"Research on Reforms" Returns

Research on Reforms, Inc. (ROR) now returns to its website following its successful lawsuit against the Louisiana Department of Education for violation of the Public Records Act, resulting in a judgment of over $18,000 against the Department.

As background, Dr. Barbara Ferguson and Charles Hatfield co-founded Research on Reforms, Inc. for the purpose of studying the state takeover of the New Orleans public schools. ROR published over 60 articles on its website beginning in 2008.

To conduct research, ROR and other researchers received decoded student data from the Department. In 2012, the Department stopped releasing the data to ROR, while continuing to release the data to its selected researchers.   During the years ROR did receive the data, ROR published articles on its research findings, citing problems with the state takeover.

ROR's research findings on the state takeover did not agree with the findings of the Department's selected researchers. Thus, the Department stopped releasing the data to ROR. Immediately, ROR sued the Department of Education for violation of the Public Records Act. The Baton Rouge District Court held in the Department's favor. ROR appealed and the Louisiana First Circuit Court of Appeal reversed the judgment, holding that the Louisiana Department of Education violated the Public Records Act.   ROR was awarded a judgment of $18,121 and on August 23, 2019, the judgment was paid. Seven long years!

While the litigation was a success for ROR, it was also a defeat for its work. During the years of litigation, without the data, ROR could not conduct any statistical analysis. During that time, ROR did publish commentaries on its previous articles and a book, *"Outcomes of the State Takeover of the New Orleans Schools."*

Now, ROR will briefly return to publishing on its website simply to reflect on its work and the progress of the state takeover or the lack thereof. We invite you to be a part of the work. Look on our website for how to contribute articles or suggest topics.

Happy New Year!