



Credit: The Algiers Charter School Association

## New Year, New Challenges



Credit: The Algiers Charter School Association

Happy New Year! 2015 brings with it many milestones, from the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Louisiana Charter School Law to the 10th anniversary of Katrina, to electing a new Governor in the fall.

The changes in the public education system over the last two decades have been incredible. In my time as E.D. of the Association, the number of students being served by charter schools throughout the state has more than tripled to over 70,000. Families have sent a clear statement that they want to control decisions about their children's education and not allow zip codes to mandate those choices.

Unfortunately, this increase in educational options has brought about greater opposition from the status quo. Every year, legislation is filed that, if passed, would create more hurdles for educational choice. 2014 saw numerous lawsuits filed by local school districts and teacher unions that could have grave impact on charter schools.

We have held the line and even pushed it forward. However, the opposition is not turning back and has been emboldened by recent election results, political flip-flops and legal victories. If we are to thrive, even survive perhaps, then we must extend our energy, passion and efforts from beyond the classroom and into the hallways of the state capital, to BESE and district board rooms and, most importantly, into the community.

As a sports fan, I'm reminded of a television ad that ran in the 90's narrated by Duke basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski for the March Madness NCAA basketball tournament. The ad shows kids all over the world practicing their free throws while Coach K says: "Somewhere, he is out there training while I am not, and when we meet, he will win."

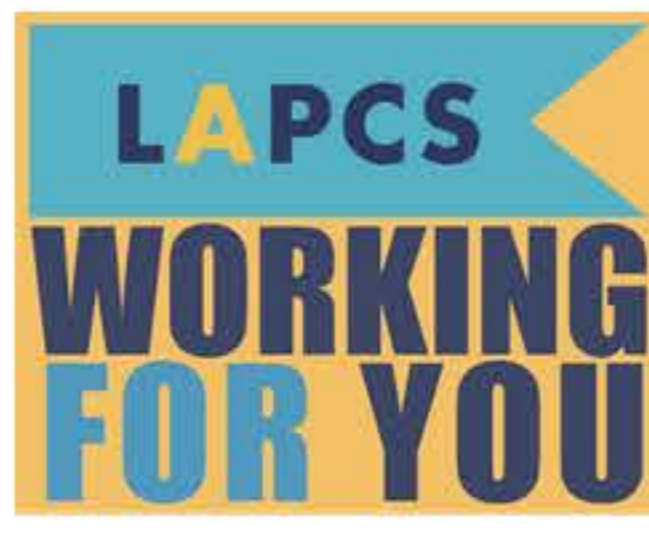
The special interest groups representing the past are practicing their free throws. They are operating from a position of fear - a fear of loss - which makes people ferocious. If you don't believe me, just check out the recent school board races in Jefferson Parish and the money that the national teacher unions dumped into those races.

Whether you are a charter school board member, an educator, a parent, a public education supporter or just someone that believes that education choices makes for a better Louisiana, know that we will need your help in 2015 as we prepare for this year's legislative session. When we send out calls to action, be prepared to answer. Help us bring our message to Baton Rouge. We must stand together to ensure the progress we have made continues throughout 2015 and beyond. If we do not, we risk losing the progress we have made in providing families with educational options.

### In this month's newsletter:

- [In the News](#)
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## LAPCS: Working for You!



**January 21: New Student Privacy Rules Webinar.** Hosted by LAPCS Policy Director Veronica Brooks, this Bottom Line webinar will discuss the new student privacy rules that went into effect January 1. This Bottom Line webinar is only open to LAPCS members. For more information, contact LAPCS Legal Director [Sarah Vandergriff](#).

**January 22: Increased Renewal Standards Webinar.** The Louisiana Department of Education recently created the Charter School Performance Compact for Types 2s, 4s and 5s as a way to more transparently about how schools are held accountable. This webinar, presented by The Top Shelf, will offer insights about the increased renewal standards and ways for boards to be proactive in this important process. [Click to register.](#)

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### In the News



- [Rex foundation gives \\$860,000 to education groups](#)
- [22 New Orleans students to receive free college tuition as 2015 Posse Scholars](#)
- [US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and Mayor Mitch Landrieu tour Arthur Ashe Charter School](#)
- [MAX Charter School approved for three more years](#)
- [One quarter of New Orleans public schools see their charters reauthorized or extended](#)
- [Charter schools help improve special education in New Orleans](#)
- [Special ed students thriving at Cohen](#)
- [The unappreciated success of charter schools](#)

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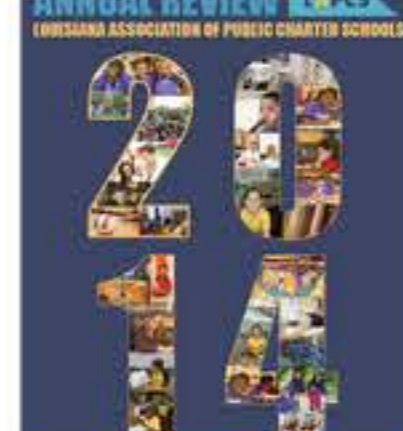
### Educating Louisiana: New Episode March 5!



New episodes of *Educating Louisiana* will air on Cox 4 Thursday nights at 7:00 pm (repeating on Monday evenings at 10:30 pm) in New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Lafayette beginning on March 5. New episodes will also now air on Northshore Channel 17 on Sundays at 7:00 pm (repeating on Wednesdays at 7:00 PM and Mondays at 4:30 pm) beginning on March 1. As always, you can view past episodes on our [Vimeo page](#).

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## LAPCS 2014 Annual Review



Our 2014 Annual Review will soon be released! The review will discuss the ways LAPCS fulfilled its mission to support, promote and advocate for Louisiana charter schools throughout last year. Each school leader, CEO and board chair will be mailed a copy of the newsletter. An electronic copy will also be posted on our website.

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### The Top Shelf: Latest News



In addition to the upcoming webinar on January 22, The Top Shelf recently released its [January newsletter](#), which includes current news and information and links to past webinars.

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### The Bottom Line: Latest News



The Bottom Line recently released its [January newsletter](#) and will host a January 21st webinar on new student privacy rules. The Bottom Line program is exclusive to LAPCS members. If you're interested in joining the association, contact LAPCS Membership and School Development Director [Simone Green](#).

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### Just the Facts: Graduation Rates in the US



According to [DoSomething.org](#), only 69% of US high school seniors earn their diploma each year. In Louisiana, that number is less than 60%, one of the lowest in the nation. 30 years ago, the US led industrialized nations in the quantity and quality of high school diplomas; we now rank 18th out of 23 nations.

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### Featured School System: The Algiers Charter School Association

Each month, LAPCS will feature a different school (or school system) and share highlights, milestones, and good news for that school. This month we're featuring The Algiers Charter School Association, but we would love to feature your school in the coming months! [E-mail us](#) and let us share your good news!



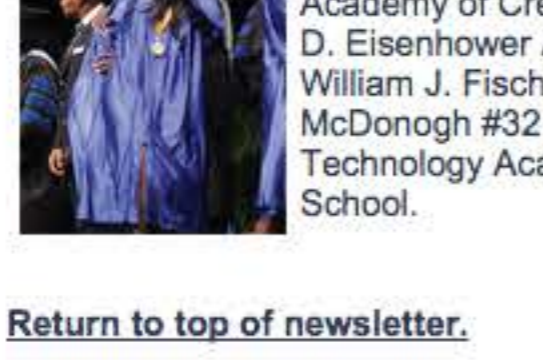
Founded in 2005 by a nonprofit board comprised of members from the Orleans Parish School Board and neighborhood representatives, the Algiers Charter School Association (ACSA) provided the first educational options for families returning to Algiers and the wider New Orleans community after Hurricane Katrina.



ACSA is the largest charter management organization in Louisiana, serving 4,190 children from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade across six schools: Martin Behrman Charter School Academy of Creative Arts and Sciences; Dwight D. Eisenhower Academy of Global Studies; William J. Fischer Accelerated Academy; McDonogh #32 Literacy Charter School; Algiers Technology Academy; and Landry-Walker High School.

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### Partner Connection Spot



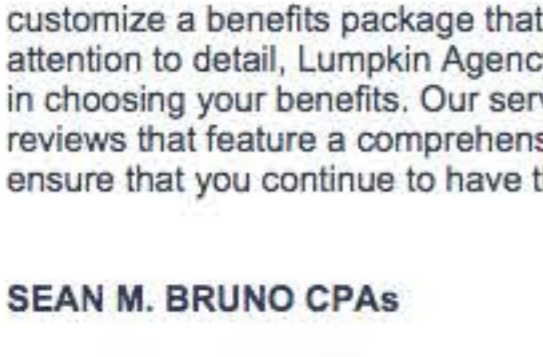
From employee benefits to accounting and classroom instruction, we've got you covered! Check out the newest addition to our vendor partners.

### THE LUMPKIN AGENCY



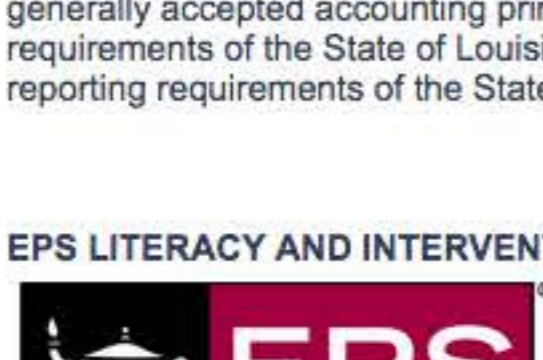
The Lumpkin Agency is your independent advocate in the Benefits Marketplace. This means that we represent the best national and local carriers to customize a benefits package that best fits your needs. Paying close attention to detail, Lumpkin Agency will make sure you feel confident in choosing your benefits. Our service also includes annual benefit reviews that feature a comprehensive review of the marketplace to ensure that you continue to have the best option available to you.

### SEAN M. BRUNO CPAs



Sean M. Bruno CPAs provides back office support and start-up services to public charter schools. We assist in providing timely and reliable financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and the reporting requirements of the State of Louisiana Laugh Guide and any other reporting requirements of the State.

### EPS LITERACY AND INTERVENTION



EPS provides K - 12 blended learning solutions to help at-risk and on-level students build proficiency in reading and math. Our programs connect time-tested content and innovation to give educators the power of differentiation to meet the needs of a variety of students. From screening, to instruction and intervention, we offer an integrated approach to address the Common Core State Standards and RTI. Please visit [epsbooks.com](#) or call 800.225.5750 for more information.

Check out our entire list of partners by visiting our [website](#). Don't see something you're searching for? Help us pick the partners you desire by completing a short feedback [survey](#).

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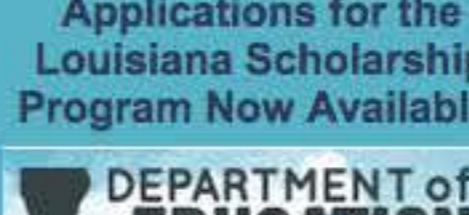
### Donate to LAPCS by Shopping Online!



You can donate to LAPCS just by shopping online! Visit [Amazon Smile](#) or [iGive.com](#) and make LAPCS your charity of choice. A percentage of your purchases will be donated to LAPCS.

### NEWS FROM OUR PARTNERS

#### Applications for the Louisiana Scholarship Program Now Available



The Louisiana Scholarship Program provides low-income families with the financial resources to choose a school that will prepare their child for a lifetime of success. Students must be enrolled in a C, D or F rated school for the 2014-2015 school year or entering kindergarten. For more information or to obtain an application, visit their [website](#).

#### Louisiana Bar Foundation Kids' Chance Scholarship Program



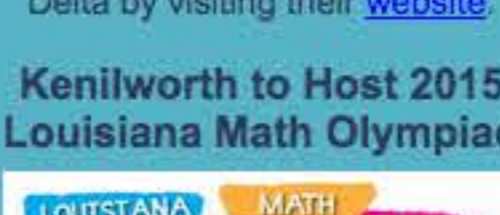
The Louisiana Bar Foundation (LBF) Kids' Chance Scholarship Program awards scholarships to dependent children of certain workers killed or permanently and totally disabled in an accident. For more information on eligibility requirements and to download an application, visit their [website](#). The application deadline is February 20, 2015.

#### Seeking a High School Director



KIPP Delta is seeking a High School Director for KIPP Blytheville Collegiate High School in Blytheville, Arkansas. [Click for more information](#) about the position. Learn more about KIPP Delta by visiting their [website](#).

#### Kenilworth to Host 2015 Louisiana Math Olympiad



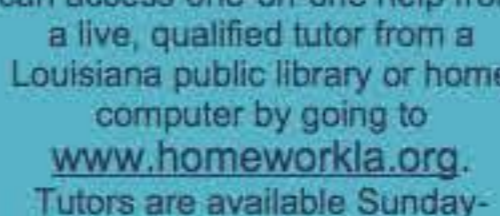
Those "old school" days are coming back at the 2015 Louisiana Elementary Math Olympiad, open to all fourth and fifth-grade students in Louisiana. The event will be held Saturday, Feb. 21, 2015 at Kenilworth Science and Technology Charter School in Baton Rouge. Registration for the event must be completed by February 7.

#### Free Online Homework/Tutoring Services



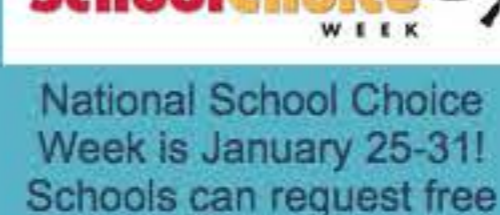
The State Library of Louisiana offers FREE online tutoring to K-12 Louisiana residents. Students can access one-on-one help from a live, qualified tutor from a Louisiana public library or home computer by going to [www.homeworkia.org](#). Tutors are available Sunday-Thursday from 2:00-10:00 pm. Over 1,800 tutors offer academic help in math, science, social studies, and English. For more information, contact [Angela Germany](#).

#### National School Choice Week-Free Supplies!



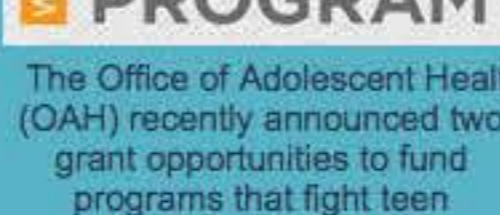
National School Choice Week is January 25-31! Schools can request free supplies to celebrate and promote school choice by visiting their [website](#).

#### OAH Grant Opportunities



The Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) recently announced two grant opportunities to fund programs that fight teen pregnancy while promoting positive youth development and engaging the community. The deadline to apply is April 1. For more information, visit their [website](#).

#### Math and Science Partnership Grant Opportunity



The Louisiana Department of Education is announcing a new round of competitive funding for Mathematics and Science Partnership subgrants. The application deadline is February 27. Visit their [website](#) for more information.

#### Independent Evaluators Needed



The Orleans Parish School Board is seeking independent evaluators to review charter school applications during the 2015 Charter School RFA process. For more information, visit their [website](#).

#### LAA-SCD Conference



The Louisiana Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development will host its Spring Conference on Friday, March 27 at the Landmark Hotel in Metairie. E-mail [kevery@miknola.org](#) for more information.

#### Free Tickets to SELMA for New Orleans Students



New Orleans 7th, 8th and 9th graders can receive a free ticket to the civil rights drama *Selma* by showing their student ID at the box office of participating theaters. Tickets are limited. For a list of theaters and more information, visit [selmastudenttickets.com](#).



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