



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release – May 19, 2010*

**Contacts:** Janet R. Howard, *BGR, President & CEO*  
(504) 525-4152 x107

Shannon Jones, *Scott Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives at Tulane University, Executive Director*  
(504) 274-3688

### **BGR and the Cowen Institute Outline Options for Addressing School Governance Challenges**

Today Tulane University's Cowen Institute and BGR release *Managing Innovation: Models for Governing the System of Public Schools in New Orleans*. The report presents five potential models for governing public schools in New Orleans and discusses the advantages and disadvantages of each. The report is available on BGR's web site, [www.bgr.org](http://www.bgr.org), and on the Cowen Institute's web site, [education.tulane.edu](http://education.tulane.edu).

Currently, New Orleans is in the midst of a sweeping reform movement, the scale of which has been seen in few cities. Two efforts, in particular, have defined the movement: the state takeover of most public schools in New Orleans and an explosion in the number of public charter schools. New Orleans has proportionately more charter schools than any other school system in the nation. Harnessing the potential of the reform movement and addressing the challenges created by the current complex system requires a new approach to education governance.

Most discussions relating to school governance focus on issues of control, such as the method of selecting board members. *Managing Innovation* goes beyond the traditional line of inquiry to a more fundamental issue: How should the school system in New Orleans be structured to allow the reforms under way to succeed and prosper?

To help answer the question, the report identifies the governance functions critical to the operation of the school system; presents five potential models for allocating those functions to various entities; and discusses the advantages and disadvantages of each. The models range from highly consolidated, with one entity responsible for all school governance functions, to relatively dispersed. None of the models is perfect.

*Managing Innovation* does not recommend a specific model for structuring education governance in New Orleans. Rather, the models are offered as a starting point for a public conversation on the future of education governance in New Orleans.

New Orleans faces an unprecedented challenge in creating a new governance structure that meets the needs of a diverse and innovative network of schools. Getting there will require intellectual rigor, integrity and political will. It will also take time. The process should begin immediately.

---

*BGR is a private, nonprofit, independent research organization. Since its founding in 1932, it has been dedicated to informed public policy-making and the effective use of public resources in the Greater New Orleans area. For more information call (504) 525-4152 or visit BGR's web site, [www.bgr.org](http://www.bgr.org).*

*The Scott S. Cowen Institute for Public Education Initiatives at Tulane University is an action-oriented think tank that informs and advances solutions – through policies, programs and partnerships – to eliminate the challenges impeding the success of K-12 education in New Orleans and beyond. For more information call (504) 274-3690 or visit the Cowen Institute's web site, [education.tulane.edu](http://education.tulane.edu).*