



NEW SCHOOLS FOR NEW ORLEANS



## **For Immediate Release**

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## **NEW SCHOOLS FOR NEW ORLEANS AND EDUCATE NOW! AWARDING \$1.5M IN GRANTS TO SUPPORT PERSONALIZED LEARNING PROGRAMS IN New Orleans SCHOOLS**

*3 Schools Receive Implementation Grants; 9 Schools Continue Innovative Pilots*

New Orleans, LA, April 21, 2015— Sharing a commitment to ensuring all New Orleans students have a competitive edge in an innovation-based economy, New Schools for New Orleans (NSNO) and Educate Now! have partnered to provide grants to three New Orleans schools to implement new school-wide personalized learning programs. Akili Academy, KIPP McDonogh 15 Middle School, and New Orleans Charter Science & Mathematics High School (Sci High) will each receive \$300,000 to create a more student-centric instruction approach beginning in the fall of 2015. Funding for these grants comes from the Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC), the Booth-Bricker Fund, Baptist Community Ministries, and Educate Now!.

“We’re proud to support schools as they take this step towards improving learning outcomes by ensuring all of their students are supported and challenged,” said NSNO Co-CEO Maggie Runyan-Shefa. “Adopting a personalized approach to instruction is a great way for schools to allow students to take ownership of their learning.”

Personalized learning initiatives tailor instruction to the individual needs, skills, and interests of students using technology, robust data, and rigorous planning. This education model gives teachers and schools the opportunity to accelerate student learning and skill mastery, particularly for struggling students.

Over the past several years, a growing number of schools across New Orleans have used personalized learning techniques to drive student success; today over 25 schools have incorporated some form of a personalized model.

“Personalized learning programs will help our students on their paths to college,” Deanna Reddick, co-school leader at KIPP McDonogh 15 Middle School, said. “We have seen the success of personalized learning at other schools in New Orleans, and we’re excited to bring those same opportunities to students at KIPP McDonogh 15 Middle.”

The three implementation grants are part of a broader plan by NSNO and Educate Now! to increase the use of personalized learning in schools across the city. In addition to the three schools that will

implement new programs, grants were also awarded to support 9 additional charter schools to explore personalized learning practices or pilot programs.

NSNO and Educate Now! are also dedicated to equipping educators with the tools they need to design and introduce new personalized learning initiatives, and have worked with organizations across the city and the country to provide professional development to school leaders and teachers. In fall 2014, school leaders and teachers gathered monthly to learn from local experts and each other about personalization strategies to increase student learning.

“The opportunity to meet with other teachers, hear from national experts, and test this pilot program over the last year has been incredible for our students,” said Mary Carlton, Director of Expanded Learning at Akili Academy. “We’re looking forward to applying what we’ve learned to further improve academic outcomes for our kids.”

The chart below details the status of the schools that have been awarded grants through the NSNO and Educate Now! partnership during the 2014-15 school year:

<b>IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS</b> (Awarded March 2015)
Akili Academy (Crescent City Schools)
KIPP McDonogh 15 Middle School Academy (KIPP New Orleans Schools)
New Orleans Charter Math and Science High School

<b>EXPLORE and PILOT GRANTS</b> (Awarded September 2014)
ARISE Schools
ENCORE!
Morris Jeff Community School
Sylvanie Williams College Prep (New Orleans College Prep)
Bricolage Academy
Fannie C. Williams (Community Leaders Advocating for Student Success)
Edna Karr High School (InspireNOLA)
Paul Habans Charter School (Crescent City Schools)
KIPP Believe Primary School (KIPP New Orleans Schools)
ReNEW Schools
FirstLine Schools
New Orleans Charter Math and Science High School

***About New Schools for New Orleans***

New Schools for New Orleans (NSNO) is a nonprofit organization founded in 2006 whose mission is to deliver on the promise of excellent public schools for every child in New Orleans. To achieve this mission, NSNO drives change in three ways: 1) we invest in the launch or expansion of high-performing open-enrollment public charter schools, 2) we help schools become more effective by providing them with direct support to help accelerate academic improvements, and 3) we coordinate solutions to citywide challenges to remove barriers to academic excellence.



***About Educate Now!***

Educate Now! is a non-profit organization dedicated to effective and sustainable reform of New Orleans public schools. Educate Now!'s mission is carried out by providing current, comprehensive information on education reform in New Orleans; lending programmatic support to educational reforms in New Orleans; and advocating for decentralized, quality public schools for all students in New Orleans. More information about Educate Now! is available at [www.educatenow.net](http://www.educatenow.net)