

How Hynes Charter Schools built a network of excellence

Network overview

What began as a single school is now a three-campus network demonstrating that sustained excellence is possible when leadership builds coherent systems, not isolated initiatives.

Located in New Orleans, Louisiana, the Hynes Charter School Network serves students across three open-enrollment campuses:

- Hynes–Lakeview (PK3–8)
- Hynes–UNO (K–6, growing to K–8)
- Hynes–Parkview (K–8)

Together, the campuses serve diverse communities across Lakeview, Lakefront, and Gentilly.

The challenge

In the early 2000s, Hynes–Lakeview faced a critical question: how could the school close literacy gaps and ensure strong outcomes for every student?

Leaders understood that improvement would require more than adopting new materials. It would demand:

- Coherent instructional routines.
- Embedded professional learning.
- Shared leadership structures.
- A system capable of sustaining growth over time.

In 2005, the school building was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. In order to reopen and serve children and their families as quickly as possible, the leadership at Hynes reopened as a charter school in 2006.

The solution

Prior to Katrina, the school chose Success for All due to its strong research base and proven impact on literacy outcomes for all children.

“After Katrina, we didn’t just have to rebuild a school—we had to rebuild trust, stability, and hope,” said CEO Michelle Douglas. “Success for All gave us structure, evidence, and direction at a time when both adults and children were navigating profound disruption.”

Rather than layering programs, Success for All delivers a comprehensive, research-based literacy system designed to align:

- Science of Reading-based instruction.
- Data-driven regrouping and tutoring.
- Distributed leadership.
- Shared routines and instructional language across classrooms.
- Embedded coaching and professional development.

Through sustained partnership with Success for All, Hynes strengthened instructional practices, leadership capacity, and implementation consistency.

Over time, those aligned systems became the foundation for sustained performance and expansion.

Network expansion

The strength of Hynes–Lakeview’s systems and the improvement in student outcomes resulted in expansion from one campus to three.

Hynes–University of New Orleans (U.N.O.): Established in 2019

Opening with kindergarten and expanding one grade per year, Hynes–U.N.O now serves grades K–6. In 2024–25, UNO posted a 10-point gain on Louisiana’s School Performance Score (SPS) system.

The campus demonstrated significant gains among English Learners, economically disadvantaged students, and Black students, along with a 44.9-point increase in its Interests and Opportunities Index.

Hynes–Parkview: Joined in 2021

Parkview entered the Hynes network as the lowest-performing school in its district.

In just four years, Parkview achieved a 39-point increase on Louisiana’s SPS system. Within three years under Hynes leadership, the campus climbed two letter grades and earned an “A” growth indicator.

This transformation reflects the transferability of shared systems across campuses—not a one-school success story, but a scalable model.

The proof

Sustained excellence at Lakeview:

- **14 consecutive “A” ratings** from the state of Louisiana
- Named a **Top Gains Honoree** for earning an “A” in the Progress Index
- Embedded professional learning.

Network-wide growth:

- U.N.O. achieved a 10-point SPS gain and earned a “B” growth indicator.
- Parkview achieved a 39-point SPS increase in four years and earned an “A” growth indicator.

In January 2026, Hynes–Lakeview was named the Dr. Robert Slavin Success for All Award recipient, a national honor recognizing schools that exemplify aligned systems, strong leadership, exceptional instruction, and sustained literacy growth year after year. Hynes—U.N.O and Hynes—Parkview were also recognized for their significant and sustained literacy improvement using Success for All.

External validation of system strength

In 2024, Hynes Charter Schools were recognized as a Cognia® System of Distinction, an honor awarded to only 60 schools worldwide.

Cognia’s evaluation process examines leadership capacity, instructional consistency, student performance, and organizational sustainability across an entire system.

Hynes leadership attributes this distinction to the shared systems developed and sustained through long-term implementation of Success for All.

“At Hynes, the systems we’ve built are bigger than any one person,” said Michelle Douglas. “That shared leadership, common language, and collective accountability are what make success sustainable, and what allow the work to endure year after year.”

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Lasting impact

From rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina to expanding from one campus to three, Hynes Charter Schools demonstrate that sustained literacy growth requires aligned systems.

Across campuses, Hynes proves SFA's belief: shared systems ensure that students—regardless of background—receive strong instruction, timely support, and clear expectations every day. Success doesn't only show up in test scores, but in the reduction of special education referrals, behavioral disruptions, and increased retention of staff, students, and families.

“Our impact is truly generational. We often have alumni return to work for us, or send their children to our schools. There's no greater endorsement of culture, of quality, or of impact than that.” – Michelle Douglas

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For school leaders considering Success for All, Hynes offers a practical example: when leadership, instruction, and professional learning are aligned and sustained, reading success is reliable and enduring.