

DISTRICT-CHARTER COLLABORATION COMPACT

A Collaboration for High-Quality Education for All Students in Denver Public Schools

We believe that all students can achieve and deserve the highest quality public schools. We believe that it is the collective responsibility of all schools – district, charter, performance, magnet, or innovation – to ensure all students have access to an excellent education that successfully prepares them for college and career. These opportunities must be available to all students in all parts of the city, and our students’ access to them must not be limited in any way by socioeconomics, language, citizenship status, or special needs of students. We believe that our students and parents should be able to exercise choice among high-performing schools in their neighborhoods and across the city.

Driven by these shared beliefs, this District/Charter Collaboration Compact (the “Compact”) represents an unprecedented commitment among district and charter leaders in Denver Public Schools to improve the ways they work together for the benefit of all students in the city. Denver Public Schools has worked with the charter community to make real our core principles of equity of opportunity, equity of access and responsibility, and equity of accountability, as illustrated in the following recent measures:

- Charter schools, in aggregate, serve students populations that nearly mirror district averages in terms of free/reduced lunch status (73%), ethnic minority percentages (75%), English language learner status (30%), and special education status (11%).
- In 2010 Omar D. Blair became the first charter school in DPS to open a special education center program for students with multi-intensive needs in a charter school, and additional center programs are slated to open in charter schools this fall.
- In the last three years (including schools to open this fall), 14 new charter schools have opened in district facilities. As of August of 2011, there will be 16 charter schools operating in district facilities, representing approximately 48% of charter schools operating in the district, with 11 of these schools operating in a shared campus partnership.
- The District’s multi-measure School Performance Framework (SPF) treats district-run and charter schools equally; three of the top five performing schools in Denver Public Schools in the fall 2010 SPF are charter schools. Statewide, four of the top five schools demonstrating the most academic growth in the 2009-10 school years were DPS schools, of which three are charters.
- In the last two years, the District’s Call for Quality Schools new schools RFP and rigorous screening process has resulted in the approval of 2 successful district-run schools and 12 successful charter schools. The third iteration of the Call for Quality Schools will be issued early in the new year.
- District and charter leaders serve on joint teams to ensure equity regarding special education and the enrollment practices and procedures.
- Charter schools share equitably on the same pro rata basis as district run schools in funding the cost of center programs for severe needs students throughout the District. To ensure all students in DPS are afforded the highest quality education.
- Denver has committed to closing or restructuring the lowest performing schools, including the 6 lowest performing charter schools in the last 3 years.

In order to capitalize on the momentum to date and deepen our joint commitments to serving all students, we set forth a bold agenda in this compact to dramatically increase student achievement in Denver. To that end, the purpose of this compact is to expand opportunity and raise achievement for all students in Denver’s public schools through equitable resources, equitable responsibility, collaboration, and communication.

Listed below are the commitments of each Compact signatory partner, including district and charter school leaders. These commitments are made in mutual trust and with the recognition that we can best achieve our common purpose by working together to meet our common challenges. A timeline for implementation is also included below. Implementation of this Compact shall take in account, throughout, those schools with Alternative Education Campus status.

DISTRICT AND CHARTER SCHOOL JOINT COMMITMENTS:

- Ensure that *all* students in the city graduate from high school prepared to succeed in college, work, and life. The children living within Denver do not belong to a particular district school or to a particular charter school – the children in Denver are all our children. Expect all schools to meet or exceed *district-wide* performance standards that are rigorous, consistent and transparent. Collaborate to refine and improve the School Performance Framework.
- Ensure all schools provide equitable access and high-quality supports for all students. The district and charter schools commit to developing a city-wide vision and definition of what equitable access means across a school system. The district and the charter schools also commit to developing a common, coordinated school choice and enrollment system that makes the vision achievable.
- Embrace the opportunity and need to help the most effective schools reach substantially greater levels of scale, whether those schools are district-run or charter schools, thereby increasing the number of high performing seats in the district.
- Ensure equitable hosting of programs for students with severe special needs and equitable funding and sharing of the corresponding resources such that both district and charter schools are equipped to provide high-quality support for students with severe special needs.
- Develop and implement a common approach to enrollment that accounts for alternative education campuses and unique programs and that ensures parents will be able to make informed, data-driven choices through a common and clear process. Key elements may include,
 - Common enrollment forms (not excluding additional forms), common application dates for the Denver Public School choice enrollment window (acknowledging that some schools such as Alternative Education Campuses have continuous enrollment policies), and transparent communication with parents and students (and between sending and receiving schools) regarding school choice, and counseling of parents and students based solely on the educational interests of students.
 - Sharing all parent enrollment information in a timely and transparent manner and together building a common parent information system.

- Agreeing to track and publish outcomes of student enrollment, including mid-year entry students and administrative transfers, and following-up on lessons learned based on those results.
- Share timely access to longitudinal data systems and data warehouses. Charter schools commit to keeping data accurate and current, and contributing to their share of the cost. The District commits to giving charter schools access, at the District's cost, to all of the relevant data analysis and reporting tools available to other district schools.
- Commit to equitable funding among all schools for district-wide obligations, such as alternative education.
- Develop and implement systems and policies to maximize grant opportunities available to Denver's charter community, including opportunities to collaboratively pursue grant funding with the district.
- Accept a mutual obligation to create highly effective schools and to pursue accountability across all schools in the city, including rewarding and supporting successful schools, and ensuring that failing schools are restructured, replaced or closed when not meeting expectations, whether district or charter.
- Create a systemic approach to sharing of best practices throughout the year on specific topics, such as academic support for struggling students, to advance practical solutions and strategies to common challenges. Include, and learn from, both district-run schools and charter schools in formal and informal venues.

CHARTER SCHOOL COMMITMENTS:

- To the greatest extent possible and without restricting opportunities for new schools arising outside of district plans, commit to locating new schools in the highest-need areas, aligned to district plans and connected to district feeder patterns. Demonstrate parent support for new school applications and participate in ongoing parent engagement.
- Commit to providing access and high quality support services or programs for all student populations, including English language learners, high risk students, students with mild-moderate needs, and students transitioning out of alternative schools. Commit to providing access and high-quality support services for students with severe needs as appropriate, guided by an equitable allocation process of center-based programs and corresponding resources. Support the comparable representation of all student populations in charter schools
- Commit to providing access and high-quality support services for mid-year entry students in accordance with the district administrative transfer process and agreed upon district-charter school enrollment policies. Ensure that mid-year entry students are provided equitable access to schools across the district.
- Commit to partnering with Denver Public Schools to implement a common and coordinated choice enrollment system.
- Commit to highlighting the partnership with Denver Public Schools in newsletters, marketing materials, and special events and when speaking with the media.
- Commit to a high level of communication with the district, making appropriate personnel aware on a timely basis of both successes and potential problems in the schools.

- Commit to make available to district educators, where feasible and at cost, professional development opportunities.

DISTRICT COMMITMENTS:

- Commit to ensuring that all Denver students, including those in charter schools, have access to adequate facilities. Develop and implement an equitable and transparent process for facilities assignment that considers parent demand and school performance, as well as building quality where possible. Ensure occupancy costs are accurate and include the impact of bond funds and ensure all buildings are kept to reasonable maintenance standards.
- Commit to ensuring equitable resources for charter schools. This includes not only per pupil revenue, but, to the greatest extent possible, an equitable share of all other district resources including Title funds, existing bond funds, application opportunities for future bond funds, mill levy funds, curriculum and materials purchased with federal funds, and grants for programs that could benefit charters. This would also include an opportunity for the charter schools to play a meaningful role in shaping expenditures of funds made on their behalf.
- Commit to an effective schools authorization process for all new schools (district schools and charter schools) that ensures an infrastructure for effective new school development. Implement a parent engagement strategy that effectively communicates the strengths of approved district-run and charter schools.
- Commit to a market-driven system that allows charters to solicit bids for food service, transportation, procurement, or other back-office functions from both the district and third-party providers and to select a menu of services from those providers who best meet the needs of the school.
- Commit to providing charter school staff access—at cost—to the same high-quality professional development available to district-run schools. This includes training and development in special education, RTI, ELL and other specialized fields.
- To the greatest extent possible, allow charter schools to actively inform the process of assigning, supervising and evaluating district employees who work in or provide services to charter schools. This includes employees who provide student services as mandated by special education IEPs, custodial staff, food service staff, transportation staff and others.
- Commit to broadly informing district and charter school students and families about all of the choice options available to them and developing and implementing a common enrollment system that allows families to easily exercise those choice options.
- Commit to publicly celebrating the successes of all schools (including district-run and charter schools) in district newsletters, in marketing materials, at special events, and when speaking with the media.

JOINT COMMITMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION

The various provisions of this compact represent the parties' collective commitment to both the principles and objectives enumerated within as well as the ongoing process by which those principles become operational. Over the coming months, the principles and objectives will be translated to specific policies, expectations, and opportunities relevant to both the district as well

as individual charter schools, and agreed to by both parties. To the extent future compact development translates to changes in Board of Education policy, such changes will be put to the Board for approval. To the extent future compact development translates to amendments of existing charter contracts or the development of new contracts applicable to individual charter schools, those amendments or contracts will be separately agreed to by the parties along with applicable opportunities for opting out of individual provisions.

The parties agree to make all best efforts to implement the compact according to the following timeline. The parties further agree to convene all signatories to this agreement at least once annually to review progress toward implementing the parties' shared commitments and objectives, dialogue about common challenges, and explore new opportunities for collaboration. The parties agree to transparently and publicly report on progress every six months and develop additional working groups as needed to overcome obstacles to implementation. The parties will identify a third party to support this convening and identify clear and authentic measures to evaluate compact participation and success.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

The Compact will be implemented in three phases, by three working groups, with three areas of focus: Enrollment, Special Populations, and Resources. The phases are as follows:

PHASE I: November 2010-March 2012

- Identify participants and convene working groups
- Working group kickoff to delineate specific objectives and critical partners to involve in developing the details to support the Compact
- Working groups convene partners and stakeholders for dialogue, issue identification, and definition of key principles guiding the agreements.
- Prioritize key issues in each focus area.
- Develop shared perspective on resolution of key issues and associated six-month and one-year action plans with specific deliverables for each focus area.
- Develop a set of specific metrics against each deliverable (including ultimate results and leading indicators) by which compact progress can be measured
- Publish progress report specifying core actions and specific impact of Compact efforts over first 12-15 months of the effort.
- Identify any additional Compact agreements to be incorporated and areas for deeper collaboration

PHASE II: March 2012-November 2012

- Implement six month action plan against each focus area.
- Incorporate additional items into the Compact that were agreed to during Phase 1
- Develop list of additional issues for signatories to tackle, convene working groups, etc. as in Phase 1 to the extent necessary
- Convene Year I Compact review meeting and publish progress report.
- Modify one-year action plan based on key learnings over Phase 1 and Phase 2

PHASE III: November 2012—November 2013

- Implement one-year action plan for each focus area.
- Convene Year II Compact review meeting and publish progress report.

We, the undersigned, agree to the commitments of the compact, on this 6th day of December 2010.



District Superintendent's Signature Tom Boasberg, Superintendent



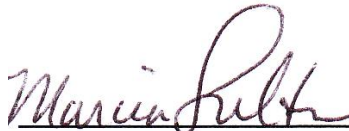
Charter Representative's Signature Stephen Dalla Betta, CEO School Venture Prep



Charter Representative's Signature Michelle Moss, Board Chair School GALS



Charter Representative's Signature Eloy Chavez, Principal School ACE



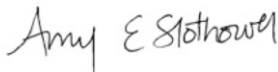
Charter Representative's Signature Marcia Fulton, Executive Director School Odyssey



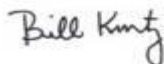
Charter Representative's Signature Chris Gibbons, CEO School WDP

Signature 

Charter Representative's Signature Rich Barrett, Principal School Pioneer



Charter Representative's Signature Amy Slothower, Executive Director School GSS



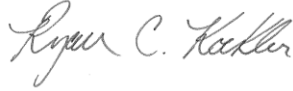
Charter Representative's Signature Bill Kurtz, CEO School DSST



Charter Representative's Signature Jessica Degenhart, Director School DSST-GVR



Charter Representative's Signature Rich Harrison, Director School DSST-Stapleton



Charter Representative's Signature Ryan Kockler, Principal School WDP-Lake

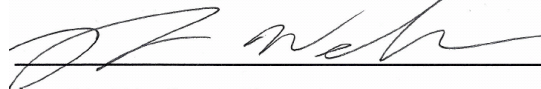


Charter Representative's Signature Joshua Smith, Principal School WDP-Harvey Park

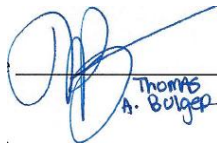


Charter Representative's Signature Betsy Peterson, Principal School WDP-Highland

Charter Representative's Signature Cyndi Bush-Luna, Principal School Colorado HS



Charter Representative's Signature Brian Weber, Executive Director School DLS



Charter Representative's Signature Thomas A. Bulger, Board Chair School Highline Academy



Charter Representative's Signature Gianna Cassetta, Head of School School SOAR



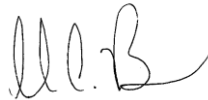
Charter Representative's Signature Ryan Lucas, Principal School Cesar Chavez



Charter Representative's Signature Katie Holz-Russell, Principal School WDP-Federal



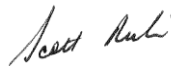
Charter Representative's Signature John Fry, Principal School Ridge View



Charter Representative's Signature David Brown, Principal School AUL



Charter Representative's Signature Rebecca Holmes, Executive Director School KIPP Colorado



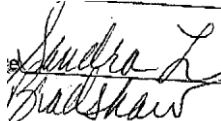
Charter Representative's Signature Scott Rubin, Principal School Southwest Early College



Charter Representative's Signature Linee T. Perroncel, Principal School Wyatt-Edison



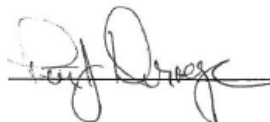
Charter Representative's Signature Deborah Blair-Minter, Principal School Omar D. Blair



Charter Representative's Signature Sandra Bradshaw, Chair for Northeast Academy School Northeast Academy



Charter Representative's Signature Gary Losh, Principal School Justice High School



Charter Representative's Signature Peter J. Droege, Board Chair School Life Skills