Updated for 2020-2021

This plan, which has been reviewed and approved by the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), is based on peer-reviewed research, LDOE Tier 1 Curriculum recommendations, and best practices in K-8 education.

NeST staff and an external program evaluator (TBD) will support the school in monitoring success of new strategies of the School Plan (related to academic achievement, high-quality curricula and assessments, high-quality PD, and teacher retention), and continuing initiatives (individualized intervention, supplemental course offerings, etc). Structures, systems, and staff already exist to administer interim and annual assessments, gather and analyze student achievement and growth outcomes, implement the TNTP Insight Survey, and report educator retention data. Formal collaborative monitoring will occur at 6-week intervals to identify whether the intervention is improving student achievement and retention, and where adjustments are needed to boost program outcomes.

System-wide Interventions

Principal Coaching

Leader preparation directly impacts teacher and student performance. 100% of ReNEW principals receive ongoing coaching. Multiple data sets from the annual TNTP Insight Survey, interim assessments, student and teacher attendance, teacher coaching cycles, and family and student surveys, all inform and customize coaching for each ReNEW leader. Leaders also share best practices with each other during full-day, monthly leader cohort PDs.

Saturday, summer and After-school Programming

Saturday school, summer school, and school-year extended-day programming provide additional learning time to improve student achievement. ELT allows at-risk students to participate in high-quality tutoring, credit recovery, remediation, and enrichment in individual and small-group formats. In high-stakes test grades, students study content they need to retake any LEAP 2025 assessments needed to pass to the next grade or to graduate. Educators who serve in ELT receive stipends for their additional preparation and teaching activities. High-quality tutoring/remediation is aligned with DSS allowable activities, and uses Tier 1 curricula and evidence based intervention programs.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion training

Overcoming Racism training is an intensive, high-quality PD for 100% of ReNEW NeST and school staff. The training exposes adults to inequities, begins difficult conversations, and helps educators better serve ReNEW's students and families of color (98%). Overcoming Racism PDs are offered in a variety of methods (large group, follow up lunch series, surveys, etc.). The intervention will impact schoolwide behavior / culture as adults increase awareness of daily challenges facing students of color. To sustain this important work past 2018, ReNEW will hire a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer. S/he will help leaders assess their campus attitudes, policies, and activities and build equitable and inclusive practices. S/he will support the Human Capital team in attracting and hiring effective educators of color. This foundational intervention is aligned to high-quality leader PD, high-quality teacher PD, school-wide discipline/school culture, supporting diverse learners, and educator retention.

Network Support
Tier 1 curricula and assessments, professional learning packages, additional master teachers, and leadership training are among the main resources needed to implement new intervention strategies.

ReNEW's Network Support Team (NeST) will support in implementing and monitoring all School Plan initiatives and activities. Dedicated grants staff serve as points of coordination to braid initiatives and facilitate conversations among network and partner stakeholders. Grants staff spend significant time daily, providing technical assistance and support for program management, compliance, reporting, and auditing.

Human Capital (HC) staff support recruiting, screening, and managing educators, with goals of increasing educator effectiveness, diversity, and retention. HC supports school-based leaders in identifying critical workforce needs and coordinating pipeline partners to provide appropriate teacher residents. Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) staff oversee teacher induction and coaching, providing extra support to novice and new-to-ReNEW educators. C&I staff will continue to support collection, reporting, and analysis of student achievement data to identify trends. Operations staff provide safe, efficient facilities, allowing leader focus on academic coaching instead of management. NeST IT staff provide daily expertise to ensure continual, high levels of technology service that directly impacts implementation of Tier 1 curricula and assessments, high-quality PD, and effective, engaging classroom pedagogy.

School-based leaders and teachers are extremely invested in the intervention plan, and have been collaborating with the NeST team and Ms. Wondwossen for several months to identify needs, determine priorities, and dialogue with curriculum and PD providers to build the 3-year intervention. With support from the NeST and an external program evaluator, school-based staff will spearhead implementation of the intervention strategies with fidelity, in a systematic, impactful way. Utilizing the approved plan, schools will expand PD for teachers and leaders, replace curricula and assessments with Tier 1 resources, and secure additional master teachers to support teachers and leaders.

Robust, job-embedded intervention trainings for teachers and leaders will focus on Tier 1 curricula and assessments, training in core content and strategies, and leader development. As identified in the needs assessment, content training will be provided by LDOE-approved vendors, LDOE-trained content specialists, or master teachers.

**Direct Student Services**

**Direct Student Services at ReNEW**

Direct Student Services (DSS) programs support students in gaining access to academic courses, credentials, and services that are not currently available at their schools.

DSS funds support ReNEW K-8 campuses in offering advanced courses (such as Algebra I) that are not available on campus. DSS funds may also support high-quality tutoring services. Tutors will be dedicated to helping students remediate missing skills and content, and will be trained in and utilize Tier1 ELA and math curricula and evidence-based intervention programs. Tutoring also supports extended learning time, with services continuing where needed on Saturdays, after school, and/or during the summer.

**Outreach**

Each ReNEW campus engages multiple family and community outreach strategies to build positive relationships and increase parental participation and voice in educational programming. Specific campus strategies include a) monthly parent -teacher working groups; b) annual student and family surveys with distribution and data analysis supported by School Operations Managers and ReNEW's Directors of Data; c) the Student Learner Profiles (populated by
Schoolrunner) provide ongoing parental access to student data including achievement, growth, attendance, course enrollment, and credits earned; and d) parent engagement nights educate families on school programs and offerings and gather written feedback on what course and service offerings parents would like to see expanded or added. Each ReNEW campus parent liaison seeks vital parent and family input on student success and support needs.

Public report

ReNEW campuses participate in the NOLA.com open access web portal. The portal easily allows parents to use the search feature to find a school and easily view school offerings and student achievement scores. Data is readily accessible by parents and the community within 1 week of becoming available from LDOE. Student outcomes are also reported monthly at public board meetings, however parent attendance at board meetings is low. ReNEW's dashboard initiative is directly targeted to parents and educators. ReNEW spent 2 years and significant resources to develop the student and parent learner profile portal. The portal is a secure academic dashboard, customized to each ReNEW student, that includes a wealth of real-time student outcomes data: benchmark scores, grades, GPA, credits earned, and attendance. The learner profile pulls real-time data from Schoolrunner, and allows students to set goals and monitor their ongoing progress toward each goal. Finally, ReNEW campuses hold annual recognition luncheons and evening award Ceremonies. At these events, students, families, and educators celebrate student achievement, college acceptance, dual enrollment credits earned, and IBCs earned.

Availability of seats

All ReNEW students and families must annually renew their choice to attend a ReNEW campus. There is no automatic enrollment. As Recovery School District campuses, all ReNEW schools are required to participate in the One App process. The One App allows families and students to select schools based on multiple characteristics, including SPS, letter grade, student achievement, class size, enrichment offerings, location, diversity, educator experience, etc. Annual placement is determined by a vetted, unbiased enrollment formula, allowing families to move their children out of CIR schools to those with demonstrated success.

Monitor Direct student services

ReNEW's Network Support Team (NeST) supports school teams in selecting DSS activities, accessing qualified providers, negotiating contracts, and processing payments on DSS activities. The NeST staff, especially the Finance/Grants Team and the Curriculum & Instruction Team, support school-based staff extensively in implementing and monitoring their DSS strategies as an integral part of school improvement. With support from the NeST staff and the School Redesign external program evaluator, school leaders will review intervention implementation monthly. With each semester, all stakeholders, including external partners, will review achievement benchmarks and other student outcomes to support schools in providing meaningful, high-quality, and robust DSS courses and activities.
## Tier 1 Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birth to Age 5</th>
<th>K-2</th>
<th>Grades 3-5</th>
<th>Grades 6-8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>Teaching Strategies</td>
<td>Fundations; partially transitioned to ELA Guidebooks; ReadyGen</td>
<td>Teacher-created; partially transitioned to ELA Guidebooks</td>
<td>Teacher-created; partially transitioned to ELA Guidebooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>Frog Street; Creative Curriculum</td>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>Frog Street; Creative Curriculum</td>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>Frog Street; Creative Curriculum</td>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA</td>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>Teacher-created; Zearn (PK)</td>
<td>Zearn Math</td>
<td>Teacher-created; partially transitioned to Zearn Math</td>
<td>Teacher-created; partially transitioned to Zearn Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>Frog Street; Zearn</td>
<td>ZEARN</td>
<td>ZEARN</td>
<td>OPEN UP ILLUSTRATIVE MATH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>Frog Street; Zearn</td>
<td>ZEARN</td>
<td>ZEARN</td>
<td>OPEN UP ILLUSTRATIVE MATH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>Frog Street; Zearn</td>
<td>ZEARN</td>
<td>ZEARN</td>
<td>OPEN UP ILLUSTRATIVE MATH</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Tier 1 Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Type</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Birth to Age 5</th>
<th>K-2</th>
<th>Grades 3-5</th>
<th>Grades 6-8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELA screener/</td>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>Teaching Strategies GOLD</td>
<td>STEP, DCI-created; NWEA MAP Reading</td>
<td>DCI-created assessments; LEAP 360, Star Reading</td>
<td>DCI-created assessments; LEAP 360, MAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diagnostic &amp;</td>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>Teaching Strategies GOLD</td>
<td>Wit &amp; Wisdom Assessments; STEP</td>
<td>Wit &amp; Wisdom; LEAP 360</td>
<td>LEAP 360, MAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interims</td>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>Teaching Strategies GOLD</td>
<td>Wit &amp; Wisdom Assessments; STEP</td>
<td>Wit &amp; Wisdom; LEAP 360</td>
<td>LEAP 360, MAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>Teaching Strategies GOLD</td>
<td>Wit &amp; Wisdom Assessments; STEP</td>
<td>Wit &amp; Wisdom; LEAP 360</td>
<td>LEAP 360, MAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math screener/</td>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>Teaching Strategies GOLD</td>
<td>STEP, DCI-created; NWEA MAP Math</td>
<td>DCI-created assessments; LEAP 360, Illustrative Math</td>
<td>DCI-created assessments; LEAP 360, Illustrative Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diagnostic &amp;</td>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>Teaching Strategies GOLD</td>
<td>ZEARN ASSESSMENTS</td>
<td>ZEARN; LEAP 360</td>
<td>LEAP 360, Illustrative Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interims</td>
<td>2019-2020</td>
<td>Teaching Strategies GOLD</td>
<td>ZEARN ASSESSMENTS</td>
<td>ZEARN; LEAP 360</td>
<td>LEAP 360, Illustrative Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2020-2021</td>
<td>Teaching Strategies GOLD</td>
<td>ZEARN ASSESSMENTS</td>
<td>ZEARN; LEAP 360</td>
<td>LEAP 360, Illustrative Math</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Tier 1 Teacher Professional Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2018-2019 Curriculum</th>
<th>2018-2019 PD Provider</th>
<th>Audience (e.g. teachers)</th>
<th>Structure (e.g. 1-on-1 coaching)</th>
<th>2018-2019 Grade Level(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frog Street; Creative Curriculum</td>
<td>Frog Street, Teaching Strategies LLC</td>
<td>Birth-age 5 teachers</td>
<td>1-to-1 teacher coaching</td>
<td>Birth-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELA Guidebooks, Wit &amp; Wisdom (cross-curricular writing using Hochman Method)</td>
<td>Writing Revolution</td>
<td>ELA teachers and leaders, paras, academic interventionists, and AC members</td>
<td>4 half-day trainings, large group</td>
<td>K-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
<td>Achievement Network</td>
<td>ELA teachers and leaders, paras, academic interventionists, and AC members, additional focus on novice educators</td>
<td>Small group coaching especially for novice teachers</td>
<td>K-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
<td>Great Minds; Jounce</td>
<td>ELA teachers and leaders, paras, academic interventionists, and AC members</td>
<td>2-day training institute followed up w 1-on-1 coaching</td>
<td>K-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Minds Wit &amp; Wisdom</td>
<td>Great Minds; Jounce</td>
<td>Leaders; ELA master teachers, Directors of Curriculum and Instruction</td>
<td>One full-day workshop to ensure fidelity of coaching and support</td>
<td>K-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZEARN</td>
<td>ZEARN</td>
<td>Math teachers and leaders, paras, academic interventionists, and AC members</td>
<td>2-day training institute followed up w 1-on-1 coaching</td>
<td>K-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZEARN</td>
<td>ZEARN</td>
<td>Leaders; math master teachers, Directors of Curriculum and Instruction</td>
<td>Two full-day workshop to ensure fidelity of coaching and support &quot;Lead Zearn Math&quot;</td>
<td>K-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILLUSTRATIVE MATH</td>
<td>OPEN UP</td>
<td>Leaders; math master teachers, Directors of Curriculum and Instruction</td>
<td>1-to-1 coaching for leaders and master teachers</td>
<td>K-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies / Cross Curricular: Mini-Qs and DBQs</td>
<td>The DBQ Project</td>
<td>All academic staff</td>
<td>Full-day workshops and coach workshop to ensure fidelity of implementation</td>
<td>3-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>TBD after vetting and alignment of needs</td>
<td>school Leaders</td>
<td>Intensive, weekly leadership coaching on long-term planning, curricula expertise, and coaching</td>
<td>Pk-8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dolores T. Aaron Elementary School
2018 Comprehensive Evaluation
PART A: REFLECTION ON PAST PERFORMANCE

Academic Program and Impact

As a turnaround Charter Management Organization (CMO), ReNEW actively sought the lowest performing, open enrollment public PK-8 school in New Orleans to manage. Dolores T. Aaron Elementary (DTA), formerly Reed Elementary, was taken over by ReNEW in July 2011 with the mission to provide a rigorous, college preparatory education to historically underserved students.

ReNEW implemented a full school turnaround model coupled with a small school approach to reach learners that had difficulty in past educational environments. ReNEW schools stood apart from others because the ReNEW founders invested in students who were currently at the school, took over the whole school, and changed the results. Utilizing a small school approach, DTA’s large population of students was broken down into smaller populations, or smaller schools, with the grade bands of PK-2, 3-5, and 6-8, each with its own principal. This structure allowed those principals to focus on a smaller number of students, parents and teachers with the underlying goal of focused management to yield expedited results. The structure remained that way until 2013-14, and in 2014-15 the school was and remains broken down into two smaller populations with the grade bands PK-4 and 5-8.

From 2011 to 2018, DTA has served the student population depicted in the graph below and has a high incidence of students that directly qualify for free and reduced lunch.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Students Served (Feb 1)</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited English Proficiency</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with Disabilities (Feb 1)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifted/Talented</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When ReNEW was founded in 2010, school performance data indicated that less than 30% of students were on grade level and were not receiving an education that was preparing them to attend college. In the first year in which ReNEW operated DTA, the Academic Index climbed from 36 to 48, and further climbed to 65 and 66 in the 2014-15 school year and the 2015-16 school year, respectively. DTA was also designated a “C” School Performance Score in 2014-15 and 2015-16. Although renewal timelines that target growth were the same for all charters, ReNEW took on the auspicious goal of increasing the student achievement of the same population of students without regard to renewal timelines.
In the first five years of operations, ReNEW and DTA focused on results and used data to drive instruction and results. We sought to implement curricula, pedagogy, and school culture that had been clearly demonstrated in preparing students for success on the state standardized exams and college matriculation. The following practices were key levers that were critical and necessary to maximizing student achievement:

- Recruit and empower outstanding teaching professionals
- Expect all students to work hard and meet or exceed high academic standards
- Establish a structured and orderly learning environment
- Teach with curricula and instructional models that have proven results
- Assess and analyze data regularly to ensure each student achieves academically

Recruit and empower outstanding teaching professionals

Recruiting and retaining great teachers has been one of DTA’s foremost priorities and DTA has boasted the most stable teaching staff in the ReNEW network. DTA has and continues to leverage every recruitment resource available, including teachNOLA, an initiative of The New Teacher Project, Teach for America, local and national university educational schools, and national networks with high-performing charter school organizations from across the country to maximize the potential of recruiting teachers who have demonstrated clear results in driving student achievement in their classrooms. We understand that teachers must be provided effective leadership to unlock their full capacity to advance student achievement. John Gravier, School Director of DTA, has been with DTA since ReNEW took over the school in 2011 and he empowers teachers with professional development, a strong culture, and clear accountability systems that are tied directly to the best
practices of the teaching profession.

Expect all students to work hard and meet or exceed high academic standards

ReNEW and DTA realize that many students enter school with significant deficiencies in basic skills. We believe that one of the most tragic and grossly erroneous conclusions one could make about a student who is performing below grade level is that he or she is incapable of meeting or exceeding high academic standards. At DTA, we ensure that we hold high expectations for every child, regardless of his or her past performance, home environment, race, or socioeconomic background. The response to a child who is not meeting the school’s rigorous academic and behavioral standards is not to make excuses or lower the rigor, but instead to employ every educational resource available to ensure that the student reaches his or her full potential. We believe that each and every child will achieve academic excellence.

Establish a structured and orderly learning environment

At DTA, we echo the same core believe that highly successful schools do: a highly disciplined culture is integral to establishing an environment where students can achieve at high levels. John Gravier has spent years building the culture and structure at DTA through explicit processes, procedures, rituals and routines that are consistent in every classroom and hallway. Consistency in culture also drives results and this kind of structure did not come easily and did not sufficiently pervade the school building without deliberate design, detailed planning, and comprehensive training for all staff and students in the common systems that have been embraced by the school. At DTA, we understand that in order for every student to succeed, the school culture must be highly structured, academically focused, and embedded with a sense of personal and collective accountability.

Teach curricular and instructional models that have proven results

ReNEW’s overall instructional approach was not rooted in innovation or experimentation with no respect to curriculum and pedagogy; rather it was an instructional program that was implemented and informed by successful practice of high-performing urban public schools that allowed for creative teacher adaptation and improvement tied to measurable outcomes. Based upon the work of ReNEW’s Academic Leadership Team, the development of curriculum satisfied the following foundational criteria:

- Scope, sequence, and assessments aligned with the Louisiana Grade-Level Expectations and the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum, Common Core, and the Louisiana Student Standards and supplemented with standards that promote rigor and critical thinking.
- Proven results through the practice of successful public schools.
- “Spiraling” cumulative review of past concepts throughout the school year to continuously reinforce student learning and basic skills. Key concepts are revisited throughout the school year to refresh past learning.
- Integration of literacy instruction into every subject and every lesson.

Teachers were strongly encouraged to incorporate lesson plans and curricula from the top-
performing urban charter schools in the country, including KIPP, Achievement First, and Uncommon Schools - all charter organizations that have demonstrated consistent success in outperforming district and state averages on state exams, as well as high rates of college matriculations. ReNEW’s instructional leaders selected the best supplemental curriculum materials with proven results and provided robust professional development to use those resources well. Within classrooms, teachers used individualized instruction and differentiated instructions to meet the needs of all types of learners. Teachers constantly assessed students and tracked their progress throughout the year in all subjects. The data gathered from the assessments was used to provide additional supports for students performing below grade level.

Assess and analyze data regularly to ensure each student achieves academically

In the first four years, ReNEW Schools and DTA partnered with the Achievement Network to develop and maintain a yearlong assessment system. Accordingly, a set of scope and sequence assessments were given every six weeks in each subject and grade to provide continuous and comprehensive information regarding DTA’s overall progress in meeting academic performance. While teachers would use the results of these assessments to analyze and adapt their instruction to student learning accordingly the same way that they would any other unit quiz or test, these comprehensive exams were standardized to allow School Leaders to assess class, grade, and teacher performance at a more aggregate level. Furthermore, the instructional leader would use the assessments to identify specific teachers or areas of curriculum in need of immediate development to ensure student academic success. One of the cornerstones of DTA’s success of the first five years of operation was careful planning and diligent monitoring of student academic progress.

Although DTA had respectable gains in it’s first five years of operations, the decline in years 2016-17 and 2017-18 have caused us to reflect upon our current practices and consider other avenues of improvement. Upon reflection, we found that some of the practices described in the preceding section were not carried forth when both founders of ReNEW departed in 2016 and 2017.

- Teach with curricula and instructional models that have proven results
- Assess and analyze data regularly to ensure each student achieves academically
- Coach teachers on a regular basis to build strong classroom culture, implement the curriculum with fidelity, and drive student learning

Specifically, we must refocus around the following principles to be successful in the future. Not only must these principles guide us into the next chapter at DTA, but we also must make sure that all the principles described in the preceding section be cornerstones of our success.

Teach with curricula and instructional models that have proven results

Teacher development and retention plays a crucial role in systematizing high-quality instruction. The past two years show a marked decline citywide in the ability to maintain the vast talent pool attracted to the city during the initial period following Hurricane Katrina. In an attempt to address this increasingly transient teacher population school leadership requested the lead network instructional staff focus their efforts on generating detailed curriculum plans for core subjects. The intended goal of this initiative was to provide high quality scripted lesson plans to balance the lack of teacher level
instructional background needed to generate such plans. The late in the academic year timing of this request and lack of resources available were both significant negative factors that could not be overcome. Additionally, the availability of high-quality commercially produced curriculum with documented results was determined to be a better solution.

Assess and analyze data regularly to ensure each student achieves academically

All levels of a high performing school and network must engage in continuous reflection and be prepared to make course adjustments to meet established goals. Regularly scheduled and executed opportunities for every team member from CEO to school leaders to teachers to collect and review data is essential in charting and adjusting the course of action. Network level data days scheduled at crucial points throughout the academic year are critical to the success of a data-driven instruction and inquiry approach. Under new leadership, during the 2017-18 academic year, a decision was made to move away from the longstanding and successful practice of hosting quarterly network level data days as well as school-based re-assessment and reflection meetings. Collaborative opportunities to determine where we were regarding our goals, identify gaps in student knowledge, and subsequently craft and execute action plans to adjust course were lost as a result of this decision.

Coach teachers on a regular basis to build strong classroom culture, implement the curriculum with fidelity, and drive student learning

At ReNEW, we believe that all teachers—regardless of experience or performance level—can improve in meaningful, measurable, and significant ways through great coaching. This guiding principle is the foundation for the coaching model we developed in collaboration with national partners who have achieved proven results. Below are examples of the teacher feedback we received after participation within ReNEW’s coaching program:

- “Coaching with ReNEW has been really great for me. It has been probably the most genuine and helpful coaching I have received since originally getting my education degree.”
- “Continue coaching teachers...All teachers deserve to be coached and developed. Keep hiring content experts at the CMO level to ensure content is appropriate and rigorous.”
- “Coaching here is amazing-I have never felt like I have grown so much in half a year of teaching before.”

A decision was made to abandon ReNEW’s coaching model and instead contract with an upstart external partner for the 2017-18 school year. The specific high-quality academic content coaching provided under the ReNEW model with in-house content specific personnel was discontinued. Historically, ReNEW coaching goals included prioritizing coaching for all teachers. The externally contracted model utilized during the 2017-18 did not focus on academic content and only targeted support for one team member at DTA which significantly limited the potential for impact.

Student Experience

Love. Family. Joy. These are the words that many use to express the feeling you get when
entering the DTA building. We have intentionally thought through every aspect of our school to ensure that our students have an amazing educational experience each and every day. Everything done at DTA is derived from our mission and core values.

**Mission Statement:** Our mission at Dolores T. Aaron Academy is to provide a positive learning environment that inspires excellence, fosters integrity, and stimulates critical thinking to support our students as they fulfill their academic and personal potential.

**Core Values:** Community--Leadership--Integrity--Perseverance--Scholarship

Our mission and core values serve as the foundation of the school culture and will permeate with students throughout life. We work incredibly hard to ensure that the daily experiences of our students and our staff reflect the spirit of our mission and core values and are thus translated into actions and habits. These are not things that we simply just “talk about”...we live them.

At DTA, we are most proud of the commitment that our students and families make to our school community. Each year, we welcome in a new class of four year-old Pre-K students and then in the spring, we send off another class of 8th grade students on to high school. What happens over the course of those years from Pre-K to 8th grade is what truly makes DTA such a special place. Aligned to our mission, we are constantly seeking out the best ways to support ALL of our students to fulfill their academic and personal potential during their time at DTA. Most of our students and families choose to stay with DTA year after year because they believe in what we are trying to accomplish as a school, and believe in the community that we are building.

At the core of our school culture, we love to celebrate. At DTA, the small wins are celebrated and the big victories are celebrated. Every achievement and every success is important. We take the time to intentionally celebrate our students’ academic and personal achievements over the course of a school year, whether they meet their behavior goal for the week, achieve Mastery on a Benchmark assessment, have an Honor Roll GPA, or get selected as the “Scholar of the Month” recipient. We firmly believe that all of our students should be celebrated for their growth and achievements, regardless of how they started the school year in August. It is not where students start, but where they finish that is most important.

One of the most special traditions, and the students’ favorite, is the DTA Value Shirt. Each week, a different DTA core value is chosen and that value is promoted throughout the school community for that week. At the end of the week, a staff member presents a student from each homeroom class a DTA Value Shirt in front of their peers. This is a significant accomplishment for students because they are recognized by their peers for going above and beyond; all in the spirit of our core values. The core values of DTA are not just words on a wall that we talk about, we aim for our core values to be a lived experience for all members of our school community.

Over the past few years, there have been many challenges that have jeopardized the school culture and the daily experience for our students. An ongoing challenge has been ensuring that each student at DTA receives the necessary social and emotional support that they need to be successful in school. It is not uncommon for students to come to school with circumstances and needs that
require an intense level of support - situations that no child should have to endure. Also, due to the mobility of students in the city of New Orleans, it has been challenging to ensure the right supports are always in place, especially when we receive new students. Knowing that these challenges exist and will most likely continue to exist, our team has worked hard to create strategic solutions to address this ongoing challenge. One of our areas of focus at DTA this school year is that we will intentionally integrate Social Emotional Learning (SEL) into our student experience. We have partnered with the organization, Move This World, to provide an SEL curriculum for all of our students this year. We are currently piloting this program with seven classrooms and the results have already been incredible. Our students are learning coping skills, meditation techniques, and appropriate ways to express their feelings and emotions. We are looking forward to rolling this out to the rest of our student body over the next few months.

Organizational Effectiveness

Board Governance

The board of ReNEW, inclusive of DTA, is made up of various citizens of New Orleans representing diverse backgrounds with the belief that every student deserves a rigorous college preparatory education. The ReNEW board has remained a constant champion of ReNEW despite various organizational changes. The ReNEW board is currently made up of 10 members, three of which have been on the board since ReNEW’s inception. Our Board Chair, Stephen Rosenthal, joined the ReNEW board in December 2015. He has been actively involved in New Orleans public education for more than 20 years and is a strong advocate of charter schools. Stephen Rosenthal also serves on other charter school boards in the city and is a founding board member of New Schools for New Orleans.

The Board of Directors has not only been advocates for ReNEW, but has also been the critical oversight needed to oversee a successful charter management organization. Board committees exist for each facet of the organization and the committees include: the Academic Excellence Committee, the Development and Marketing Committee, the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Governance Committee. The Board Chair is a member of each of these committees. Although the committee members discuss topics in great detail, relevant topics are also discussed at each board meeting following a report from the committee chair. In the board meeting that took place in August, the full Board discussed the 2018-19 budget, enrollment, and academic improvements in great detail. The ReNEW CMO staff strives to ensure that the board is informed and abreast of all pertinent information so that outcomes can be anticipated and obstacles can be foreseen before they occur.

Organizational Compliance

ReNEW prides itself in maintaining compliance with laws and regulations and adheres to the regulations set forth by the charter operating agreements. This includes compliance with student privacy laws, as well as the adherence to provisions set forth under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”), the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), as well as any additional applicable provisions of state
law. ReNEW has set forth an exemplary educational model for the delivery of special education services and/or accommodations for students with disabilities which was reviewed by independent consultants, Educational Support Systems, Inc. and the 2017-18 ESEA/ESSA Consolidated Program Desk Monitoring and 2017-18 IDEA Monitoring of DTA resulted in no findings that needed resolution. ReNEW also ensures compliance with state and federal laws and regulations applicable to the education of English Language Learners as evidenced by the 2017-18 ESEA/ESSA - English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act Desk Monitoring Checklist conducting in the Winter/Spring of 2018 whereas DTA received notice that the results of the monitoring review revealed that there were no findings that needed resolution.

ReNEW’s strives to provide all of its students with a rigorous education and must employ qualified staff in order to do so. ReNEW adheres to the policies set forth by the state in employing such individuals in charter schools and conducts background checks and evaluations in compliance with state mandated requirements.

ReNEW applauds the steps taken in Orleans Parish to provide parent choice when it comes to the education of their child and appreciates and respects the fact that many parents have chosen ReNEW. ReNEW’s compliance with EnrollNola is integral to ensuring the partnership between ReNEW and parents remains strong. ReNEW works within the EnrollNola parameters to ensure all students are enrolled in a nondiscriminatory manner and that ReNEW is in compliance with admissions, recruitment, and enrollment standards set forth by EnrollNola. ReNEW also works directly with parents to finalize the annual Pupil Progression Plan and adheres to parent/guardian communications as set forth by the RSD prior to July 1, 2018 and OPSB beginning on July 1, 2018. Because of our strong interest in the operation of EnrollNola, our current CEO, Tanya Bryant, was honored with the opportunity to sit on the advisory committee of EnrollNola during the 2017-18 school year.

Financial Compliance

Financial compliance has been a strength of ReNEW. ReNEW has contracted 8 financial audits with an independent accounting firm throughout its history and received an unmodified (clean) audit opinion on its financial statements since inception. Furthermore, ReNEW has not had any questioned costs, material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in the Single Audit of Federal Federal Programs since the year ended June 30, 2011. ReNEW maintains most of its finance function in the back office, allowing schools and school leaders to concentrate on instruction. This has enabled the back office staff to specialize in areas of finance including, payroll, purchasing, general ledger accounting, and grants analysis, thus streamlining the financial systems to ensure efficient and effective financial management. The strengths of the financial systems at ReNEW has allowed all ReNEW schools to benefit from economies of scale and redirect more funds to support classroom instruction.

The 2016-17 Financial Risk Assessment (FRA) exhibits the strong financial performance of DTA. All General Fund Budget Forms and the Annual Financial Report were submitted on time to the LDOE and there were no weaknesses in internal controls, no consecutive audit findings, and no
Overall Organizational Effectiveness

We are very proud of the organizational effectiveness that ReNEW has exhibited and attribute this success to maintaining strong back office support, in light of organizational changes. There have been two major organizational challenges that have existed in the past three to four years and we have been able to overcome them due to decisive actions and dedication to achieving the best outcomes for our organization and most importantly, for our students.

The first major challenge arose in 2015 and it was found that there was an issue with special education compliance at SciTech Academy. Although the issue arose at SciTech, we used the information found there to redesign special education programming and compliance at all of our school locations, including DTA.

The second major challenge has been having multiple CEOs between 2015 and 2018. According to an article, *The Performance Consequences of CEO Turnover*, Khurana of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Nohira of Harvard University, found that there is an interdependent and significant link between executive turnover and subsequent firm performance. At ReNEW, we have spent the past 3 years in a state of turnover and school performance has suffered. We welcome the stability of the most recent CEO, Tanya Bryant. Tanya has been with ReNEW for almost eight years and has remained dedicated to ReNEW, as many people at ReNEW have, through its ups and downs. There is finally a strong momentum at ReNEW to be the promising organization that it once was. The ReNEW CMO staff and the ReNEW school leadership staff are embracing teamwork and are working together collaboratively to ensure that the organizational goals and priorities are met.

ReNEW has maintained a strong board of directors and strong internal control systems that have allowed us to withstand numerous organizational hurdles and has ultimately put it in a firm position to improve our schools going forward knowing that organizational compliance is in order.

PART B: PLANS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Vision for Academic Improvement

ReNEW began planning for the 2018-19 school year in March 2019 because we knew that we were not on the right track to achieve the outcomes that our students deserved. The ReNEW CMO and the ReNEW schools leadership worked together collaboratively to begin drafting a small number of strategic priorities that we must concentrate on over the next two to three years to most
dramatically affect student achievement and organizational outcomes. This work is grounded in the academic philosophy that ReNEW was founded upon: all children can learn. This belief infuses every aspect of ReNEW’s design and is the basis for ReNEW’s redesign. ReNEW must create an environment that motivates and compels all children to achieve and we will work tirelessly to ensure that ReNEW prepares every child for the future, including high school, college, and career. In order to create the new strategic priorities, we had to recognize our failures, quantify those failures, and reflect on them.

2018-2021 Strategic Priorities

The ReNEW Organization will base all decisions around the four strategic priorities agreed upon by the ReNEW CMO and school leadership staff and use these priorities to drive results.

Quality Curriculum and Support

We are committed to using LDOE researched and identified as exemplary Tier I Curriculum throughout the organization with fidelity to the rigor and requirements that the curriculum sets forth.

Strong Interventions and Literacy Programming

We know and understand that many of our students are struggling in numerous content areas, and because of this we know that strong interventions must be in place to close the achievement gap within our schools, the city, and the nation.

High Quality Staff in Every Building that are Retained and Developed

We understand that we must have great educators to provide great instruction that leads to student academic achievement. We will invest a lot of time in developing educators around instructional practices to implement the Tier I Curriculum with fidelity and we want to retain those educators as they perfect their craft.

Organizational Culture, Pride, and Branding

We believe that organizational culture relies on the staff of the organization and their belief in the philosophy that all children can learn. All staff takes pride in who we are, where we are headed, and are proud to be a part of the undeniable hard work that this entails.

The strategic priorities will guide our decisions and allow us to focus on achieving results. The two strategic priorities around curriculum and intervention will anchor DTA’s success. In March 2018, ReNEW began working closely with LDOE Assistant State Superintendents, Rebecca Kockler and Kunjan Narechania, to choose and implement English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tier I Curriculum to be used at all ReNEW PK-8 campuses. DTA has transitioned to Wit and Wisdom in ELA grades K-8, Zearn Math in grades K-5 and Illustrative Math in grades 6-8. This new curriculum will ensure that lessons are aligned to the state standards and that instruction is rigorous in every classroom at DTA. Implementation of research based curriculum will also allow teachers to focus on implementation of curriculum rather than the creation of curriculum. Each curriculum includes progress monitoring unit assessments that will be given throughout the year at designated intervals. In addition to the assessments within the curriculum, we will use LEAP 360
interim assessments and the LEAP Practice Test to progress monitor, track student performance, and respond to data to remediate and reteach.

Universal screening will continue to be used so that we know where a student begins, the progress each student has made throughout the year, as well as to guide intervention. We will use Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments as a universal screening assessment. MAP allows us to gauge where students are in reading and math compared to other nationally normed results. In February 2017, the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) performed a study entitled “Linking the Louisiana LEAP Assessments to NWEA MAP Growth Tests” where it was found that a produced set of cut scores on MAP reading and math tests for Grades 2 to 8 correspond to each LEAP performance level\(^2\). Given the results of the study, ReNEW will use the data generated from the MAP assessment to gauge progress towards desired LEAP outcomes.

With the transition to Tier I Curriculum, we embedded over ten days of professional development in the school year to familiarize and provide best practices to teachers with the new curriculum. In July 2018, professional development sessions were led by Great Minds for ELA teachers and Zearn and Illustrative Math for math teachers. This time was used to dive deeply into the new curriculum with teachers and provide practice implementing lessons. Throughout the school year, the ELA and Math Directors of Curriculum and Instruction (DCI) are observing, coaching, and leading PD on a weekly basis at DTA to support teachers with implementation and provide regular feedback. We have also contracted with Jounce Partners to provide additional Wit and Wisdom training for our ELA coaches on a monthly basis.

Another one of ReNEW’s priorities is to implement high quality literacy interventions in all of our schools. To determine which students are in need of literacy intervention, an oral reading fluency assessment was administered to all students as a universal screener within the first few weeks of school in August 2018. The Decoding Placement Test is individually administered and measures each student’s reading accuracy and oral-reading rate. Placement takes into account the student’s ability to decode words in sentences and stories. This placement test determines exactly what lessons each student will begin on. Results for students at DTA this August, are as follows:

**DTA Student Percentiles, Oral Reading Fluency August 2018**
Based on this assessment, 46.3% of DTA students scored at “Average” or above. Because we anticipated a high incidence of students scoring below average and well below average, we implemented a comprehensive and intensive literacy intervention block school-wide. Our goals at DTA by the end of this school year are to decrease the number of students scoring at the 10th percentile or below from 31.7% to 15% and increase the number of students scoring at the 50th percentile and above to 55%. Achieving these goals will drastically impact the number of DTA students able to read on grade level, participate effectively in Tier 1 curriculum, and achieve growth targets on the state LEAP assessments.

As mentioned in the previous section “Student Experience”, DTA receives new students throughout the school year and it is difficult to ensure that the right supports are identified quickly in order to put the student on the best trajectory towards academic achievement. We are piloting a new program that will do just that, the IM4 data collection and intervention system. IM4 stands for Intervention Matching, Mapping, Monitoring, and Meeting.

The IM4 data collection and intervention system will be used as our behavior intervention programming for students who exhibit social, emotional, and behavioral challenges that serve as barriers to learning. IM4 simplifies intervention programming by coordinating the process from beginning to end. The IM4 system provides an evidence-based, streamlined, step by step, fail-safe implementation platform involving automated processes of Assessment to Intervention and problem-solving. We are very excited about what this system can offer to tailor interventions to specific student needs given the behaviors exemplified.

Planning for Academic Improvement

The ReNEW network staff and the DTA school staff are a team dedicated to achieving results for students. We are well on our way to implementing the priorities highlighted throughout this document and through the support of our Board of Directors and our partners at the LDOE, we have been planning for and implementing these changes for over six months. The ReNEW network and school staffing models were redesigned to support the changes in instruction, intervention and professional development. Furthermore, the size of the ReNEW network was reduced and the school based staff was increased to allow for a greater focus at the school level. Although the size of the ReNEW network was reduced, the network Directors of Curriculum and Instruction spend more time in schools supporting teachers and school based instructional coaches with curriculum implementation, rather than writing curriculum.

The network academic leadership team is comprised of the CEO (Tanya Bryant), Chief of Student Support (Emily Waterfield), Chief of Staff (Tammy Robicheaux), and Chief Academic Officer (Lisa Giarratano). The DTA School Director (John Gravier) formally reports directly to the CEO; however, the School Director also indirectly reports to the full network academic team. This structure ensures that the academic focus of the schools remains at the forefront. The network academic team meets weekly to discuss overall progress and challenges that arise and meets bi-weekly with the School Director to discuss data, progress, and challenges that arise specifically at the school. At the school level, the School Director meets weekly with the academic coaches to review lesson plans, annotations, adherence to scope and sequence, and coaching results. The
School Director also spends 2.5 hours per week with each principal observing classrooms and providing feedback and meets with both principals together to collaborate on school wide initiatives. These new structures foster collaboration and create joint accountability for instructional results at all levels. The chart below illustrates this structure.

**Instructional Framework**

![Diagram of instructional framework]

Not only was the leadership and support staffing built around the implementation of the new curriculum and literacy intervention initiatives, but the entire school staff at DTA was built around implementation of the curriculum with student achievement as the expected outcome and goal. Each teacher has 90-100 minutes of planning time to fully engage with and plan for upcoming lessons and each grade level teacher has common planning time to participate in grade level meetings.

The school schedule was also streamlined and modified to support the new curriculum and intervention plans. The minutes required for each of the new ELA, Math, and Literacy Intervention curriculums was examined and schedules were created to ensure enough time was available for the curriculum. For all students in grades third through eighth, the schedule includes a 90 minute mathematics block, a 90 minute ELA block, a 90 minute social studies and science block that alternates days, a 45 minute literacy block, and a 45 minute enrichment block at each PreK-8 school.
For all students in Kindergarten through second grade, the schedule includes a 90 minute ELA block, a 45 minute science block, two 45-50 minute literacy blocks, a 90 minute math block, and a 45-50 minute enrichment block. The instructional time was strategically placed so that school based and network based instructional coaching could be maximized within the schedule to ensure we were making the biggest impact on student achievement.

When student achievement is referenced, we are always referring to all students at ReNEW. At DTA, 3% of our students are English Language Learners, 16% of all students are in need of special education services, and over 50% of students are reading below grade level. Our team at DTA and the ReNEW network has and will work to understand each student’s strengths and needs in order to match them with interventions and experiences that propel their performance. Within each classroom environment, instruction and materials are adapted to meet the individual learning needs of students, students who need supplemental services and supports to be successful. A variety of supports are available to all students. The staffing structure at DTA demonstrates this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DTA Staffing</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
<th>DTA Staffing (Continued)</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Leadership</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Principals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Behavior Interventionists</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special Education Coordinators</td>
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<td>ESL Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention Coordinator</td>
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<td>Social Worker/Counselors</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
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<td>School Psychologist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Classroom Teachers</td>
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<td>Speech Therapists</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<td>Nurse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Replacement Special Ed Teachers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Director of Data &amp; Operations</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Operations Manager</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paraprofessionals</td>
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<td>Total Students on Campus</td>
<td>830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Teachers &amp; Interventionists</td>
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<td><strong>Staff to Student Ratio</strong></td>
<td><strong>10 to 1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ReNEW network will also re-incorporate data days into the network wide professional development schedule to review students’ progress and adjust course as necessary. Prior to the 2017-18 school year, data days, which were professional development days for staff, were held after
each of the three benchmarks given quarterly throughout the year. This facilitated, quarterly deep dive into data allowed teachers to collaborate and reflect on their students’ performance with their content area and grade level peers across the network.

The changes that have been made to the organizational and school structure are directly linked to student achievement and we are excited about the outcomes that will be produced. This new approach provides more targeted instructional time for the implementation of Tier 1 curriculum and intervention, as well as additional time for teachers to plan for and internalize the curriculum to be fully prepared to deliver the lesson to students and adjust course as needed. By fully implementing Tier I curriculum and targeted intervention with fidelity, and by ensuring that the structure of the network and the school support that implementation, we are positioning DTA to be a “B” school by 2020.

PART C: OPEN RESPONSE

We would like to thank you for reviewing our comprehensive evaluation submission. We are committed to providing an excellent education for all of our students and we are committed to Dolores T. Aaron Elementary (DTA). We realize that we fell short of achieving the score required for an automatic renewal and we know that we can achieve a score of a “C” by next school year with the plans set forth in this document. Given that we were very close to a “C” for the 2017-18 school year, we are excited about the future at DTA. We believe that the literacy intervention and the Tier I Curriculum is exactly what is needed to push academic achievement forward. We are also excited about the state’s new calculation of SPS with the 25% progress index. This component recognizes and gives points for students who may not yet meet “Basic” or above but who are on their way to “Basic” and ultimately “Mastery” or “Advanced” by meeting the growth goals set forth. Now, all the components of SPS, the Academic Index, the Progress Index, and the Credit Accumulation Index allow schools to concentrate on individual student achievement, rather than just the overall school SPS which we believe is a step in the right direction for schools.

Overall, we are invested in the success of the students at DTA and believe that charter schools working together in the city of New Orleans under one umbrella, the Orleans Parish School Board, will make an impact on a brighter future in New Orleans.

Thank you,

John Gravier
Dolores T. Aaron School Director

Tanya Bryant
ReNEW Chief Executive Officer
References

2. NWEA. 2017. Linking Louisiana LEAP assessments to NWEA MAP growth tests.