

1. Partner Background

A. Organization Name: Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL)

B. Organization Mission & Connection to Louisiana’s Plan for Struggling Schools

AUSL (Academy for Urban School Leadership) is a nationally recognized Chicago nonprofit school management organization that creates schools of excellence by developing highly effective teachers and transforming educational outcomes for students in the lowest performing schools. AUSL was founded in 2001 and today manages 31 Chicago Public Schools serving 17,000 students. Over 950 teachers have graduated from the AUSL Chicago Teacher Residency™. Steady, positive improvements in academic achievement, student engagement, and parent satisfaction are hallmarks of all AUSL-managed CPS schools.

AUSL has extensive experience implementing one of the strongest interventions in persistently struggling schools. Through the restart intervention approach, AUSL transforms educational outcomes for students in what were once the lowest performing schools by executing a rigorous, comprehensive, and evidence based model of school improvement. We also provide comprehensive professional development to schools and districts through our school advisory services. Various elements of a high performing school can be created incrementally.

2. Evidence of Track Record of Student and School Outcomes

A. Please illustrate your organization’s track record in dramatically improving schools or systems of schools and/or radically increasing outcomes for targeted subgroups of students.

The AUSL program is a school intervention model predicated on evidence based practices for teaching and learning, leadership development and support, data management systems, family engagement, and wraparound supports for our most vulnerable students. The AUSL model has been fully implemented in 31 schools in Chicago since 2001. Implementation of the AUSL program has resulted in significant gains in student achievement across our network of schools. Notable outcomes include:

- Chicago Public Schools (CPS) recently announced their findings from the annual School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP). SQRP is a school quality rating scale created by CPS which places their schools on a 5 point scale (highest 1+, 1, 2+, 2, 3 lowest) based on multiple measures of school quality – such as standardized assessment data, attendance, behavior, etc.). Prior to AUSL takeover, none of our schools were in “good standing” with CPS, and 90% of our schools scored Level 3 on SQRP, the lowest level of achievement. Many of these schools were among the persistently lowest performing schools in the state of Illinois. Today, nearly 85% of AUSL Elementary Schools (22/26) scored in Good Standing and 73% (19/26) are Level 1 or Level 1+. In just the past 4 years, 14 AUSL schools have undergone rapid and dramatic improvement.
- School climate and culture has dramatically improved through the AUSL intervention program. For example, AUSL elementary schools have made strong progress in closing the attendance gap in Chicago Public Schools. In the 2016 school year, AUSL elementary schools tied for the third highest attendance out of 17 networks in the district, despite the vast majority of our schools being located in neighborhoods that traditionally rank among the lowest levels of attendance. AUSL elementary schools grew 0.9% from the prior school year, achieving a 95.6% attendance rate.

Please see attachment with additional student and school outcome data.

3. Organization’s Model

A. How will you differentiate your services to meet the unique needs of schools and districts in Louisiana?

Through AUSL’s Advisory Services, our approach involves partnering with districts. Instead of taking over the operations of a school or leading a turnaround implementation, AUSL will offer tools, training, and support, through a consultative relationship, to build the foundation for Louisiana’s districts and schools to support all

of its persistently struggling schools. AUSL has the capacity to provide comprehensive services to schools of all types (PK-12; Charters; Neighborhood Public Schools). Before any long-term engagement, AUSL will begin with a data-driven assessment of needs of the school/district to develop an understanding of needs and priorities and collaborate with the school/district to define the plan. Through interviews, analysis of data, and observations, AUSL will recommend a specific set of supports to implement, within the context of educators, school environment, student demographics, and community at large. Below are examples of our activities to illustrate our approach:

- Joint diagnosis planning. Using AUSL's school environment checklist, AUSL will diagnose and recommend action plans for facility and security policy improvements to ensure a safe and orderly environment.
- Principal Coaching and Support. Utilizing AUSL's *Core Levers for Instructional Improvement* and related tools, AUSL will co-construct a series of targeted learning sessions to jointly work on improving the principal's instructional leadership. Areas of change include: student learning, teacher practice, and principal practice.
- Instructional Programs. AUSL will review all existing District-supported instructional programs at each school and provide recommendations to the District on whether such programs should continue and if so, how such programs can be modified to better align with and support AUSL's proposed intervention programs.

B. What are the attributes of your ideal partner school or district?

Based on our experience transforming persistently struggling schools, AUSL believes that school districts can incorporate individual elements of AUSL's programs into their own school reform and talent development models. Attributes of ideal partner districts/schools include:

- Continuous measurement and communication of AUSL's role in the school(s) redesign to ensure buy-in throughout the school community.
- Common belief that all children can learn and deserve a quality education. This is a core operating belief of AUSL and our successful partnerships are also based on a foundation of education as a pathway towards greater opportunity for society's most vulnerable children.
- Open communication, transparency and support of mutually agreed upon school transformation initiatives.

C. Describe your experience working with other third party providers to support coherent school and district improvement.

AUSL Advisory Services provides recommendations of intervention programs to best suit the needs of the state, district, or school. School districts (both large and small) have contracted with AUSL to provide services to one or a number of schools, including New York Department of Education, Partnership for Los Angeles Schools, North Chicago Community School District, Tennessee Achievement School District, Maywood (Illinois), Omaha Public Schools, among others. With each of these engagements, AUSL partners with the district/school to recommend and implement intervention programs to support coherent school and district improvement.

AUSL also prides itself in effective, high quality management of third party providers to support the AUSL intervention program. In Chicago, AUSL partners with many vendors who provide a variety of school based supports – ranging from social emotional to academic to talent development for teachers and principals. These partners include City Year, SGA, UCAN, University of Chicago ("Success Project"), President's Council on Arts & Humanities ("Turnaround Arts"), University of Washington Center for Educational Leadership, Erikson Institute, DePaul University, National Louis University, and many others.

D. What support from the state, district or school partners would enhance your success in Louisiana?
AUSL believes our clients should be provided with the sufficient autonomy to fully implement our proposed intervention programs, such as: approaches to school staffing, budget allocations, use of facilities to optimize learning, professional development, curriculum scope and sequence, and school scheduling.