

Groups interested in submitting parent petitions should follow these steps:

1. Designate a Lead Petitioner.
2. The Lead Petitioner collects all signed, original, official petition forms.
3. The Lead Petitioner has two options for submitting petitions:

Hand Deliver:

Megha Upadhyaya
Office of Portfolio, 5th Floor
Claiborne Building
1201 N. 3rd St.
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Certified Mail:

Megha Upadhyaya
Office of Portfolio, 5th Floor
Louisiana Department of Education
P.O. Box 94064
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Please Note: Mailed petitions must be postmarked prior to the deadline on February 1, 2016. Late submissions will not be accepted.

4. The Department will send a confirmation e-mail to the Lead Petitioner upon receipt.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is a Parent Petition?

A Parent Petition is a tool that enables parents to transfer their children's consistently low-performing school to the Recovery School District to be transformed into a charter school.

2. What is the Recovery School District (RSD)?

The Recovery School District (RSD) is a statewide school district under the Louisiana Department of Education that works with charter operators to transform academically struggling schools into high-performing charter schools. The Recovery School District currently oversees charter schools in Orleans, East Baton Rouge, and Caddo parishes.

3. What will happen to my child's school if it is transferred to the Recovery School District (RSD)?

If your child's school is transferred to the RSD under the parent petition process, the school may be reopened as a Type 5 charter school as early as the 2017-18 school year. Your child's school can only be transformed into a charter school if 1) your parent petition group turns in a successful parent petition; 2) a Type 5 charter operator that has been approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) is willing and able to open a charter school at your child's school; 3) the State Superintendent of Education approves transferring your school to the RSD; and 4) the RSD Superintendent approves allowing the approved charter operator to open at your school. Please note that some approved charter operators may be willing and able to operate your child's school, but may not be able to open the school until Fall 2018.

4. How can I find out which charter operators are willing and able to operate my child's school?

For a list of approved Type 5 operators that may be able to operate a parent petition school, please contact megha.upadhyaya2@la.gov. We recommend that your parent petition group seek to partner with one or more charter operators prior to turning in parent petitions to the Louisiana Department of Education.

5. What if there are currently no approved Type 5 charter operators who are willing and able to operate my child's school?

If there are no operators who are currently willing and able to operate your child's school, it is still possible that your child's school can be transformed into a charter school as early as the 2018-19 school year. A charter organization interested in transforming your child's school into a charter school may submit a Type 5 charter application to the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) in February 2017. BESE will decide whether to approve the charter application in the fall of 2017. If BESE approves the charter application, the Recovery School District Superintendent must also approve that charter operator to open a charter school at your child's school. For more information on the charter application process, visit the Louisiana Department of Education's (LDOE's) [State Charter School Request for Applications website page](#).

6. How do I know if my child's school qualifies for the parent petition process?

You may only fill out a parent petition if your child's school has received a letter grade of "D" or "F" for the past three consecutive years (2014 Letter Grade, 2015 Letter Grade, 2016 Letter Grade). Schools that are already RSD charter schools or schools that are operated by the local school board pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding or Shared Success Agreement with the Recovery School District are not eligible for parent petition. For a list of eligible schools, please visit the LDOE's [Parent Petition website page](#).

7. Can any member of the community sign the parent petition for my child's school?

No. Only parents or legal guardians of a student currently attending your child's school can sign the petition form.

PLEASE NOTE: Only one signed petition form can be turned in for each child. Only one parent or legal guardian may fill out a parent petition for each child. If you are the parent of siblings who both attend the same school, you may sign separate parent petitions for each child.

8. How many signed parent petition forms does my child's school need?

Your child's school needs enough parent petition forms signed by a parent or legal guardian to represent at least 50 percent plus one of the total number of students currently attending the school. For example, if there are 100 students at the school, then at least 51 signed petition forms are required.

9. Can I make my own petition?

No. Only the parent petition form posted on the LDOE's [Parent Petition website page](#) will be accepted.

10. What are the protections for parents/legal guardians interested in signing a petition?

Any person harassing, threatening, or intimidating parents/legal guardians related to the parent petition may be subject to criminal prosecution under the laws of this state, including, but not limited to La. R.S. [14:122.1](#), [14:285](#), or [14:329.1](#).

BESE Policy provides that no person shall:

- intimidate, deceive, or misinform a parent/ legal guardian about the petition;
- intimidate a parent or legal guardian by the use of violence, force or threats to attempt to influence the parent's/legal guardian to sign or not sign the petition;
- physically prevent or delay a parent/legal guardian from accessing a petition or a meeting about the petition; or
- give or offer money or anything of value to a parent/legal guardian to influence a parent/guardian to sign or not sign the petition.

Further, members or employees of the local school board are not allowed to use school or district resources to support or oppose any parent petition effort.

11. If I sign the petition, will my information be shared publicly?

By signing the parent petition, you are consenting to have the parent petition form shared as a public record. This means that if the local school board, another organization, or any member of the public makes a formal public records request to the Louisiana Department of Education for the parent petition forms, the Department will be required by law to share the form with the person making the request.

However, it is important that you provide at least one reliable piece of contact information (preferably a phone number and/or email address) so that the Department may contact you in case there is a need to verify the authenticity of your parent petition form.

12. How do I turn in my petition?

Each parent petition groups must have a "Lead Petitioner." The Lead Petitioner is responsible for collecting and turning in the parent petition forms to the Louisiana Department of Education. Only the Lead Petitioner may submit the petition forms to the LDOE. The Lead Petitioner must collect all completed parent petition forms and submit all forms together, at one time.

PLEASE NOTE: The Department will not accept individual petition forms. Lead Petitioners may not submit a petition until they reach or exceed the required minimum number of signature forms specified by the Department.

13. Where can I get a petition?

You can download and print a petition found on LDOE's [Parent Petition website page](#).

14. What happens once the Lead Petitioner turns in the petitions to the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)?

The LDOE will review the parent petition forms and will contact the Lead Petitioner to let him or her know if enough signatures have been collected. If there are not enough valid signatures, petitioners will have 30 calendar days to resolve discrepancies and collect additional signatures. If there are enough valid signatures, the LDOE will post a notification on the LDOE website. For 15 business days following the LDOE's post on the website, the LDOE will accept challenges to the validity of the signatures or the parent petition form. If any valid challenges to the parent petitions are received, the LDOE will investigate these challenges within 45 calendar days. If the LDOE finds that the parent petitions are valid, the State Superintendent of Education will make the decision whether to transfer the school to the RSD, no later than March 31, 2017.

15. Is there more written guidance on the parent petition process?

The law creating the parent petition was passed as part of Act 2 in the Spring of 2012, and is codified in Louisiana Revised Statute [17:10.5](#). The Board of Elementary and Secondary Education also has written policy on the parent petition, §502 of Bulletin 129 (<http://bese.louisiana.gov/documents-resources/policies-bulletins>).

16. Still More Questions?

E-mail: megha.upadhyaya2@la.gov at the LDOE Office of Portfolio.

Timeline

Action	Further Guidance	Timeline
LDOE posts on the LDOE website: 1) list of schools eligible for parent petition; 2) official parent petition forms	Eligible schools are those that have received a "D" or "F" letter grade for three or more consecutive years.	December 14, 2016
Deadline for submitting completed petitions to the LDOE.	Parents/legal guardians must fill out the official parent petition form created by the LDOE. Each parent petition group must choose a "Lead Petitioner" to collect all parent petitions and submit them to the LDOE at one time.	January 25, 2017
LDOE Signature Review	The LDOE will review the parent petition forms to ensure enough signatures have been collected. The LDOE will contact the Lead Petitioner to let him or her know if enough signatures have been collected.	Within 5 business days of receiving petition
Petition Appeal Process	If there are not enough valid signatures, the parent petition group is given more time to try to gather more valid signatures.	Parents are given 30 calendar days after notice from the LDOE to resubmit petition.
Challenges to the parent petitions may be made	If there are enough valid signatures, LDOE will receive and investigate acceptable challenges to the petition.	LDOE will accept challenges to the petition for 15 business days after the LDOE has posted notification on the LDOE website. After 15 business days, LDOE has 45 calendar days to investigate challenges and verify signatures.
Type 5 charter applications deadline	If there are no operators who are currently willing and able to operate your child's school, it is still possible that your child's school can be transformed into a charter school as early as the 2018-19 school year. A charter organization interested in transforming your child's school into a charter school may submit a Type 5 charter application to the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).	February 2017
State Superintendent of Education considers transfer	The State Superintendent will determine whether to approve the transfer of your child's school to the RSD.	No Later than March 31, 2017
BESE approves Type 5 charter applications	Charter operators approved by BESE at this time could potentially operate a parent petition school beginning in the 2018-19 school year.	Fall 2017