

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE

LETTER OF INTENT

**Name of Applicant:** Partnership for Los Angeles Schools

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**Central Region Elementary School #18**

260 E. 31<sup>st</sup> Street, 90011

Neighborhood: East LA

The Partnership for Los Angeles Schools is pleased to submit this letter of intent to make an application for Central Region Elementary School #18 under the 2009 Public School Choice Initiative. The Partnership is committed to serving all students and families in the CRES #18 school community and neighborhood. We envision this new school as a collaborative, inviting place where students, and the adults who teach and support them, are engaged at the highest level of efficacy and continuous improvement.

**Vision, Mission and Core Values**

The Partnership's **vision** is a CRES #18 where all students are at grade level in English language arts and mathematics when they promote to middle school. **Our mission is to transform teaching and learning so all students have a foundation for academic excellence and personal success.** Our ultimate **goal** is to establish CRES #18 as a true 21<sup>st</sup> Century School by empowering and supporting the staff to dramatically accelerate student achievement. Our vision is ambitious and far reaching because we believe that all students can be successful when school staff, parents, and community members work together to transform the school's culture and support students to reach their maximum potential.

The Partnership's **core values** underpin every aspect of our work with the schools we serve. Simply stated: 1) students are the first priority in everything we do; 2) our commitment to continuous improvement is key to accelerating school transformation; 3) a culture of high expectations sets the bar for our children, our schools, and our organization; 4) the entire school community is accountable for results; 5) families and communities are critical partners in a student's education; and 6) integrity is highly valued and placed at the center of all our actions. These core values are the building blocks to our education model.

Founded in 2007 as a cornerstone of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's strategy to improve education in Los Angeles, the Partnership is a unique collaboration between the City of Los Angeles and LAUSD. The Partnership currently serves 12 schools with similar student populations and similar educational challenges faced by the three schools that will send students to CRES #18.

## Partnership Education Model

To transform underperforming schools and improve their academic performance, the Partnership implements a comprehensive education model that addresses key instructional, cultural and policy issues that have plagued these schools for years. Our model is focused on fundamental changes, rather than incremental improvements. We are committed to working with existing school staff and providing them with the necessary supports to improve their practice. We believe our education model will put CRES #18 on the right track to accelerating student achievement.

Our model includes the following key strategies:

- **Transforming School Site Leadership & Culture:** Creating the conditions necessary for students to succeed requires a dramatic change in the way that administrators, teachers and school governance groups define and practice leadership. Key strategies include hiring and developing CRES #18 administrators as strong instructional leaders who spend a minimum of three hours a day in classrooms, focusing on improving instruction; extending school site leadership to teachers and giving them real input into the instructional program, which includes specialized training for Grade Level Leads, Coordinators, and Coaches; and focusing the school’s culture on high expectations for all students, especially through offering academically rigorous content and engaging instruction in all classrooms.
- **Strengthening Quality Instruction:** Quality classroom instruction lies at the core of improved student achievement. The Partnership will support excellent teaching and learning by working with administrators to design teacher professional development, including creating consistent opportunities for grade level collaboration; developing school structures that strengthen the planning, teaching, and assessment cycle with side-by-side support from content experts; creating opportunities for professional collaboration and learning within the school via site-based professional development that is designed to address the particular needs of staff and students; and finally by leveraging the use of data and technology to focus the curriculum, content, and pedagogy on students specific academic needs.
- **Accelerating Opportunities for Students:** The Partnership believes that quality schools provide students with customized intervention and enrichment programs that accelerate the rate of student academic achievement. The Partnership will support CRES #18 in this work by developing a targeted intervention program that includes afterschool and within the day intervention support for students scoring Basic and Below in English Language Arts and Mathematics, testing all 2<sup>nd</sup> Graders for Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), and expanding enrichment opportunities for students (Afterschool programs, technology, field trips, mentoring, among others).
- **Actively Engaging Families & Communities:** Engaging families and communities is a largely untapped but vital strategy in boosting student achievement. With our prior experience in supporting the development of best-practice family and community engagement efforts, the Partnership is uniquely qualified to work with the CRES#18 to build the leadership capacity of parent leaders on campus, implement family education programs that support student learning, and engage our community-based organizations in increasing student achievement.
- **Optimizing School Structures & Operations:** Through our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the District, the Partnership has secured flexibilities from LAUSD to enable more local control for the schools we serve. In conjunction with the District, the Partnership has also developed a per-pupil funding model that provides flexibility in school site budgeting. As a result, Partnership schools have increased decision-making authority in exchange for increased accountability. We know that there are tremendous “non-instructional” demands that can dilute the instructional focus at a school. To help remedy this situation, the Partnership provides additional support to our schools in

key operational areas such as performance management, facilities, technology, budget and finance, employee management, compliance and school governance.

### **Partnerships**

The Partnership believes that teaching and learning not only takes place in the classroom, but happens throughout all aspects of a student's school and community life. Therefore, we are committed to building schools that are at the center of change for the community by fostering strong partnerships with community-based organizations, youth programs, universities and colleges, and city services.

This past year, the Partnership developed a Community Collaborative in Central/South Los Angeles, which consists of seventeen organizations (including A Place Called Home, among others). The objectives of the collaborative are to further engage parents and increase their involvement, coordinate services across all groups, update community members on the Partnership's activities and to create opportunities to connect community and city services with the Partnership schools. This collaborative will also serve and support the CRES #18 school community. Ultimately, the collaborative will ensure that students from all Partnership schools have access to enriching activities throughout the entire day, and to share best practices more effectively across all the service-providing organizations.

The Partnership has also developed strong partnerships with universities, businesses and corporations, such as **UCLA Center X, Wells Fargo, Time Warner, Direct TV, VH1 Save the Music Foundation, City Year, Fox Sports West, Cal State LA**, among others. These partners are committed to linking resources to our schools and providing students with enriching development opportunities. For example, Fox Sports West adopted Santee Education Complex and has launched a full school initiative that includes student trainings, job shadowing, career and college exposure, faculty support, and student incentives. We intend to bring similar resources to the CRES #18 school community.

### **Community Engagement and Outreach**

The Partnership believes that properly engaging communities requires open and continuous communication from the outset. Therefore, we focus significant time and resources to establish practices that foster broad community input and engagement.

We plan on doing extensive outreach in the coming months to inform and engage potential staff members, parents and community members. Activities include:

- **Hosting Community Forums:** Successfully engaging families and communities throughout the educational process is vital to the educational and personal success of each student. The Partnership will host a series of community forums prior to the beginning of the school year in order to seek input and participation in CRES #18's future direction from all community stakeholders.
- **Hiring Highly Qualified Teachers and School Staff:** The Partnership will begin the hiring process for CRES #18 as early as possible. Prospective teachers will be required to successfully plan and teach a lesson during the interview phase. The Partnership will seek out teachers and staff that are highly skilled and motivated to be a part of a collaborative and engaging school where everyone believes in the academic potential and ability of all students.
- **Extending the Community Collaborative:** The Partnership will utilize and expand our pre-existing South LA community collaborative to boost student achievement at CRES #18. This collaborative consists of city services, community-based organizations, local businesses, and youth programs designed to serve students in the school's attendance area.
- **Enlisting the Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Team:** The Partnership recognizes that parental presence at the school site can only bolster stakeholder cooperation, accountability and

understanding, as well as student achievement. To this end, the Partnership's FACE Team will consult with school administrators, parents, and community leaders to provide professional development opportunities for school site staff, parents, and teachers. The FACE Team will create and maintain a parent center at CRES #18 that parallels the parent centers at our four other elementary schools. The parent center will help ensure that families and the community are properly informed and integrally involved in school site decision and policy-making.

### Partnership Results to Date

The Partnership achieved some strong academic results in its first year. The average API growth across all Partnership schools was 17 points, which outpaces the state, LAUSD, and comparable LAUSD Local Districts. Growth in CST English Language Arts proficiency rates at 3 of the 4 elementary schools were in the top 15% of all LAUSD elementary schools.

School	2009 API	API Growth	Met All 2009 AYP Targets?
PLAS Average (All Schools)	625	17	N/A
99 <sup>th</sup> Street ES	721	54	Y
Figueroa St. ES	709	9	N
Ritter ES	670	4	N
Sunrise ES	733	41	N

### CST English Language Arts and Mathematics Achievement: Pre- and Post-PLAS (2008 vs. 2009)

	ELA % Prof. & Adv. (2008)	ELA % Prof. & Adv. (2009)	1-yr. Change	Math % Prof. & Adv. (2008)	Math % Prof. & Adv. (2009)	1-yr. Change
PLAS ES Avg.	25.5%	34.0%	+8.5%	43.8%	47.7%	+3.9%
PLAS MS Avg.	18.1%	19.4%	+1.3%	13.0%	14.6%	+1.6%
PLAS HS Avg.	15.1%	17.7%	+2.6%	2.6%	3.6%	+1.0%
99 <sup>th</sup> Street ES	22.9%	38.3%	+15.4%	39.6%	52.6%	+13.0%
Figueroa St. ES	27.6%	32.2%	+4.6%	45.6%	48.2%	+2.6%
Ritter ES	17.0%	26.5%	+9.5%	42.0%	34.7%	-7.3%
Sunrise ES	31.8%	39.5%	+7.7%	46.6%	53.8%	+7.2%

### English Learner Reclassification Rates (2008 vs. 2009)

School	2008 ELL Reclassification Rate	2009 ELL Reclassification Rate	Difference
99 <sup>th</sup> Street ES	4.0%	5.2%	+1.2%
Figueroa St. ES	19.4%	16.2%	-3.2%
Ritter ES	2.4%	14.8%	+12.4%
Sunrise ES	16.9%	15.6%	-1.3%

For a more comprehensive analysis of student achievement results for all Partnership schools please visit [www.partnershippla.org](http://www.partnershippla.org).

We look forward to working with the CRES #18 school community—parents, school staff, students and community members—to help build a remarkable school. We are excited at the prospect of creating a school that dramatically improves the lives of CRES #18's prospective students so they have a foundation of academic excellence on which to build their future.