Letter from the CEO

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

We are pleased to share with you the Partners in School Innovation 2011-12 Annual Report. This year's theme is scaling national impact. Thanks to your generous support and with the help of valuable partners like the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, this was a year of increased academic outcomes and organizational results. From newsworthy outcomes in our partner schools, to innovations in our ability to build the capacity of educators and leaders, we have made the dream of scaling our impact a reality.

Taking our almost twenty years of experience partnering with the most challenged of schools, this year we executed against a four-pronged plan to create breakthrough achievement for students of color who live in poverty.

Our directives:

1. Develop and codify our transformation model so it can be implemented with fidelity in a variety of state, district and school contexts.
2. Solidify our home base of support in order to continue to help districts in the San Francisco Bay Area transform their schools.
3. Expand our service offerings to meet the needs of more districts in and beyond the San Francisco Bay Area.
4. Promote our results and methods with the aim of inspiring others, helping even those unfamiliar with education reform to conclude that low-performing schools can transform themselves if given the right guidance and support to do so.

As you will see by the results shared in this report, we did it. We saw our approach carried out successfully and achieved indications of sustainability across the San Francisco Bay Area. We saw student achievement skyrocket in response to our partnerships with teachers and leaders, and we initiated partnerships with district leaders in the Midwest.

While this is all tremendously exciting, we know that transforming one low-performing school district at a time is not enough. That is why we also expanded our services in ways that allow us to partner with greater numbers of school districts around the country, offering elements of our approach via networks of teachers and leaders learning together. Delivered by our new Discrete Services team, these engagements strategically target areas of a district’s greatest need, such as Common Core State Standards implementation, change management or developing systems of collective accountability.

We hope you will find this report useful in your own efforts to ensure social justice though educational equity. On behalf of our Board of Directors and the entire staff, thank you for your unwavering support and for joining us in the work of creating a public education system in which every student thrives.

Sincerely,

Derek S. Mitchell, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer
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Our Vision

Partners in School Innovation envisions a thriving system of urban public schools that fosters the growth of all of its students and works to eliminate the achievement gap by creating vibrant places to teach, learn and grow, with rigorous standards and an unwavering focus on results.

Scaling our impact means that we take our success and generate it consistently and sustainably, but at an order of magnitude greater than we have done before. And this means that we reach more students—more students of color living in poverty, more English Language Learners, more students who are struggling to read but who have the capacity to learn, grow, achieve and thrive in school and life.

“SV2s Education Grantmaking Group selected Partners in School Innovation as a Grantee because we were so impressed with their ability to build the capacity of urban school leaders and teachers, in order to bring about transformative and sustainable change in our public school system.

Partners has reached an exciting moment in time: they are ready to scale their successful model across the country. We are thrilled to be supporting Partners as they develop and implement their plan for strategic growth.”

– Lindsay Austin Louie
Executive Director, SV2
Why Our Work Matters

Public education lies at the heart of American democracy and economic vitality. According to a McKinsey Quarterly (April, 2009) report, gaps in U.S. education achievement have affected GDP more severely than have all recessions since the 1970s. Yet, public schools here rank far below many nations with whom we compete in the global economy, and our systems for resourcing them leave families living in poverty at a distinct disadvantage. Our nation’s demographics are rapidly changing, and we are seeing a new majority of underserved youth in even more public school classrooms. With this, the room for optimism about how public education can foster opportunity diminishes.

At Partners, we believe that a quality education is a civil right, not something that should be determined by zip code. Our work matters because the achievement gap persists. Significant gaps for Latino and African-American students, for example, are still evident in virtually every measure of achievement. Despite decades of public policy aimed at improving the overall achievement of our most challenged students, research continues to show that on average, low-income students of color remain up to four years behind their peers.

We therefore target the fundamental building block of literacy in the lowest-performing schools because we know that literacy challenges evident in the elementary years often trigger a cycle of academic failure. In fact, school and life success can now largely be measured by whether or not a student can read proficiently by third grade. Research reveals that while 16 percent of children who do not hit the third-grade reading proficiency mark fail to graduate from high school, this figure rises to 31 percent for African-American students and to 33 percent for Latino students. These are exactly the students Partners is committed to serving.

“State and local governments are overwhelmed by social costs directly linked to our shortcomings in the classroom—whether it is prisons, welfare, other social services or simply the lower lifetime earnings of people who lack the education needed to compete in the global economy.”

– Arne Duncan
U.S. Secretary of Education

8,465 Students

84% Students of Color 51% English Learners 82% Free and Reduced Lunch

QUALITY EDUCATION IS A CIVIL RIGHT
Who We Are

With an almost 20-year history of achieving lasting outcomes for underserved public schools and districts in urban areas, Partners is a national model for high-impact work to eliminate the achievement gap. Our work helps scaffold alignment within and across the public school system to ensure that everyone is working together toward the common goal of improved student achievement.

The organization was founded in 1993 by Julien Phillips, a former Peace Corps volunteer and McKinsey & Company partner, and Kim Grose, a Rhodes Scholar and social justice advocate, to create systemic improvements in low-performing public schools. Since our inception, our dedicated staff has partnered with teachers and leaders in 70 public schools to accelerate student achievement. In 2011-12, we partnered with 16 schools.

Our staff of education professionals embodies the principles and practices we use in work with our district partners. We strive to be the change we seek. Our staff focuses on results, and we are continuously learning and improving, holding ourselves and one another accountable for outcomes. We collaborate using systems of professional learning and operate with a clear Theory of Action. We do this because we believe that it is the only way we can maintain fidelity to an approach to school and district transformation that has at its core high-quality leading, teaching and learning.

Together with our school and district partners, we produce a shared commitment to provide access, opportunities and sustainable change for each and every student.

“I have been a board member at Partners for eight years, and in that time seen the organization meaningfully increase its impact for the most underserved of students. 70% of our partner schools over that period have achieved growth between 5 and 10% points in a single year for students reading at grade level, and an impressive 25% of our schools have achieved double-digit growth.

What that tells me is that we are ready to take on the challenge of becoming significant in the education reform arena - not just for California, but nationally. I believe we are exceptionally well positioned now to do that.

– Eric O’Brien
Board Chair, Partners in School Innovation

The power of the Partners approach to school and district transformation lies in our people.

- 33 Staff Members
- 79% Have an Advanced Degree
- 187 Total Years of Teaching Experience
- 150 Total Years of School and District Reform Leadership Experience
What We Do

Partners staff work alongside teachers and leaders to accelerate literacy achievement. We build the organizational capacity of schools and district offices, working across the system with teachers and leaders to:

1. Build a strong core instructional program in literacy and English language development that ensures all students learn at high levels;
2. Create and establish systems for professional learning so that all teachers are able to deliver excellent instruction; and
3. Strengthen results-oriented leadership so that leaders can carry out the daily actions necessary to lead whole school improvement efforts successfully.

Our District Partnership Directors (DPDs) provide the leadership and guidance necessary to manage the implementation of our approach with districts and their schools in order to generate results through leader and teacher practices. DPDs are responsible for helping leaders invest staff in a shared vision and goals for the school year. They work alongside district leaders to build systems to support their lowest-performing schools, and they work to ensure that leaders and teachers are developing, delivering and refining powerful instruction, as well as the systems to sustain high quality long after we are gone.

Our School Innovation Partners (SIPs) partner with school leaders, coaches and teachers to make powerful use of student achievement data, working to set goals and develop a Theory of Action for transforming schools. A Theory of Action lays out:

1. The common teaching practices that a school believes will help them reach their student achievement goals; and
2. The supports teachers will receive to implement these practices.

SIPs support site-based leaders in cultivating equitable school-wide practices, a continuous-improvement learning culture and the development of systems for high-quality teaching and learning throughout the school.
Our Commitment

CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE THE CORE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

As educators, we believe that classroom teachers who are supported by high-quality instructional leadership and professional learning opportunities will dramatically improve outcomes for their students. Promoting good instruction in alignment with a school’s vision and maintaining high expectations, we partner and work with school educators to think strategically about the design of their instructional program. We help teachers define what students need to learn, implement best practices for instruction, and use assessments to identify learning needs and monitor progress.

STRENGTHEN SYSTEMS FOR TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

We partner with district leaders, school leaders, coaches and teachers to develop and strengthen the systems and structures for teacher professional learning. We help school leaders develop a professional learning plan that aligns the focus and content of professional development, grade level collaboration and instructional coaching. We then partner with instructional leaders within the school to design and deeply engage in high-quality and collaborative professional learning.

DEVELOP RESULTS-ORIENTED LEADERS

In order to drive sustainable and successful outcomes for the district, teachers, leaders and students, we focus on the essential leadership practices needed to create a school environment where high-quality teaching and learning can take place. Effective leadership is not achieved by completing a simple checklist of actions; rather, leaders must develop particular mindsets and a relentless focus on results.

RESULTS-ORIENTED CYCLE OF INQUIRY

The most powerful means we have found for building schools’ capability for continuous organizational learning and improvement at all levels of the system is the Results-Oriented Cycle of Inquiry (ROCI).
In 2011-12, Latino students in Partners’ middle schools outpaced the state rate of growth significantly on the CST-ELA.

How We Work

Our experience has shown that certain key conditions increase the rate of transformation that we are able to achieve through our intensive partnerships. Partners therefore examines a number of key conditions when selecting new sites at which to implement our approach. We conduct a readiness assessment that determines the:

- Potential for impact and success, especially in the first year, with given staffing
- Stability of the leaders who will likely be in place for the entire partnership
- Foundation of a positive adult culture as demonstrated by an openness to partner, learn, grow and improve practice
- Willingness of the leader to partner in building adult capacity and their commitment to providing protected time for teacher collaboration
- Basic level of safety in the school and classrooms

Once these conditions are met, we:

ENGAGE MULTI-YEAR PARTNERSHIPS

Partners works with school and district colleagues over a 3-5 year period, building a strong core instructional program in literacy and English language development. Evidence of our impact can especially be seen in the test scores of schools that have worked with us for two years.

Overall, these schools:

- Decreased the percentage of Far Below Basic and Below Basic students by 6.2 percentage points on the 2012 California Standards Test - English Language Arts (CST-ELA), which is triple the state rate of only 1.9 percentage points
- Increased the percentage of Proficient and Advanced students by 6.9 percentage points, which is more than double the state rate of 2.9 percentage points

FOCUS ON EXISTING HUMAN CAPITAL

We strengthen the capability of the dedicated leaders and teachers who are already in the system because we believe that all teachers can deliver excellent instruction.

ENSURE DATA-DRIVEN, RESULTS-ORIENTED, CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Partners builds the capacity of district leaders, teachers and school leaders to use data. We help them set goals, plan, implement, assess, reflect and adjust in a Results-Oriented Cycle of Inquiry (ROCI).

ROCI focuses everyone’s attention directly on student learning; stimulates people to learn from their successes and to diagnose and problem-solve their shortfalls; and then leads them to implement their provisional solutions and monitor outcomes. In this way, ROCI engages teachers and leaders at every level as practitioners of sustained organizational learning and improvement.
Our Change Agents

DISTRICT PARTNERSHIP DIRECTORS AND SCHOOL INNOVATION PARTNERS

Whether working in school or district partnerships, in networks or across districts, our District Partnership Directors and School Innovation Partners:

DEVELOP LEADERS’ CAPACITY TO:

• Invest their staff in a clear and compelling vision, set rigorous goals, develop clear strategies and plans, distribute leadership, monitor implementation and adjust practices based on a deep understanding of results
• Identify and develop the qualities, mindsets and knowledge needed to be successful as they take action to improve teaching and learning. SIPs strive to become increasingly results-oriented, equity-focused, strategic and committed to continuous improvement for themselves and their schools

DEVELOP TEACHERS’ CAPACITY TO:

• Establish or strategically adjust the scope and sequence of a rigorous, culturally-relevant, standards-based curriculum
• Develop standards-based lessons that incorporate key instructional practices that scaffold learning for all students, particularly African-American, Latino and English Learner students
• Use a comprehensive set of assessments and analyze achievement results to identify student needs and determine next steps for instruction and intervention

BUILD SCHOOL SYSTEMS IN WHICH EDUCATORS CAN:

• Deliver professional development on high-priority instructional strategies that have been shown to be highly effective in meeting the needs of students of color and English Learners
• Facilitate collaboration in which teachers plan standards-based instruction, reflect on how their instruction is impacting students, and adjust their practice accordingly
• Provide high-quality instructional coaching, including focused observations and follow-up support for teachers
Partnering with Districts

Demand for Partners’ school support has grown both inside and outside California as more district leaders hear about our successes. Building on this momentum, we are growing our model substantially in order to increase impact and visibility. Embedded in this effort is a stronger strategic partnership with districts.

We work with leaders at all levels of the school system to analyze their needs and understand their district’s culture and context in order to implement our Intensive District Partnership Model. Through this comprehensive approach to support, we engage teachers, school leaders, and district leadership as partners to promote alignment among classrooms, schools, and the district office.

In collaboration with our district partners, we determine how best to build upon district and school strengths. We determine which schools within the district are ideal candidates for intensive partnerships and which are suited for targeted partnerships. We also support district leaders in determining what cross-school learning networks would be aligned with their plan for professional learning.

DISTRICT COACHING / COLLABORATION

We support principal supervisors and other key district leaders with leadership coaching to create aligned and equitable systems for curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development in support of school transformation.

INTENSIVE SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

We partner with principals and their leadership teams to:

- Analyze achievement data, set student achievement goals and create a plan for reaching those goals
- Engage in ongoing cycles of monitoring and adjustment

We support teacher leaders and coaches to strengthen and utilize best practices in the structures for professional learning:

- Teacher collaboration
- Professional development
- Instructional coaching

Through weekly coaching meetings, we support school leaders to:

- Strengthen their results-oriented leadership
- Develop the skills necessary to implement and sustain a comprehensive system for professional learning that will catalyze instructional change and student learning results
STRATEGIC AND TARGETED SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

We partner with principals and their leadership teams to:

• Analyze achievement data, set student achievement goals and create a plan for reaching those goals
• Engage in ongoing cycles of monitoring and adjustment

Through weekly coaching meetings, we support school leaders to:

• Strengthen their results-oriented leadership
• Develop the skills necessary to implement a targeted structure for professional learning (teacher collaboration, professional development, or instructional coaching)

NETWORKS

We collaborate with district leaders to convene and co-develop cross-school learning communities that provide principals, coaches, and teachers with professional development related to:

• Strengthening results-oriented leadership
• Establishing integrated systems for professional learning
• Building a core instructional program

CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR PARTNERS:

Between 15,000 and 100,000 students, and a minimum of TEN elementary schools

A substantial number of schools with majority students of color and majority low-income households

At least 50% of elementary schools identified as schools that are under-performing

A primarily urban area surrounded by (within 10 miles) other potential client districts
Who We Serve

"With Partners’ help, teams of teachers are better able to analyze student performance data and make decisions about specific ways to accelerate student achievement. This combination of essential school supports is resulting in significantly improved outcomes for students."

– Guadalupe Guerrero
Deputy Superintendent for Instruction, Innovation and Social Justice, SFUSD

"Partners in School Innovation has been a driving and supportive force that has helped to turn our school around on multiple levels. Our academic achievement has improved thanks to their support with how to use data to inform instruction. We are a stronger Professional Learning Community thanks to them."

– Richard Curci
Principal, Everett Middle School, SFUSD

"I don’t believe our school would be as successful as it is without the help of Partners in School Innovation. With the help of Partners, we shifted the focus of our work to the California State Standards, and they also instilled the cycle of inquiry in all the work we do at our school."

– Howard Greenfield
Principal, Clyde L. Fischer Middle School, ARUESD

"In their roles as grade-level mentors and facilitators, our partners helped us to analyze data, set goals, guide instruction, observe and give feedback on classroom practices. What I value most about working with them is the respect and professional integrity they bring to our school and to a potentially stressful reform process."

– Marina Marlowe-Wood
2nd Grade Teacher, Paul Revere College Preparatory K-8 School, SFUSD

"Fordham Street Foundation is proud to be a long-term supporter of Partners in School Innovation. The numbers speak for themselves—student test scores improve and continue to improve in schools working with Partners. Partners’ work demonstrates that even the most challenged schools can offer a great education to their students."

– Judy Bigelow
Executive Director, The Fordham Street Foundation
Our Partners

SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Bryant Elementary School
Buena Vista/Horace Mann K-8 School
George W. Carver Elementary School
César Chavez Elementary School
Everett Middle School
Bret Harte Elementary School
John Muir Elementary School
Paul Revere K-8 School

In the SFUSD, our partnership focused on:

• Utilizing a preliminary District Transformation Rubric to reflect on current and desired states of the district’s leadership capacity
• Facilitating the implementation plan for rolling out the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and for creating a district-level continuous improvement plan
• Analyzing student achievement data, identify trends and implications for improving practice and setting student goals for the new school year
• Convening monthly network meetings for Superintendent Zone leaders, principals and their leadership teams, specifically the assistant principals and the instructional reform facilitators, to assess progress and adjust practices accordingly

RESULTS:

1. Our schools within SFUSD increased the percentage of students who scored Proficient or Advanced on the CST-ELA with a growth rate of 5.6 percentage points; nearly doubling the state growth rate of 2.9 percentage points.

2. Partners’ schools within SFUSD also moved students out of the two lowest performance bands on the CST-ELA, Far Below Basic and Below Basic, by more than double the state rate.

3. In the Bayview Zone, the percentage of students at Revere Elementary who scored Proficient and Advanced grew by over 20 percentage points, from 30.9 percent to 51.3 percent, or 7 times the rate of the state.

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

RISE Community School
New Highland Academy

Although our intensive work with our OUSD partner schools ended in 2011, the S.H. Cowell Foundation made it possible for Partners to provide services designed to ease the transition from transformation to sustainability:

• At RISE Community School, we worked with school leaders to create a Theory of Action, monitor instructional quality and professional learning systems. We also supported the Teacher on Special Assignment to plan and deliver instructional coaching and begin to create a peer-coaching system
• New Highland Academy was able to fund an intervention coach and provide release time to teachers so they could continue their collaboration efforts
• Partners was also able to study the sustainability of our program in New Highland Academy
• Through our work in OUSD, our partner schools saw an increase in the ability of teachers and leaders to implement systems for professional learning including teacher collaboration, instructional coaching and professional development
ALUM ROCK UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

César Chavez Elementary School  
Clyde Arbuckle Elementary School  
A.J. Dorsa Elementary School  
Clyde L. Fischer Middle School  
Mildred Goss Elementary School  
O.S. Hubbard Elementary School  
Lee Mathson Middle School  
San Antonio Elementary School

In the ARUESD of East San Jose, our partnership focused on:

- Facilitating cycle review sessions after each benchmark in order to assess progress against and adjust actions to achieve student achievement goals
- Improving the effectiveness of balanced literacy instruction and identifying expectations around curricula strengths and weaknesses so that student achievement goals could be planned for appropriately
- Developing and implementing a cross-school professional learning network that provided venues for various groups of leaders and teachers to share best practices and learn from each other using Partners’ ROCi process
- Co-leading with our district partners a Middle-School Inquiry Group for the principals and deans of all middle schools to identify common issues and problem solve

RESULTS:

1. We helped ARUESD outperform the rest of the state and increase the percentage of students scoring Proficient and Advanced by 4.7 percentage points compared to 2.9 percentage points in the state overall.
2. San Antonio Elementary demonstrated exceptional results by decreasing the percentage of students in the lowest performance bands and increasing the percentage of students in the highest performance bands both by about 8 percentage points, compared to the state rates of -1.9 percentage points and 2.9 percentage points, respectively.
3. With Partners’ support at the district level this past year, we saw dramatic improvement, averaging an Academic Performance Index (API) growth of 14 points, nearly twice the 8 point average API growth for schools in Santa Clara County. This increase in API scores catapulted six district schools into the 800 and higher API score category, increasing the number of schools in that category to 11 (there were only 3 such schools in 2008).
4. In three years, the district has made a 57-point jump in API scores.
BATTLE CREEK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Partnership initiated January 2012

This was the first year of bringing our successful district and school transformation approach to BCPS in Michigan. Our initial achievements include:

- Hiring, training and deploying a four-person local team to implement our intensive approach starting in 2012-13
- Conducting five School Transformation Reviews
- Facilitating a District Transformation Review

To date, the BCPS team has assisted the district in developing a district-wide Theory of Action for district transformation, and each school is in the process of developing a Theory of Action aligned with the district.

“I am excited about this opportunity to work with Partners in School Innovation because I believe our collaboration can propel the district into high performance. I am looking forward to the experiences that lie ahead.”

– Dr. Linda Hicks
Superintendent, Battle Creek Public Schools

Build Increased Adult Capacity in Leadership, Instruction and Use of Data

School Transformation Rubric

Breakthrough Student Achievement

Student Achievement Tests
Our Results

CST-ELA

Our partner schools’ students are increasing in proficiency at significantly faster rates than their districts and the rest of the state on the California Standards Test–English Language Arts.

Between 2011 and 2012, Partners’ schools:

- Significantly increased the percentage of students who scored Proficient or Advanced on the CST-ELA by 5.7 percentage points, nearly double the growth rate of 2.9 percentage points seen in the rest of California.
- Are increasing the percentage of Proficient and Advanced students more than 2 times faster than a matched cohort of schools in the state that serve similar students (5.7 percentage points vs. 2.6 percentage points).
- Significantly decreased the percentage of students who scored Far Below Basic or Below Basic on the state exam by 4.5 percentage points, more than double the state decrease of 1.9 percentage points, and by 2.6 percentage points in a matched cohort of schools that served similar students.
API

Partners’ schools also saw outstanding results in the Academic Performance Index (API):

• On average, our partner schools **more than tripled statewide API growth**. Growth across all grades statewide was only 10 points. The average 2012 API growth experienced by our partner schools was 32 points.

• 87% of our 15 partner schools with valid 2012 API growth scores (13 total) **experienced double-digit growth** on the API.

• Our 10 partner elementary schools with a valid 2012 API growth score **increased their API scores** by an average of 24 points. Statewide growth for grades 2-6 was 7 points.

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Partners piloted its approach in three middle schools last year with approximately 1,700 students in grades 6 through 8. We saw great improvement in CST scores compared to other middle schools throughout the state.

• The percent of our middle school students who scored Proficient or Advanced increased by 9.0 percentage points, **approximately 2.5 times** the 3.7 percentage-point increase observed in the rest of the state.

• Our three partner middle schools **increased their API scores** by an average of 41 points. Statewide growth for grades 7-8 was 14 points.

• As a district, SFUSD surpassed 800 on the API for the first time.

• **Alum Rock increased their API score by 14 points (771 to 785), which put them 5th in overall district growth in Santa Clara County.**

• **Revere Elementary School experienced a significant API increase of 70 points. This was the second highest gain of all SFUSD schools.**

• **In Alum Rock, 3 schools surpassed 800 for the first time: San Antonio Elementary, César Chavez Elementary and O.S. Hubbard Elementary.**

• **O.S. Hubbard Elementary’s 56-point gain (767 to 823) was the 2nd highest gain among all schools in Santa Clara County.**
A key emphasis in the work was the alignment of systems and standards to the school’s Theory of Action. This included the creation and implementation of a professional development plan, investment in outcomes such as providing tools for teachers, interventions, data analysis and creating a college-going culture.

- The percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the California Standards Test-Algebra 1 rose 14.2 percentage points, over 7 times the state rate of Algebra 1 growth, which was only 2.0 percentage points.
- The percentage of students scoring Far Below Basic or Below Basic on the CST-ELA reduced by over 13 percentage points, and the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced increased by over 13 percentage points.
- Everett experienced the greatest API gain (54 points) of all middle schools in SFUSD.

“Working with Partners has catapulted our school forward. By supporting communication, the use of data and constant reflection amongst the school leadership team members, Partners’ work has been transformative.”

– Lena Van Haren
Assistant Principal, Everett Middle School, SFUSD

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School Success Stories

**EVERETT MIDDLE SCHOOL, SFUSD**

In our second year of partnership, work at Everett Middle School included a focus on both literacy and math standards-based instruction. Our objective was to involve a larger number of teachers in the work of school transformation in order to meet student needs. Partners’ efforts focused on enhancing effective collaboration at all levels, analyzing formative and benchmark data and backwards mapping a standards-based curriculum in order to meet student achievement goals.

Collaboration with Everett teachers and leaders was not only about supporting the school’s academic goals, but also its cultural goals. For example, the year saw the emergence of a new kind of culture, one driven by leadership and teacher teams using data to help drive student achievement. Impressively, Everett experienced exceptional growth in the percentage of students moving into the Proficient and Advanced bands on the CST-ELA, at three-and-a-half times the state rate for middle school students, in part because of this shift.

“Partners has been a driving and supportive force that has helped to turn our school around on multiple levels. We are a stronger Professional Learning Community thanks to them.”

– Richard Curci
Principal, Everett Middle School, SFUSD
Previously one of the lowest performing schools in California, César Chavez Elementary exceeded district expectations this year and was identified as a demonstration site for the Alum Rock Union Elementary School District.

In our third year of partnership, we built on previous successes in working toward a strong core instructional program led by results-oriented leaders at every level. We saw the impact of a sustainable approach come into effect as our staff transitioned to a supporting role. As thought partners, we supported teachers and school leaders in the implementation of their Theory of Action.

We continued to work with the leadership team to build their capacity. Working with the Principal and Instructional Coach, we created a professional development program directly aligned to the school focus and inclusive of teacher participation in planning as well as execution. As we worked together to build capacity, the partnership continued to generate success, and our multi-year collaborative approach led to dramatic increases in student proficiency:

- Between 2010 and 2012, the percentage of students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the CST-ELA skyrocketed by 18.9 percentage points. This is more than 4 times the state growth rate of 4.5 percentage points observed during the same time period.
- When Partners began to work with César Chavez Elementary in 2010, the school was in Program Improvement. Due to unprecedented growth, César Chavez Elementary exited Program Improvement in 2011.
- In the three years of our partnership the API score has increased 167 points at César Chavez Elementary. In 2010, the API score was 645. In 2012, the API score was 812.

“As an Instructional Coach, working with Partners has helped me develop my skills as a school leader. Having a thought partner to support me as I set goals, plan coaching cycles and collaboration meetings, and reflect and adjust on professional development for teachers has been refreshing.”

— Kelli Sorich
Instructional Coach at Cesar Chavez Elementary, ARUESD

83% Latino
70% English Learners
87% Free and Reduced Lunch

Enhancing Effective Collaboration
2011-12 Accomplishments

BREAKING GROUND IN BATTLE CREEK

In January of 2012, Partners was on the snowy ground in Battle Creek, Michigan, thanks to funding by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. This was one of our first physical steps toward scaling the impact of our School Transformation Approach nationally. With our local team of education leaders and in partnership with Battle Creek Public Schools (BCPS), we initiated work at the district level, as well as in three schools to transform teaching and learning.

Looking forward, one of the outcomes anticipated through our partnership is that BCPS will show increased district capacity to support and sustain transformation. We will know district leaders and staff are exhibiting the behaviors of bold, results-oriented leaders when they:

- Help schools align curriculum, improve instruction, make powerful use of assessment data and deliver strategic and effective professional development
- Support site-based leaders in cultivating equitable school-wide practices, a continuous improvement learning culture and the sustaining of high-quality teaching and learning
- Provide strategic and just-in-time support for school leaders and teachers in their efforts to improve student learning

Initial results are promising, with the team experiencing a high level of engagement among BCPS leaders, honest conversations among school staff and the creation of student goals and Theory of Action plans aligned across the district.

“After seeing the needs of the districts I was working with, I was looking for an organization that could provide intense transformation coaching with a shoulder to shoulder approach for teachers, principals and district leaders. When I discovered Partners, I thought it was too good to be true. Yet several site visits where I witnessed the depth of the work, the data that demonstrated the results and the voices of educators that made enthusiastic claim to the impact, proved that indeed Partners was the type of organization I had been seeking.

It is truly wonderful to work with the Partners team and am excited about increasing academic achievement for vulnerable children in Battle Creek and Grand Rapids, Michigan.”

– Arelis Diaz
Program Officer, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
Partners staff are especially talented in coaching and collaborative work. As thought partners, they are able to step out of the box while maintaining clear focus on the client’s goals and outcomes.

– Herman Reeves III
Professional Development Design Specialist, Office of Professional Learning, Chicago Public Schools

DISCRETE SERVICES A SUCCESS

Partnering with districts and schools seeking short-term, targeted support for their transformation efforts through our Discrete Services team, we provided discrete elements of our more comprehensive Intensive District Partnership Model in the form of services, consultation and professional development workshops in more locations than ever before.

Discrete Services launched work in Alum Rock, Franklin-McKinley, Oakland, Battle Creek and Chicago school districts to bolster and support strategic as well as targeted engagements:

• In Alum Rock, we worked with the teachers in schools where we did not have intensive partnerships to create a Theory of Action and reflect on leadership practices, instructional quality and effectiveness of instructional learning systems throughout the year

• At Franklin McKinley, we developed a Leadership Network for all principals on how to do Benchmark ROCI at the school and grade level. We also facilitated their District and School Transformation Reviews

• In Oakland, we facilitated Data Leadership Networks for Principals on using data to reflect on student achievement data, leadership practices, instructional quality and effectiveness of instructional learning systems in schools

• In Battle Creek, we provided support for an intensive partnership through District and School Transformation Reviews

This was also the first year of the Chicago Public Schools’ Common Core Initiative, and the third year of collaboration between Partners and the district. Back in 2009, Partners had worked closely with the Chief Area Officer of Area 9 to provide critical support to principals and grade level teams. With Partners’ support, Area 9 posted the largest improvements in literacy instruction seen in many years.

Despite having some of the district’s historically most challenging schools, Area 9 became the second most improved area in the district. In 2011, Area 9 schools made an 8 percent gain on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, doubling the district average.

• The focus of 2011-12 was in part to bring to scale the success of this model across the entire district. Our focus was collaborating with the Office of Professional Learning to deliver network sessions to support district teams to manage change as their schools adopted Common Core State Standards
Our Financials

In fiscal 2011-12, Partners in School Innovation dedicated $0.77 on every dollar invested to direct program implementation, support and assessment. The year was financially solid, with our Discrete Services team adding new revenues of $424,260 through selected engagements. We also increased total foundation revenues by 33 percent over last year and spent approximately $3.6 million on the work of accomplishing our mission. Partners ended the year with an estimated $513,078 in unrestricted net assets.

2011-12 SOURCES OF INCOME

- Total Revenues: $3,662,109
  - Foundations: 55%
  - Schools & Districts: 41%
  - Individuals: 4%

2011-12 ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

- Total Expenses: $3,608,062
  - Direct Services: 77%
  - Administration and Executive: 13%
  - Development and Communications: 10%

Direct Services includes evaluation and research dedicated to program implementation and assessment.
Our Board and Leadership Team

BOARD

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Managing Director

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Partners in School Innovation
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Partners in School Innovation
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Corporate Securities Attorney

Catherine Walcott *
WestEd
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* Executive Committee Member

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Chief Executive Officer

Jim Ahrens
Chief Financial Officer

Chandra Alexandre, Ph.D.
Chief Development Officer

Eric Barela, Ph.D.
Chief Knowledge and Impact Officer

Malika Starr, Ed.D.
Chief Program Officer

ENCORE FELLOW

Jim Dern
Director of Strategic Initiatives
Our Staff

Shehz Ali  
School Innovation Partner (ARUESD)

Amanda Bachelor  
School Innovation Partner (ARUESD)

Bela Bhasin  
District Partnership Director (SFUSD)

Marcelina Contreras  
Office Manager

Viviana Garcia  
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School Innovation Partner (SFUSD)

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Director of Learning & Knowledge Capture

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Sr. District Partnership Director (SFUSD)

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School Innovation Partner (SFUSD)

Abbey Kerins  
School Innovation Partner (SFUSD)

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Managing Director of Program Development & Support

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School Innovation Partner (SFUSD)

Scott Lan  
School Innovation Partner (ARUESD)

Belinda Liu  
Director of Discrete Services

Sonya Lopes  
San Francisco Bay Regional Director

Ryan Louie  
Data Analyst

Dana McCurdy  
Research & Evaluation Manager

Linda Ponce de Leon  
District Partnership Director (SFUSD)

Sisa Renie  
School Innovation Partner ARUESD

Emily Schriber  
Discrete Services School Innovation Partner

Sarah Skinner  
School Innovation Partner (SFUSD)

Meaghan Spencer  
District Partnership Manager (Franklin McKinley)

Cameron Stephenson  
School Innovation Partner (SFUSD)

Gretchen Stewart  
Senior Network Design Manager

Lul Tesfai  
School Innovation Partner (SFUSD)

Alejandra Villalobos  
Director of Development

Kim Wisckol  
Senior HR Director

Ally Wray-Kirk  
School Innovation Partner (SFUSD)

We Strive to Be the Change We Seek
Thank You

Partners in School Innovation acknowledges those who generously invested in our work between August 1, 2011 and July 31, 2012. Thank you for your demonstrated commitment to providing a high-quality public education for all children.

### Philanthropist ($300,000+)
- Applied Materials Foundation
- W. K. Kellogg Foundation

### Investor ($100,000 – $299,999)
- East Bay Community Foundation
- S.H. Cowell Foundation
- Dirk & Charlene Kabcenell Foundation
- Shortino Family Foundation
- Stuart Foundation

### Benefactor ($25,000 – $99,000)
- Fordham Street Foundation
- Walter and Elise Haas Fund
- Hellman Family Foundation
- JPMorgan Chase Foundation
- Julien Phillips
- Juniper Networks Foundation Fund
- Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund (SV2)
- Silver Giving Foundation
- W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation
- Joyce and Larry Stupski
- Wells Fargo Foundation

### Innovator ($10,000 – $24,999)
- Jeanne and William Barulich Family Foundation
- William and Charlene Glikbarg Foundation
- Grace and Laurance Hoagland
- Jimmy Price
- Sandisk Community Sharing Program
- Irene S. Scully Family Foundation
- Nancy and Gary Steele

### Advocate ($5,000 – $9,999)
- Sally and Noel Fenton
- Deborah Halpern and Jeremy Singer
- Northleaf Capital Partners
- Rosemary and Tom Tisch
- Catherine and Wister Walcott

### Leader ($1,000 – $4,999)
- Kathleen Burke and Ralph Davis
- Sue and John Carver
- Elizabeth and Kingston Duffie
- Tonia and Adam Karr
- Marian and Larry Krummel
- Jeannette LaFors and Matthew Kelemen
- Cecile Lyons
- Christine and Lenny Mendonca
- Derek Mitchell
- Suzanne and Eric O’Brien
- Madeline and Bruce Ramer
- Malika Starr

### Visionary ($500 – $999)
- Becky Crowe
- Leigh and Roy Johnson
- Corrine and Bob Larson
- Patty and Roy Schmidt

### Partner ($100 – $499)
- Chandra Alexandre
- Jinoos Yazdany and Arash Anoshiravani
- Sharon Bernstein and John Sheehan
- Eva and David Bradford
- Mila and William Clark
- Valerie and Chris Cooper
- Timothy Dowd
- Laurel and Hugh Dubb
- Liz and John Fowler
- Kate Godfrey
- Dick Gourley
- Carol and Doug Henton
- Elizabeth Hughes
- Elizabeth Jones
- Laura and Ryan Kelley
- Jaime Kidd and Ben Smith
- Rita and Rob Lancefield
- Leslye Louie
- Liz and Don Maruska

### Friend (Up to $99)
- Elisabeth Atwell
- John Baxter
- Jason Chapin
- Ron Clazie
- Mary and Arthur Forsberg
- James Ingwersen
- Julia and Richard Kassissieh
- Allyson Taketa
- Caroline and Hunter Walk

### In-Kind
- Sobrato Family Foundation
- Images by Rosalinda

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