Tulsa Public Schools’ Collaboration Compact

A collaboration to transform public education in Tulsa, Oklahoma

The Compact Schools—Tulsa Public Schools, KIPP Tulsa, Tulsa School of Arts and Sciences (TSAS), Tulsa Legacy, College Bound Academy, Collegiate Hall and Tulsa Honor Academy (collectively “the Schools”)—are committed to making every school in Tulsa a high-performing school. A high-performing school prepares all students for college, career and life by providing them highly effective instruction in every classroom, every year; a safe learning environment; and a focus on the whole child that supports student achievement and engagement.

We recognize that public charter schools are public schools sharing deeply and directly in this mission. In the last five years, we have actively worked to eliminate the “us” and “them” mentality. We look to each other for support when opening new schools and facilities and when transitioning to independent public school districts (LEAs). We lean on each other in times of need—whether it means sharing textbooks and materials, turning around a low-performing school, or being on the scene in times of catastrophe to lend a hand and aid in recovery. We celebrate each other’s academic success and seek to scale and customize successful practices in new contexts, all while being mindful of parent demand in high-need areas. This spirit of collective work will serve us well. Our city is plagued with high rates of poverty, student mobility and parental disengagement. While significant progress has been made to address historically low student achievement results, growing English Language learners (ELL) and special education populations, many public schools still open their doors every fall to students two, three or more years below grade level. In this reality, there is no time for isolation and competition.

We have not always worked together as well as we are now—and there are still several areas of interaction, follow-through and trust to address—but we are committed to serving the public school students of Tulsa together.

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1 In the early morning of September 5, 2012, three weeks after the school year began, a three-alarm fire engulfed the Tulsa School of Arts and Sciences (TSAS), the city’s first charter high school and a signatory to the Compact. Fortunately, no students or school personnel were hurt; but the entire school was destroyed—the building and all of its contents. Immediately, Tulsa Public Schools Superintendent Keith Ballard met TSAS Director Eric Doss on the scene to assist and find the school an alternate facility. By the next day, Tulsa Public Schools employees had readied a vacant school building, also providing TSAS with supplies and textbooks. Community members from all over Tulsa added to the relief effort in the following weeks and months.
In 2012, we drafted and approved our first compact, the first of its kind in Oklahoma. It was revised in 2014, and like both the original and second versions, this update to the Collaboration Compact (the “Compact”) is an aspirational document as opposed to a legal agreement or contract. It specifies how we plan to work together for the greater good of Tulsa’s students. It memorializes the signatories’ joint efforts to date and its plans for the next three years. It applies to charter school signatories of the Compact (“the Charters”) whether they are independent LEAs or charter organizations operating as a partnership school with the District.

The District’s Board of Education views the Compact as a complement to its Strategic Plan, which explicitly recognizes the value of pursuing more innovative and autonomous school models as one of its tools for diversifying the District’s offerings, addressing unmet needs, and expanding the District’s access to proven innovators. Our collective mission is to make every one of our schools a high-performing school—a school in which every student is prepared for college, career and life in a safe learning environment by highly effective educators who focus on the whole child as well as student achievement and engagement. By leveraging the District’s teacher and leader effectiveness tools, public resources and performance- based culture with the Charters’ autonomy, innovation, nimbleness, no-excuses mindsets and expertise in data-driven instruction, we, the signatories of this Compact (“the Schools”) will succeed in our mission. In service to this mission, we aspire to:

- Work collectively and in coordination to ensure every student is ready for college, career and life
- Improve and refine the coordinated enrollment system for families
- Support transparency and accountability to prepare students to be ready for college, career and life
- Recruit, develop and retain talented educators to ensure every student has an effective teacher and every school an effective leader
- Ensure equitable access to services and resources

Commitment One:
Work collectively and in coordination to ensure every student is ready for college, career and life

Because we are committed to ensuring that every student has the highest quality education—especially those children living in the city’s neighborhoods of poverty, we will:
- Coordinate our long- and short-term plans to build a portfolio of “highly effective schools” as defined by jointly-developed, rigorous, broad student-focused metrics. The Schools will develop common performance milestones to guide their collective work and inform their organizations’ planning. As noted above, the District recognizes charter schools as one of its resources in serving the students of Tulsa—not out of any desire to replace traditional public schools, but to diversify, enhance and expand its offerings to students living in the District’s enrollment zone. It will continue to include charters in its student enrollment planning, educational programming and facility
usage. Charters will continue to collaborate with TPS in both short and long-term planning. This compact will allow all signatories to collaboratively address underserved student populations and the unmet needs of geographical areas and feeder patterns. Adding high-quality, strategically located schools will enhance the District's portfolio. Our work will be guided and monitored by the Compact Steering Committee comprised of representatives from each of the Schools. Details regarding the work of the Steering Committee and the workgroups supporting the implementation of the Compact are specified in the appendices to this Compact.

- **Define, identify, reward and support "highly effective schools" and "ineffective schools" and ensuring that ineffective schools are restructured, replaced or closed when not meeting expectations, whether District or Charter.** Schools will define and report outcomes based on common accountability standards and timelines and explore the possibility of a common school reporting document. This framework will likely include overall school effectiveness measures in terms of student growth and college readiness, providing all stakeholders with complete, comparable and transparent school performance data. At a minimum, annual reviews of this data will occur with all parties so as to foster learning from one another and continued collaboration around exemplar models and best practices. The signatories will also pursue methods of identifying their abilities to reach students' social and emotional needs.

- **Operationalize our collaborative relationship.** Strong relationships among our leadership teams are not sufficient to reach our goals or sustain our collective efforts long term. We will ensure that all school personnel—from central administration to school staff members—understand and embody the joint commitment we have to support the success of all schools for all students. Signatories will develop annual action plans to address this important goal, and will leverage working groups when appropriate. Over the past two years, accountability and operations working groups have been critical in the execution of the Compact commitments.

- **Continue to develop and strengthen the synergy of co-located schools.** Because there are underserved neighborhoods that would benefit from the strength and synergy of the Schools' collective action, the Schools are working to transform one or more communities by collocating some of their best programming and educators in the same buildings. This arrangement will create a streamlined pathway for students to flow from charter to traditional public school or vice versa and maximize collaboration and the sharing of best practices among Schools. Goals for collocated sites will be revisited annually.

- **Pursue grant opportunities jointly, as appropriate, to serve all students within highly-effective or ineffective schools.**

- **Investigate opportunities to expand the Compact to new signatories, especially proven local or national charters operators with blended learning expertise or those interested in the partnership school model.**

- **Highlight the compact partnership with local media, newsletters, special events and marketing materials.** To accomplish this, the signatories commit to holding an annual
summit or informational meeting, likely in the fall of each academic year, to explain the Compact to all stakeholders in the Tulsa community.

Commitment Two: Improve and refine the coordinated enrollment system for families

Because the Schools know that families need help identifying and navigating school choices simply, seamlessly and effectively, we will:

- **Continue to provide each other with full and expedient access to student data.** When a student transfers from or to a charter school, all student data from the sending school, including cumulative files, general student enrollment data, test results, and gifted/ELL/Special Ed status, shall be provided to the receiving school upon request. In addition, Schools shall share student directory information at least twice a year, and more frequently upon request.

- **Continue to utilize the enrollment center as a vehicle for charter schools to inform parents and students of school options.** We will:
  - Ensure charter information and applications are available, with knowledgeable TPS staff able to assist with questions.
  - Designate space for charter schools around application deadlines.
  - Assist with student recruitment efforts, including publicizing any open houses or other portfolio events for other magnet or lottery schools.

- **Develop coordinated communication tools regarding public school choice.** Jointly developed communication tools (including, but not limited to, documents, website messaging and school choice expo) will inform parents of the wide array of public school choices including charters, magnets, neighborhood schools, specialty schools, high school academies, and other public schools, intentionally sharing the message that the District is expanding and improving options for students and families in the effort to create as many high performing schools as possible. It will also inform families of the charter school application processes and timelines.

- **Support each other’s recruiting efforts in school buildings.** Signatories commit to deciding how recruitment efforts will look on an annual basis, but will ensure that there are equal opportunities to present information to students and families about offerings and enrollment procedures, and that every student population is actively recruited.

- **Investigate opportunities to develop a common enrollment system.** The desired outcome for this endeavor is a common and coordinated choice enrollment system, including common deadlines and waitlist processes and, as feasible, student applications and enrollment forms.
Commitment Three:
Support transparency and accountability to prepare students to be ready for college, career and life

To eradicate the myths of “us” and “them,” to provide all public school students with equitable access to education services and ensure accountability:

- **All signatories will actively recruit and educate underserved students and remove barriers to student entry and retention.**
  - The Schools will share student enrollment data on a frequent basis, to identify whether Charters are serving and retaining similar student populations as those served by District schools, including, but not limited to, students with disabilities (of all levels), students with exceptional educational needs, students who are English Language learners (ELL), students in at-risk populations, and students transitioning out of alternative schools. Charters will develop a plan to address any deficiencies revealed by the data by enhancing their recruitment of such students and removing the barriers to serving them, especially as it pertains to the education of students with more severe disabilities. To ensure that Charters have efficient and affordable access to the educational supports and services for students of all disabilities, Charters may investigate the possibility of establishing joint contracts with outside service providers or contracts with the District.
  - To better serve families in which English is not the predominant language spoken in the home, Charters will continue to offer information regarding school enrollment and other pertinent data in all languages. To assist Charters in this regard, the District will share its policies and best practices with them, including the contact information of the vendor it uses for translation services.
  - In addition, Charters will continue to ensure that all students have access to their schools, regardless of prior academic achievement and student behavior records. Specifically, Charters will ensure that parents and students are aware of their rights to continued enrollment in their schools under state law, even in the event of poor academic performance or behavior and ensure that charter school policies allow for mid-year entry students in accordance with state law.

- **To ensure transparency and the rewards of accountability for student success, schools will continue to provide each other with transparent and complete accountability and performance data.** Signatories will continue their participation in the District-funded value added modeling including value-added data and student survey reporting. Teacher perception surveys will also be made available to charters. In accordance with student data sharing agreements, Schools will also actively share grade/subject student achievement and growth results, as well as student demographic, achievement, mobility, discipline, exceptional education, and English language learners data to assist in the development of a common longitudinal data system. Signatories will also pursue the possibility of also administering the University of Oklahoma’s school climate survey.
- Organize, plan and hold annual open house days for at least five of the most "highly effective" schools as measured by value added and other available data. Using early release time or strategic calendaring, teachers and leaders from other schools will be provided with the opportunity to participate in small-group tours of these schools. As relationships grow among school systems, it is our desire that teachers and leaders begin to collaborate directly with each other across sites, shadowing their colleagues at the most effective schools, especially those with similar prior test scores and demographics, to learn new strategies or see in person what those strategies look like when implemented with full fidelity. A particular interest of the District is to learn from teachers and leaders who have successfully implemented parent engagement as one of their key strategies in achieving the high rates of growth.
- Charters will share their knowledge in using specific student-level accountability data to guide decision-making. Of specific note, KIPP educators will share their expertise and experiences in determining students’ learning trajectories and college readiness; and KIPP and Tulsa Legacy will share their knowledge in how to use NWEA-MAP assessment information to guide instruction and meet the learning goals of students, as the District began using NWEA-MAP district-wide in the fall of 2013 in grades K-3rd.

**Commitment Four:**
Recruit, develop and retain talented educators to ensure that every student has an effective teacher and every school an effective leader

Recruiting teacher and principal talent is a struggle across the state, and the challenge is dire in Tulsa, one of only two urban areas in Oklahoma. Because of the educator shortages across the region, teachers and principal applicants have many opportunities to work in less challenging schools in the state or in its neighbor states, frequently for more money. As such, the pool of high quality applicants is small in Tulsa. Substantial teacher vacancies impede Tulsa Public Schools, especially. The Compact Schools must attract the same type of applicants—educators with a sense of urgency, willing to tackle the fallout of poverty and lead students who are often unprepared for on-level instruction to college and career readiness.

Because great results for students depend upon great teachers and leaders, schools will:
- **Continue to have full access to the District's semi-annual principal leadership conferences (LDD), which will soon be enhanced as a part of the District's $4.8 million School Leadership Program grant.** Principals at Charters may opt not to attend the training if there is an unavoidable conflict or if the conference agenda does not pertain to the work at their school.
- **Support each other’s efforts to strengthen their teacher and leader pool by sharing all teacher and leader vacancy information on their websites, including those of our Compact partners.** Instead of fearing what might occur by posting the vacancy information of other schools, the District and the Charters dispel the notion of competition and recognize that aggregating vacancy notices strengthens the pull of
their websites. (The District has provided Charters' job listings on its website since early 2013.) The Schools will also invite each other to man booths at their recruiting events.

- **Develop and pursue collective strategies to recruit the Tulsa teacher and leader pool.** Recruiting high quality talent is difficult, but the creativity and common effort of the Schools will meet the challenge better than going it alone. The Schools are already informally sharing recruiting leads, for example, sharing contact information of certain applicants whom they did not select with other schools in the Compact. Significant opportunities also exist by leveraging the Schools' partnerships with the traditional teacher preparation programs.

To develop our educators and accelerate student growth, we will design formal systems to share and spread the wealth of these resources to all classrooms in Tulsa. Specifically, we will:

- **Discuss how the Compact Schools might share College Ready standards.** This strategy would allow teachers to cross District/Charter boundaries and access best-in-class resources such as non-proprietary lesson plan templates and review student work samples and related assessment rubrics.

- **Develop a menu of highly effective practices and job descriptions who wish to share their expertise in such practices, and design processes for the Schools' teachers and leaders to observe and learn from these colleagues, whether in a District or charter site.**

- **Create processes and the appropriate climates to support an "open door" policy for the teachers and leaders of both Charters and traditional public schools to share with and learn from each other regarding the implementation of College Ready standards and student achievement strategies generally.**

- **Create a crosswalk of our teacher and leader frameworks to increase the number and quality of instructional supports available to principals and teachers, regardless of where they work.** The District has a wealth of TLE supports that are already being used by Charters. Charters have TLE resources to share as well. The usefulness of these supports will grow exponentially as the Schools analyze the frameworks and identify their common expectations: schools can keep their existing evaluation frameworks and still expand their access to TLE resources.

- **Investigate the feasibility of Charters using multiple measures for their teacher and leader evaluations.** By incorporating common, and vital, TLE components into teachers' and leaders' scores like teacher and student perception surveys, the Schools will come closer to a common definition of what it means to be an effective teacher and leader. A common definition allows for better performance management and strategic and informed collective decision-making that leads to healthy, safe and strong schools.
Commitment Five:
Ensure equitable access to services and resources

- The District will continue to provide Charters with full and affordable access to vacant or under-utilized facilities. Over the past years, the District has provided its Charters with low-cost facilities leased at a flat rate of five (5) cents per square foot per month. As referenced above, when a facility leased by one charter school succumbed to fire, the District provided the charter with an alternate facility at the same favorable rates and dedicated District personnel and educational resources to make the school operational within 24 hours. The District will continue to investigate opportunities to offer lower lease rates to Charter signatories as well as use bond funds for capital improvements to facilities leased by such schools. Additional authorizer fee-related incentives may also be offered to Charter signatories that address underserved student populations and locate their schools in specific geographic areas of need or exceed specified performance measures.

- The District will continue making available to charter schools on a voluntary, contractual basis the District’s food services, maintenance, and transportation services and expand opportunities to access the benefits of TPS’ economies of scale for purchasing supplies, products and services, including professional development services. To the extent that a Charter contracts for the use of District transportation, the Schools will optimize opportunities to minimize transportation costs by coordinating school start and end times.

- Charters commit to providing District personnel with reasonable access to their professional development as space and arrangements with vendors will allow.

- Schools will continue to expand and support participation in District-wide interscholastic leagues and other extracurricular competitions in both Charter and District schools. For example, KIPP’s middle school students participate in the 7th/8th grade football program at TPS’ Will Rogers College Junior High School. Tulsa Legacy students participate in athletic events with Monroe Demonstration Academy students.

- TPS will work to ensure that there is strong communication among personnel responsible for executing contracts and the appropriate charter school liaison. By the end of the FY 2016, the Compact manager will identify and distribute to all signatories a department lead/liaison within each area so as to facilitate and resolve ongoing issues that may arise. This will help more departments internalize the commitment and spirit of the compact and foster self-accountability.

- The District will ensure that the administrative fee for charter schools is accounted for in a transparent manner for all stakeholders.
Conclusion and Next Steps

We firmly believe that to provide every student with a high-performing school, we must rely on our collective efforts, resources and strengths as public schools—traditional and charter. We will develop short- and long-term goals in our pursuit, meeting regularly within working groups and pushing each other to achieve more for our students. We will manage and expand our portfolio of public schools thoughtfully, reporting on our progress publicly in regularly scheduled intervals. We unequivocally believe from our own experiences together over the last five years that our Collaboration Compact will change mindsets and change the lives of Tulsa students. We celebrate our success to date and look forward to our future together in service to the students of Tulsa.

Updated May, 2016
Signatories of the Collaboration Compact

Chelsea Vanacore
Lead Founder and Head of School
College Bound Academy

Date 5/11/16

Nikhil Kawira
Lead Founder and Head of School
Collegiate Hall

Date 5/30/16

Andrew McRae
School Leader
KIPP Tulsa College Preparatory

Date 5/25/16

Erie Urueta
Lead Founder and Head of School
Tulsa Honor Academy

Date 5/11/16

Carlisha Williams
Date 5/19/16

Carlisha Williams
Executive Director
Tulsa Legacy Charter School

Dr. Lana Turner - Addison
Board President
Tulsa Public Schools

Date 6/28/16

Eric Doss
Director
Tulsa School of Arts and Sciences

Date 6/15/16

OK AS TO FORM
Compact Schools' Enrollment (as of October 1, 2015)

39,451 students

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The Tulsa Collaboration Compact Steering Committee

The Tulsa Collaboration Compact Steering Committee began meeting in the summer of 2011 in order to develop a compact of collaboration in the service of Tulsa’s students. The compact, the first of its kind in Oklahoma, was finalized in August, 2012. It was revised again in 2014.

To establish new areas of collaboration and focus on key priorities, the Steering Committee will continue to meet on a regular (i.e., monthly, if not more frequently) basis to:

- Solidify its working relationship, trust, and transparency among participants.
- Articulate and create a shared understanding around the desired outcomes of the Compact and the parties’ collective efforts.
- Define areas of improvement for each participating organization and the shared benefits of the partnership.
- Determine deliverables and establish working groups of functional area experts to help drive the work of the partnership.
- Leverage working groups (defined below), as necessary, to design and implement a common enrollment center for the District and its Charters.
- Support the work of the working groups to plan one or more collocated schools that will become a national model for a partnership among high performing charter organizations and a high performing school district.
- Create a sustainable structure and process to ensure the collaboration and collective effort of the Collaboration Compact work lives beyond any personnel changes in any of the participating schools.
- Document our work for future partnerships to glean best practices and lessons learned.

The Tulsa Collaboration Compact Steering Committee Members represent leaders from the participating Schools as well as their governing boards who are directly responsible for the growth and expansion of academic programs. Members of the Steering Committee are listed below:

Dr. Deborah Gist, TPS  
Suzanne Schreiber, TPS Board  
Jana Burk, TPS  
Eric Doss, Tulsa School of Arts and Sciences  
Nikhil Kawlra, Collegiate Hall  
Andrew McRae, KIPP Tulsa College Preparatory  
Mark Modrice, TPS  
Elsie Urueta, Tulsa Honor Academy  
Chelsea Vanacore, College Bound Academy  
Carliisha Williams, Tulsa Legacy Charter School
The Tulsa Collaboration Compact Working Groups

The Tulsa Collaboration Compact Steering Committee will leverage Working Groups as necessary to lead, organize and successfully implement the expectations of the Compact. Members of the Working Groups are organizational experts in their field and will work collaboratively to advance the strategies defined below and to report findings and recommendations to the Steering Committee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working Group</th>
<th>Scope of Work</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academics &amp; Program</td>
<td>The Academics &amp; Program Working Group will identify programming needs and strengths across the Compact schools and make recommendations regarding areas of collaboration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finance &amp; Operations</td>
<td>The Finance and Operations Working Group will provide relevant financial information to the Steering Committee and support the equitable budgeting, funding, and economies of scale among all partners as described in the Compact. It will also ensure efficient use of services necessary for successful school functions, including child nutrition, transportation, human capital, and facilities.</td>
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<td>Teaching, Leadership &amp; Learning</td>
<td>The Teaching, Leadership and Learning Working Group will design and implement plans to share best practices in the area of instruction and instructional leadership as specified in the Compact and ensure that appropriate TLE performance data is reported to the Steering Committee in a transparent and timely fashion.</td>
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<td>Accountability &amp; Enrollment</td>
<td>The Accountability and Enrollment Working Group will report transparent and complete student performance data to the Steering Committee and remove all barriers to student entry, retention and information as described in the Compact.</td>
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<td>Communications</td>
<td>The Communications Working Group will develop and implement communications plans and messaging that build strong stakeholder understanding of and support for the Compact and its initiatives. The group will also support government/policy relations as appropriate.</td>
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