature established the Recovery School District (RSD). The state's voters passed a constitutional amendment authorizing BESE to take over schools considered to be failing or to allow others to take them over. It also reallocated the per-pupil state & local funding allocations to BESE for each charter school student attending an RSD school from that school district.

Acts 9, 260, 381 & 944 spelled out related procedures and created Type 5 charter schools.

2005 There were 18 charter schools in 12 local school districts, 5 of them under the Recovery School District.

2005 after August Hurricane Katrina and aftermath in New Orleans, in November the legislature passed Act 35 (HB121). The bill transferred >100 public schools from the jurisdiction of the Orleans Parish School Board to the Recovery School District and expanded the powers of the Recovery School District. The text of the bill transferred specifically all public schools performing below the statewide average academic performance for any parish having a population of 475,000. The same day the Orleans Parish School Board fired all of its school employees, in spite of their union contract and the School Board's having hired a firm to seek out and contact its employees to obtain their intention to return.

2009 there were 66 charter schools in Louisiana: 52 under BESE and 14 under local school districts. To enable Louisiana's schools to compete for Race to the Top grant funding, the Louisiana legislature removed its then cap of 70 schools.

2009 Congress' American Recovery and Reinvestment Act included Race to the Top competitive grants program. The U.S. Secretary of Education's implementation of the bill made only states without a cap on the number of charter schools and who required Common Core standards were eligible to be considered.

2011 there were 40 states with charter school laws and more than 4,000 charter schools.

2015 Congress authorized Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to replace No Child Left Behind.

2016, there were 42 states and District of Columbia with charter school laws and more than 6,700 charter schools in U.S.

2016 both the Black Lives Matter coalition and the NAACP issued statements against further privately run or managed charters due to issues of accountability, transparency, and equity.

2011 the Recovery School District centralized an enrollment process for its charter schools using a unified enrollment process, EnrollNOLA, "OneApp."

2012 BESE appointed John White as state Superintendent of Education. He had served briefly as Superintendent of the Recovery School District; 2006-2011 as Deputy Chancellor of New York City Schools & played a leadership role in development of the Innovation Zone, emphasizing customized digital learning; and prior to 2005 as Executive Director of Teach for America-Chicago and New Jersey.

2012 the Louisiana Legislature 's Act 2 (HB 976), among other requirements, created the

parent petition pathway for a public school to be transferred to the Recovery School District, along with Type 1B charter schools authorized by “local charter groups” to open charter schools serving regional workforce needs. [Type 1B removed from state statute in 2016]; and “grandfathered” charter schools’ admission requirement for charter schools with academic achievement as their mission who were in place by July, 2012.

2012 the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board and the Recovery School District signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) formally establishing the “Baton Rouge Achievement Zone” (BRAZ), as collaborative partnership to improve the academic achievement of the five low performing public schools in North Baton Rouge. The BRAZ Advisory Committee sought local priorities and expectations. By 2014 BRAZ’ schools grew to 14 charter schools. BRAZ established a common enrollment process, “ENROLLBR.

2013 the Orleans Parish School Board’s direct-run schools also participated in the OneApp unified enrollment. Each of its “legacy schools” continued to enroll its students following its own process.

2015-2016 there were 99 charter schools under BESE and 44 charter schools under local school boards—a total of 143.

2017 U.S. Department of Education funded institutions for teacher-training in the New Orleans area for one-year on-the-job residencies to recruit more local teachers, in particular more African-American teachers for the Orleans charter schools.

Orleans Parish Unification:

2016 Act 91 mandated a return (“unifying of systems”) of all Recovery School District’s Type 5 charter schools in Orleans Parish to the jurisdiction of the Orleans Parish School board by July 1, 2018. Under Act 91 the local school board functions as charter school authorizer, and oversees a mandatory universal enrollment system and a student expulsion process. All charter school contracts are continued until they come up for renewal by the Orleans Parish School Board. The Orleans’ Parish Schools Superintendent is empowered to recommend schools’ opening, renewal, and closure, subject to an override vote of two-thirds of its Board members.

Further, Act 91 states “unless mutually agreed... the local school board shall not impede the operational autonomy of a charter school ... in the areas of school programming, instruction, curriculum, materials and texts, yearly school calendars and daily schedules, hiring, and firing of personnel, employee performance management and evaluation, terms and conditions of employment, teacher or administrator certification, salaries and benefits, retirement, collective bargaining, budgeting, purchasing, procurement, and contracting for services other than capital repairs and facilities construction.”

Caddo Parish Next Zone:

In March, 2017 with funding from the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

for the “School Redesign Process, the Caddo Parish School Board and the Recovery School District signed a 3-year agreement forming the Transformation Next Zone to improve 14 of Shreveport’s lowest performing schools. (15 schools were still classified as “Academically Unacceptable Status,” after 4 or more consecutive years under the governance of the Recovery School District.) One of the two historically African-American high schools was closed as part of the plan, following an unsuccessful lawsuit attempting to prevent the closure, and its students were merged into the second high school).

The State Superintendent and Caddo Parish Superintendent are to jointly establish long term and annual goals for the schools within “The Zone”, with consultation with the Caddo Transformations Advisory Council by the Caddo Parish Superintendent. The 7-member Council is jointly appointed by the State and Parish Superintendents, and is to be composed of parish residents reflecting diversity by race, gender and professional background.

As of 2017 an Assistant Superintendent of the Louisiana Department of Education serves as the Chief Executive Officer of BRAZ.

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