

EDUCATION WEEK

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Louisiana Chief Changing Charter School Oversight

By [The Associated Press](#)

Baton Rouge, La.

Louisiana is changing the way it oversees its charter schools in response to allegations of rape and sexual encounters between students at one school that led to two state employees being fired.

Acting Superintendent of Education Ollie Tyler outlined the beefed-up oversight proposal Tuesday in an email to the members of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. She said a final plan will be complete by Sept. 1.

Under preliminary plans described by Tyler, the state-run Recovery School District will more directly monitor independently run charter schools contracting with the state. The RSD and state education department will conduct annual on-site reviews and new rounds of training will be held, she said.

"Although the (education department) currently has procedures in place for oversight of charter schools, we recognize the need to revise these procedures and guidelines," Tyler wrote.

Tyler is asking BESE to agree to spell out the new authority for the Recovery School District in a policy change.

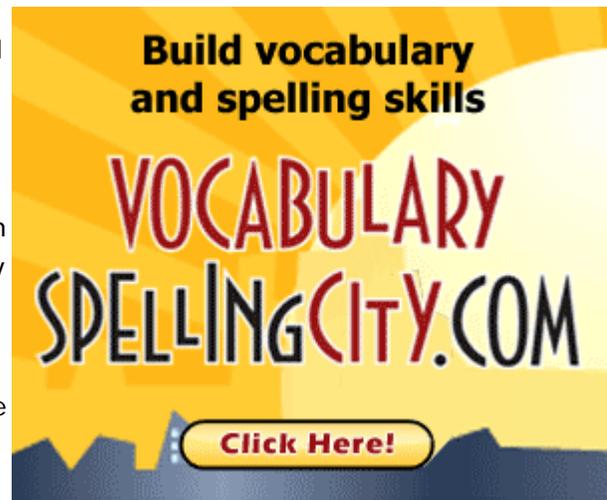
Charter schools are publicly financed but run without many of the requirements governing traditional public schools.

Tyler's email didn't mention New Orleans' Abramson Science and Technology School by name, but referenced the state's ongoing investigation into two charter schools.

BESE has temporarily shut down Abramson pending the investigation. Tyler said the investigation was expanded to include Kenilworth Science and Technology Charter School in Baton Rouge, which is run by the same independent organization as Abramson.

Abramson school officials are accused of not properly reporting sexual encounters between students and a rape accusation. Local police, the inspector general and other law enforcement agencies have been involved in the investigation, according to the state education department. The school's contract was already on probation because of prior complaints, including potential cheating.

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