

Inspiration in the Big Easy

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Jason Bedrick (EdChoice), Rabbi
Yossi Chesney (Torah Academy),
Rabbi A. D. Motzen

As advocates of school choice and representatives of Jewish day school families, my colleagues and I often find ourselves in statehouses and involved in education policy discussions. However, whenever I'm traveling around the country, I try to make a point of visiting the local Jewish schools to see the real world effect of those policies. This week, I found myself in New Orleans for a conference, but managed to get away for a bit to visit the Torah Academy of New Orleans. The school, which is finally back to its pre-Katrina

numbers and growing, accepts students from all socioeconomic backgrounds and is participating in both of Louisiana's private school choice programs.

Together with Jason Bedrick of EdChoice, I got the chance to meet the hardworking and dedicated teachers and administrators of this beautiful and inspiring school.

Of course, not everything we do is related to education.

The New York City Council awarded several grants to Agudath Israel Community Services to help serve its constituents ([see here](#)) and Agudath Israel of Illinois celebrated the signing of a bill that will help the [Chicago](#) community's volunteer EMS service Hatzalah.

If you haven't done so yet, please take a moment to look at our [action alert](#), and ask Congress to maintain the current funding level of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program which is being threatened by a 40% cut. Also, if you have the opportunity to meet with your member of Congress when they are home for the August recess, please make sure to bring up this important issue.

In [Cleveland](#), Rabbi Yitz Frank and a group of Agudath Israel of Ohio board members and community leaders met with State Senator Matt Huffman this week. Now is the time to meet with candidates and elected officials as they are in their home districts during the summer and in many cases gearing up for the upcoming elections and interested in meeting with constituents. Please reach out to me or your state's Agudah director if you will be meeting with elected officials and you want to know what issues to bring up.