PARTNERSHIP + Equity = Success

Renewing the Promise of Public Education

2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT
“We know that the promise of this nation, 
WHERE EVERY SINGLE AMERICAN REGARDLESS OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THEY WERE BORN, 
regardless of what they look like, where they come from, 
has the chance to succeed – that promise is not yet fulfilled.”
I believe all students, regardless of socioeconomic status and ethnicity, deserve an education that allows them to realize their dreams. Educators always start with the intention of helping students be successful, but educators who serve students of color oftentimes are not supported or given the appropriate resources to be successful. I do this work because I believe in the work teachers are doing, and by supporting them, we can begin to move toward the success of all students.

Christian Manley
School Innovation Partner
Battle Creek Public Schools, MI

Change Agent

“...”
“I do this work because kids of color in underserved schools deserve more, so much more, than they are getting. I also do this work because I know not only do our teachers and leaders care immensely, but they have the capacity to serve, challenge, engage and inspire our kids. So often they just need some support and a partner to be by their side to also challenge and inspire them to be more focused, results oriented, rigorous, collaborative and culturally responsive. This work matters and this approach and support is incredibly effective.”
DEAR Colleagues, Investors and Allies:

Last year was an exciting year for Partners in School Innovation. In our 2014-15 partnerships, we helped public schools in low-income communities across five states to improve teaching, learning and leadership, impacting over 30,000 students.

Addressing educational equity has never been more important, and transforming schools serving students of color and English Learners in high-poverty communities is not easy. Yet our results last year demonstrate that student outcomes can be dramatically improved when hard-working educators adopt an equity-focused, continuous improvement approach. The value of our approach has never been greater given the implementation of the new Common Core. We have strengthened our school and district transformation approach to enable leaders and teachers to meet the challenge of more rigorous Common Core expectations. Our staff continues to work shoulder to shoulder with teachers, administrators, and coaches, supporting teachers in their classrooms and empowering leaders to enact proven strategies in every school.

This report highlights how our School Innovation Partners support teachers and leaders to develop more powerful learning partnerships with their students. Last year, our staff worked with educators in each school to examine their data to understand patterns of achievement across their school’s student populations. This enabled them to focus professional development and implement culturally responsive, Common Core teaching and learning strategies to accelerate student learning. Culturally responsive, Common Core aligned teaching is more than just technical skills—the mindsets, beliefs and expectations that teachers and leaders hold about their students can be powerful predictors of the outcomes students achieve. Through professional development, coaching and collaboration, we also supported educators to build deeper relationships and increase student engagement.

As we look forward, we are well positioned to continue to address new opportunities in the rapidly changing public education environment. We are expanding our programming to help close the summer learning gap for students and find innovative ways to support teachers deepen their skill in delivering the Common Core. We are also leveraging research and best practices to test and refine future augmentations to our work. This includes expansion of our work to educate and develop the “whole child” by supporting children to develop greater ownership of their learning, building a sense of belonging and purpose, and strengthening the relationships between the child, teacher and family.

Although we are pleased with our progress, we know that there are still many challenges to eliminating the achievement gap for students of color living in poverty. I remain hopeful as our results prove that the gap is reversible and that all children can achieve. Thank you for your support and friendship, and we hope you will continue to join us to make a high quality education available to all children. Together we can renew the promise of public education, so that every student, regardless of background, thrives.

Sincerely,

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

“At Partners, we believe in the ability of the communities we serve to transform their own lives. Because of that belief we invest in the teachers and leaders already tasked with the academic success of underserved students of color. Supporting these dedicated change agents means building a lasting legacy of achievement.”

DEREK S. MITCHELL, PH.D.
Change agents are educators who strive to continually improve their practice. Change agents build relationships across and within teams to support the systems and structures that foster similar growth in their colleagues, ultimately driving equity in classrooms, schools and district offices.

“Devine, Louis, Ciara, Ismael, Michael, Destiny, Martina... My former students (and students whom I see everyday) are one reason I do this work. Having had the good fortune to be their teacher, I understood the obstacles they face in a system that is implicitly working against them. If I can offer my time, energy, and dedication to shifting mindsets that perpetuate these inequities and to bring about change, then that is what I want to be my life’s work.”

Cynthia Ho
DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION
Oak Grove School District, CA
PARTNERS’ IMPACT IN 2014-15

1 CHANGE AGENT
Our School Innovation Partners

works with...

54 TEACHERS & LEADERS

ultimately impacting...

1025 STUDENTS

32 Change Agents
32,817 Total Students Impacted

83% Students of Color

46% English Learners

83% Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch
In January 2014, the Annie E. Casey Foundation reported that in the U.S., 83% of African American fourth graders and 81% of Hispanic fourth graders were not proficient in reading.

According to the same Annie E. Casey Foundation report, in the state with the highest percentage of low-income students reading on or above grade level, only 27% are doing so.
Every day, as a society, we allow far too many young people to head down a road that ends in wasted potential. Sometimes, we are complicit in the journey. We need to do more to change that.

Arne Duncan, U.S. Secretary of Education

Our country’s vision for public schools today is ambitious and exciting. As a nation, we aspire to provide all children—regardless of their ZIP code, racial background, first language and economic status—with an education that prepares them to be college and career ready. While this is an inspiring commitment, it represents a fundamental shift from the early goals of our public schooling system. As our nation’s founding fathers grappled with the purpose and goals of a public schooling system, Thomas Jefferson advocated for two tracks in public education to separate for “the laboring and the learned,” arguing that the laboring class did not need opportunities for advanced study but that providing some level of public education to all could help to “rake a few geniuses from the rubbish.”

Today our school system still grapples with the many challenges involved in shifting its focus from the needs of an elite few to serving the diversity of students that attend our schools today. As a result, students of color, English learners and students from families living in poverty lack access to a quality education. Our public schools must be re-engineered to ensure that they provide a rigorous and culturally responsive program that enables all children to succeed.

School and life success can now largely be measured by whether or not a student can read proficiently by 3rd 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.

Our school system today is charged with helping a diversity of students succeed. However, we have long seen substantial disparities in educational achievement among ethnic groups.
Eliminating the achievement gap:
★ Model the Way
★ Develop Data-Driven Systems
★ Build Leadership Capacity
★ Build Teacher Capacity
★ Ensure Culturally Responsive Instruction
“Until we get equality in education, we won’t have an equal society.”

SONIA SOTOMAYOR, SUPREME COURT JUSTICE

WHAT PARTNERS DOES

Partners’ results prove that schools and districts can transform to serve all students powerfully. Our approach addresses the core challenges public schools face today.

MODELING THE WAY: As educators with proven track records of results for students, our staff inspire others with their optimism, commitment, respect and integrity. They know what powerful and equitable teaching, learning and leadership looks like. They maintain a strong belief in the potential and capability of the leaders, teachers and students in our public schools and districts.

DEVELOPING DATA-DRIVEN SYSTEMS: Schools will not transform using a one-size-fits-all approach; each school must develop the habit of using data to diagnose needs, inform goals and monitor the impact of new strategies. Partners’ proven data-analysis tools and continuous improvement cycles empower teachers and leaders to use data to inform their daily practice.

BUILDING LEADERSHIP CAPACITY: Our schools need powerful leaders who understand instruction, adult learning and change processes. Our staff guide leaders to develop a compelling vision, set rigorous goals, develop strategic plans, distribute leadership, monitor implementation and adjust their own practice based on thoughtful analysis of results.

BUILDING TEACHER CAPACITY: When teachers receive purposeful professional development, have regular opportunities to collaborate, and are supported by a skilled instructional coach, the quality and effectiveness of their instruction soars. We support our schools to develop and enact a robust plan for teacher learning, ensuring that powerful learning structures and practices become embedded in the fabric of school.

ENSURING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INSTRUCTION: Culturally responsive instruction is designed around the strengths, needs, interests and prior knowledge of students. Our staff guide teachers to develop powerful relationships with students, set clear goals and objectives around what their students need to learn, build their capacity to deliver powerful, culturally responsive instruction and then sit side-by-side with them as they reflect on how to more systematically ensure student success.

ROCI is the most powerful means we have found for building schools’ capability for continuous learning and improvement. This ongoing process involves five steps designed to support individuals in sharpening their focus on results and in developing habits that fuel continuous improvement.
“Partners’ work is clearly a powerful national model for school transformation; but what might be the most lasting benefit for us is how the Partners approach works to build the capacity of our leaders at the district level. As a result of this partnership, we will know more and have better tools and more adaptive skills to support teachers in our most challenged schools. For that we are profoundly grateful.”

JOSÉ L. MANZO
SUPERINTENDENT (2008-2012)
ALUM ROCK UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Our Theory of Impact states that with consistent, high-quality delivery of our approach we will build the capacity of teachers and leaders to transform low-performing public schools and districts, driving breakthrough student achievement results.

IMPLEMENTATION
We monitor the delivery of our approach with a Program Implementation Tracker to view real-time data on the completion of essential action steps. In addition, our annual Client Satisfaction Survey helps us ensure we are meeting our clients’ greatest needs.

TRANSFORMATION CAPACITY
We utilize our School and District Transformation Rubrics to benchmark progress toward implementation of research-based best practices for effective schools and districts. Our rubrics hone in on high-leverage practices in three domains:

• RESULTS-ORIENTED LEADERSHIP:
  School leaders’ ability to lead and support teachers in ways that impact student achievement.

• PROFESSIONAL LEARNING SYSTEMS:
  The quality of support provided to teachers—for example, by increasing the number of teacher teams collaborating in ways that research and practice have shown enables them to improve the quality of their instruction and impact student achievement.

• INSTRUCTION:
  The consistency with which teachers use instructional practices that have been shown to be effective for students of color and English learners.

Annually, we send teams to each school or district to interview key leaders, conduct focus groups with teachers, observe important meetings and visit classrooms across the school or district. These data are then aggregated to inform scoring on our six-stage rubric, which ranges from “no evidence” to “sustaining.” At the highest level, “sustaining,” we expect to see that a practice is being implemented with a high degree of consistency and quality and that there are structures in place to maintain the practice over time.

Our goal is for each of our schools and districts to achieve at least an “implementing” rating by the end of our partnerships.

STUDENT RESULTS
We use a range of rigorous and Common Core aligned student achievement measures to assess our impact. We set specific goals and hold ourselves accountable to accelerating achievement for students of color and English learners at a rate that exceeds state and district averages.

SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION RUBRIC MEASUREMENT SCALE

1. No Evidence
2. Readiness
3. Emerging
4. Implementing
5. Transforming
6. Sustaining
“Our Foundation has been a supporter of Partners in School Innovation for many years. Partners helps teachers excel in their profession and learn the best way to help all students succeed in school. We are proud to support Partners’ important work.”

JUDY BIGELOW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FORDHAM STREET FOUNDATION
Change Agent

“Adapting a quote from Ram Dass, ‘I do this work to work on myself and I work on myself to do this work.’ Working with children and teachers in underserved communities is my life’s work, one that feeds me so that I can show up with commitment and optimism in all aspects of my life. By doing this work, I belong to a community of change agents who are working to transform the narrative so that all children and people can thrive.”

Tim Burke
SCHOOL INNOVATION PARTNER
San Francisco Unified School District, CA
Moving into our second year of partnership, Partners and GRPS educators worked shoulder-to-shoulder supporting school leaders and teachers across six schools to develop two critical transformation strategies: instructional leadership teams and teacher professional learning communities.

- **INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS**, comprised of leaders and teachers from each school site, came together for quarterly sessions, learning to analyze data and develop school improvement plans. The teams committed to implementing culturally responsive teaching practices after a close look at their data showed large achievement gaps for African American and Latino students.

- **TEACHER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES**: School Innovation Partners strengthened professional learning communities in which teachers collaborated to analyze data, develop their knowledge of Common Core State Standards and design lessons that incorporated culturally responsive teaching strategies.

Transforming a school is not work that teachers and leaders do alone in their buildings; to ensure long-term success, they rely on quality support and alignment from their district systems.

In GRPS, our staff collaborated with leaders in the human resources department to learn about the Common Core State Standards and identify the leadership and teaching competencies needed to support student success. This effort resulted in updated job descriptions, a new process for teacher and principal selection and a unified human resources department that is deeply committed to providing schools with the talent they need to achieve their ambitious goals.

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“*We have seen the benefits and can provide proof as a staff to show that we have seen steady growth in the percentage of students who have raised scores. The process of setting goals, planning more effectively, implementing plans, assessing and reflecting on progress made, and adjusting plans to ensure we are continuously improving reflects in our students’ scores.*”

ANGELEA SMITH, TEACHER
BURTON MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

As the fifth-largest school district in Michigan, **Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS)** serves just over 17,000 students: 76% are students of color, 23% are English learners, and 83% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

In the schools we supported, the percentage of Latino students demonstrating proficiency with grade level math concepts has increased by 15 percentage points over the past two years.

The percentage of African American students at MLK K-8 School achieving reading proficiency increased 9 percentage points from 16% to 25% in just one year.

African American students at Buchanan Elementary saw accelerated gains, improving from 6% proficient in math to 27% proficient in the 2014-15 school year.
“Partners helps me complete the circle so that I have feedback and follow-up to ensure that we have a consistent process to come back to over and over again for achieving a vision of success. My School Innovation Partner was so valuable in this process because we developed trust and the work that we did together helped get us to where Franklin needed to go. Now, there’s not a breakdown in communication in our school, and that’s really important.”

NNEKA DANIELS, PRINCIPAL
FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, BATTLE CREEK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BATTLE CREEK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Battle Creek Public Schools (BCPS) served 4,758 students in the 2014-15 school year: 58% are students of color and 73% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

The 2014-15 school year marked our third year of partnership with Battle Creek Public Schools. In this year, our team of School Innovation Partners continued to provide intensive support for three elementary schools (Post-Franklin, Ann J. Kellogg and Dudley STEM) while our work in the district also expanded as BCPS leaders collaborated with our staff to embed ROCI across the district system. With Partners’ support, the district created cohorts of schools facing similar challenges and assigned a coach (modeled after our School Innovation Partner role) to support each cohort. Partners staff provided training and support to those district coaches and helped to implement an Academic Impact Presentation protocol in which principals presented their goals, data, and key change strategies to their peers and district colleagues at key points throughout the year.

The work and results at Post-Franklin Elementary (Franklin) soared to new heights, achieving demonstrable impact on leaders, teachers and students. With Partners’ support, the principal at Franklin has cultivated a robust school vision that is truly student-centered. The school’s Theory of Action has focused on increasing the rigor of daily instruction, empowering students to understand and track progress toward goals, and using assessment data to implement a Response to Intervention system. Teachers at Franklin work in collaborative professional learning communities to develop quality Common Core-aligned lesson plans and closely monitor student progress to ensure that any student falling behind receives targeted support to address his or her needs. With ROCI becoming a core way of working in the schools and at the district office, we are confident that BCPS is going to be able to sustain their transformation long into the future.

Post-Franklin Elementary saw an increase of 9.6% in students performing at grade-level on the MAP Math assessment and 7.4% on the MAP Reading Assessment.

English learners at Post-Franklin demonstrated even greater gains, with an increase of 22.9% in Math and 12.3% in Reading. Latino students showed gains of 16.1% in math and 9.1% in Reading.
I believe each year, and have seen each year since Partners has been involved with us, our school has gotten significantly better. So much so that we are the talk of the district because of the turnaround. That didn’t happen by accident. That was done by caring, dedicated people who knew what they were doing and were not afraid of keeping those of us who were working at the site accountable and reflecting on our practice. There’s nowhere else to go but up and continue to go up. In fact, it’s nice to be a part of a place whose reputation went from no one wanting to put a foot on the front doorstep to people knocking the doors down to get in, and there’s a waiting list. I’m very proud of the work we’ve done and proud of the partnership with Partners.

Richard Curci, Former Principal, Everett Middle School, San Francisco Unified School District 2008-2012

OUR SCHOOL HAS GOTTEN Significantly BETTER

Richard Curci travels to Michigan to meet with principals and school and district leaders in Battle Creek Public Schools to share his experience surrounding the transformation that took place at Everett Middle School.

Richard Curci
Assistant Superintendent, Elementary Schools, San Francisco Unified School District, California

Kimberly Parker-DeVauld
Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Battle Creek Public Schools, Michigan
Teacher quality has the single most significant impact on student academic gains. In 2014, for the first time in American history, students of color became the majority of students enrolled in public school classrooms. With this increasing diversity, there is greater likelihood than ever that teachers are supporting students from cultural and linguistic backgrounds very different from their own. Educator and professor of education Gloria Ladson-Billings describes what can happen if teachers and leaders aren’t supported to understand how those cultural differences impact their interactions with students. “Students of color may become alienated from the school process because schooling often asks children to be something or
someone other than who they really are. It asks them to use language other than the one they come to school with. It asks them to dismiss their community and cultural knowledge. It erases things that students hold dear.” Partners supports teachers to go well beyond the typical celebration of cultures found in multicultural education. Our School Innovation Partners guide educators to examine their mindsets and beliefs about the students they teach so that they can break the cycle of low expectations. As teachers build deeper connections with their students, they begin to see many opportunities to leverage their students’ strengths, prior knowledge, and interests within the classroom.
“Relationship is key. Trust is being able to say the wrong thing and people get your meaning. If the trust isn’t there, you could say the right thing, very carefully, and people still may misinterpret what you mean. I feel that the relationship and trust we’ve built with Partners has been a key to our success; for me, it’s especially been the relationship with our School Innovation Partner. She’s been our anchor.”

STACY-ANN AFFLICK, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
CARVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Reaching a total of 58,414 students in the 2014-15 school year, San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) served a student population of 65% students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, 48% students of color, and 28% English Learners.

Partners supported three schools—Charles Drew College Prep Academy, Cleveland Elementary School and Martin Luther King Middle School to implement the Common Core State Standards through a culturally responsive lens. School Innovation Partners (SIPs) collaborated side-by-side with teachers and leaders, building sustainable systems for teachers to work collaboratively and leverage data to more deeply understand their students’ strengths and needs. In addition, at two of the sites, we partnered with coaches from the New Teacher Center (NTC) under a Collective Impact Team (CIT) grant from the S. H. Cowell Foundation. The CIT team coordinated efforts to meet three goals:

1. **BUILD** the capacity of teachers to implement high-quality, culturally responsive instruction
2. **SUPPORT** leaders to develop systems for teacher learning and continuous improvement
3. **INCREASE** student achievement

Each organization leveraged its strengths in support of these goals. Our SIPs guided each site to commit to specific, measurable, and ambitious student learning outcomes and agree on an instructional focus to guide its professional learning for the year. SIPs and NTC coaches worked closely together to provide professional development and facilitate collaborative meetings for teachers. NTC coaches took the lead on providing high-quality one-to-one support for teachers. This partnership led to substantive impact in the schools and also helped us learn about how to most effectively partner with other mission-driven organizations to achieve powerful results.

![Graph showing the percentage of students on grade level in English Language Arts and Math](image)

**↑ 14%**

The percentage of African American students who are on grade level in Math at Drew Elementary grew by 14 percentage points.

**↑ 12%**

The percentage of students who are on grade level in English Language Arts at Cleveland Elementary grew by 12 percentage points.
“This work is different than what we have experienced before. This is refreshing and hopeful. With Partners, we were really able to dig deep. When you have a lot of initiatives coming in, teachers and staff usually like to wait it out to see what will be effective and if there’s follow through. What we found with Partners is that they are so involved and aligned with everything the teachers are working for that there’s a tremendous amount of connection and support. This reform effort will only work when in partnership with organizations like Partners.”

CARMEN FERNANDEZ, PRINCIPAL
SOUTHWEST COMMUNITY CAMPUS SCHOOL, GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Albuquerque Public Schools served 88,122 students in the 2014-15 school year: 77% are students of color and 68% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

With the final network session held this past summer, Partners has completed our Kellogg-supported project in Albuquerque Public Schools. Over the past year, Partners provided leadership and teacher professional development for six schools: Kit Carson, Mazano Mesa, Pajarito, Ernie Pyle, Emerson, La Mesa. Quarterly professional development sessions for the schools’ Instructional Councils and their 3rd and 4th grade teachers enabled teachers and leaders to engage in data analysis, goal setting, and planning—ensuring that their actions were closely aligned to support student needs.

“Having an objective person on the outside helped hold up a mirror to move us from talk to action and it wasn’t just a drive-by training, you came back and supported us.”

“We all brought data to PLCs and are now having conversations based on the data about specific needs of students. I didn’t think this team would ever come together like this.”

86% of the participants in the project reported that they were very likely to implement what they had learned back at their sites.

100% of participants said the overall quality of the sessions was good or excellent.

98% of respondents shared feeling that their teaching and/or leadership had been positively impacted due to their participation in Partners networks or PLCs.

The number of essential practices implemented systematically (the Implementing stage) across our Albuquerque partner schools doubled in just one year of partnership.

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Gregory Bish
DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION
Battle Creek Public Schools, MI
In 2014-15, our final year of partnership with ARUESD, we collaborated with district leaders to solidify and deepen the skills, ways of working, and mindsets necessary for sustained results and continued systems transformation.

Over the course of the partnership, Partners’ staff worked alongside teachers as well as school and district leaders to develop a system of professional learning communities (PLCs) that helped to align expectations across and within schools. ARUESD offered PLCs for both teachers and school leaders, providing regular protected time to analyze data, set targeted goals, learn new leadership skills and teaching strategies, and create plans that committed them to specific actions at their sites. The PLCs created shared language and accountability across schools and also provided a space for teachers and leaders to step back from their day-to-day routines to reflect on how they could better support their students’ success.

In the beginning of the partnership, the PLCs and many other change strategies were largely designed and led by Partners staff. As the partnership matured, the leaders and teachers within the district took increasing responsibility for their transformation process. District Transformation Reviews were completed annually and demonstrate that at the close of this partnership the district had adopted the majority of research-based best practices outlined in our District Transformation Rubric. We are proud to have ended this partnership knowing that the leaders and teachers who have worked alongside us for the last five years are well prepared to sustain their transformation.

In San Jose, the Alum Rock Union Elementary School District served 12,386 students in the 2014-15 school year: of whom 88% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, 47% are English Learners, and 86% are students of color.

“One of the strengths of Partners is that it makes the cycle of continuous improvement very visible throughout the work, so it’s not just in people’s minds, where it can get lost. It’s in everything they do.”

STEPHEN FISS, SUPERINTENDENT
ALUM ROCK UNION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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In 2014-15, our final year of partnership with ARUESD, we collaborated with district leaders to solidify and deepen the skills, ways of working, and mindsets necessary for sustained results and continued systems transformation.

Over the course of the partnership, Partners’ staff worked alongside teachers as well as school and district leaders to develop a system of professional learning communities (PLCs) that helped to align expectations across and within schools. ARUESD offered PLCs for both teachers and school leaders, providing regular protected time to analyze data, set targeted goals, learn new leadership skills and teaching strategies, and create plans that committed them to specific actions at their sites. The PLCs created shared language and accountability across schools and also provided a space for teachers and leaders to step back from their day-to-day routines to reflect on how they could better support their students’ success.

In the beginning of the partnership, the PLCs and many other change strategies were largely designed and led by Partners staff. As the partnership matured, the leaders and teachers within the district took increasing responsibility for their transformation process. District Transformation Reviews were completed annually and demonstrate that at the close of this partnership the district had adopted the majority of research-based best practices outlined in our District Transformation Rubric. We are proud to have ended this partnership knowing that the leaders and teachers who have worked alongside us for the last five years are well prepared to sustain their transformation.

95% of Alum Rock network participants feel that they are now part of a professional learning community where they can share ideas and learn from others.
Now in our third year of partnership with Franklin McKinley School District, transformation efforts are widespread across the district. During the 2014-15 school year, we continued to provide intensive support to two schools, McKinley Elementary School and Sylvandale Middle School. In addition, Partners staff facilitated four professional learning networks designed to align grade-level and leadership teams within and across schools. Finally, we also provided support to the district’s program improvement schools: Los Arboles Literacy and Technology Elementary, Robert F. Kennedy Elementary, Santee Elementary and Bridges Academy. This support was designed to help them to navigate the requirements of California’s improvement programs while developing the skills to transform their practice to achieve better outcomes for students.

School Innovation Partners supported each program improvement site to distribute leadership by establishing or deepening the work of an instructional leadership team. Those teams were able to set a tone of collaboration and clearly define expectations across the schools. A key piece of the success was empowering the leaders at these sites to utilize Partners’ Program Implementation Tracker to track and clarify their action steps and hold themselves accountable for completing them with quality. By the end of the year we saw that teachers and leaders found the transparency about accountability of required actions to be critically valuable, were excited to use it to propel their own growth in the coming year, and had developed a deep understanding of how to use this strategy to support their own growth and the growth of others.

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During 2014-15, we initiated an exciting new partnership with the School District of Philadelphia. With the support of the William Penn Foundation, we engaged in a foundational partnership planning process alongside district and school leaders. This foundational year allowed Partners staff to more deeply understand the district’s context, strengths and challenges. Additionally, district and school staff were able to learn about Partners’ approach. Over the course of the past year, we achieved several key milestones, including:

- **PILOTING** a school application process in which prospective schools were able to submit an application indicating their interest in receiving Partners support
- **INITIATING** a Principal Professional Learning Community designed to prepare leaders to begin their transformation work with Partners
- **SELECTING** three schools that will receive intensive support over the next three years

Beginning in January of 2015, Partners began providing intensive, on-site support to Edenvale Elementary, located in East San Jose. An initial School Transformation Review (STR) pointed to a need for greater alignment between the school’s vision, goals and professional learning plan. Partners staff began collaborating with several school staff to strengthen opportunities for teacher learning: facilitating collaboration among teachers and working with instructional coaches to provide systematic support to teachers. A key to this engagement’s early success was transparency from the start. STR results and student data were shared with all school staff, enabling a clarity of purpose and commitment to the school’s improvement efforts. Partners looks forward to deepening our work with Edenvale and other schools within Oak Grove School District in the coming years.
In search of a way to provide our staff with the opportunities to refresh their teaching skills and to also meet the increasing interest from our partners for summer support, we initiated summer school projects in Oakland Unified School District, Franklin-McKinley School District and Battle Creek Public Schools. Our staff co-taught alongside teachers at three summer school sites focused on building the capacity of our staff and the district teachers to design and teach Common Core-aligned lessons.

One strength that Partners brought was a keen understanding of culturally responsive teaching; our team members ensured that the instruction was situated within the experiences and frames of reference of the students.

Early results were very promising: We helped students avert the summer slide, bolstered teachers’ skills, and improved our team members’ ability to coach teachers. We look forward to expanding our programming in this area in the coming years.

With transition to the Common Core State Standards, many of our staff were excited to gain first-hand experience teaching the new content.

68%  
At ACORN-Woodland Elementary School in Oakland, students avoided summer learning loss: 68% of students met or exceeded their accelerated reading targets, while the remaining 32% of students maintained or demonstrated some growth in their reading levels.

100%  
100% of teachers and Partners staff reported increased confidence in their ability to develop and teach Common-Core aligned units and lessons.

“Our work with Partners in School Innovation has been instrumental in truly accelerating the quality of teaching and learning at Everett, and ultimately, the academic results and high school readiness of our students. Partners’ staff are 100% student and school advocates all the way. We are grateful for our continued partnership.”

Jennifer Kuhr, Assistant Principal
Everett Middle School, San Francisco Unified School District
We are proud of the results we achieved during the 2014-15 school year. It was an exciting year in which we deepened our relationships with districts in California and the Midwest, initiated new partnerships in San Jose (CA) and Philadelphia (PA) and closed out high-impact engagements in Mississippi and New Mexico.
“Multicultural education will not close the achievement gap: Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning will.”

ZARETTA HAMMOND
TEACHER, EDUCATOR, AUTHOR

Change Agent

“I deeply believe in the idea: “be the change you wish to see in the world.” I find living in a world where opportunity and achievement can be predicted by race and ZIP code to be deeply upsetting and dehumanizing. I am also extremely optimistic about the power of a diverse and talented group of educators working together to create a better future and better society.”

Jesse Hinueber
SENIOR DIRECTOR OF LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE CAPTURE
National Team
“I do this work because I feel a deep connection with the students we serve. Not only as a former teacher, but as a former student who had to deal with the effects that low socioeconomic status can have on a school and its resources. I know, firsthand, that regardless of a student’s background or ZIP code, they can thrive!”
The Most Important Social Justice Issue of Our Generation is

THE ELIMINATION OF THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP.

Partners in School Innovation is committed to working shoulder-to-shoulder with teachers and leaders in underperforming schools and districts to help students thrive as learners, regardless of background or ZIP code. Our strategic vision propels us toward the next decade as we work to fulfill our mission.

1
Demonstrate breakthrough student achievement on an unprecedented scale in urban school districts.

GOAL
Work with over 50,000 students through all levels of engagement in schools.

2
Achieve national influence by effectively transforming and helping to sustain the transformation of low-income, under-performing schools.

GOAL
Serve over 80 schools in districts across the country.

3
Communicate the impact of our approach widely in order to foster thought leadership and best practices in education.

GOAL
Be a credible thought partner to education leaders and elected officials.

4
Create a sustainable funding model that allows for continued national expansion.

GOAL
Leverage local and national support to help achieve over a $10 million annual budget to foster high-quality education opportunities for all students.
As we look to the future, many changes are emerging in teacher and student learning experiences; these include more rigorous Common Core standards, technology-based personalized learning and greater understanding of the need for student and family empowerment. In addition, Partners’ work is rapidly expanding to include new geographies and greater numbers of schools and districts. In this time of rapid change, we undertook a design process to ensure that in the coming years our approach will: 
- meet the challenge of the rapidly changing landscape 
- substantially increase our results and 
- produce sustainable impact 

During the 2014-15 school-year, a team of staff representing different regions and roles in the organization gathered for three design sessions, focused on developing deeper understanding of the future landscape of education and generating pilot ideas and designs. This process resulted in hundreds of ideas about how we might redesign our approach. After considering several factors including potential for results, level of effort and resources required and relationship to our current approach and services, our leadership team selected two ideas to pilot beginning in 2015-16 and identified several additional ideas around which we intend to conduct further research and design work. We look forward to sharing our learning and updated approach and services with you next year.
REVENUES AND EXPENSES

IN FISCAL 2014–15, Partners dedicated $0.77 of every dollar invested to direct program implementation, support and assessment. We spent $5.2 million on the work of accomplishing our mission and expanding impact. The year built on prior expansion of funding sources and maintained the momentum of prior years’ expansion. Partners ended the year with an estimated $690,000 in unrestricted net assets, and total net assets of almost $1.2 million.

Sources of Income

Total Revenues
$5,277,490

Allocation of Resources

Total Expenses
$5,270,891

- Foundations 68%
- Individuals 1%
- Earned 31%
- Program 77%
- Administrative 15%
- Advancement 8%

“Because of the moral imperative – there are millions of poor kids of color and English language learners who deserve better. They deserve to be engaged, grappling with high rigor, dynamic places of learning, at which they truly belong and contribute. It’s not OK that educators expect one thing for their own children and another for “those” kids. They are ALL OUR CHILDREN.”

Linda Ponce de León
MIDWEST REGIONAL DIRECTOR
National Team

Change Agent

Partners in School Innovation
Renewing the Promise of Public Education
SUPPORTERS

PHILANTHROPIST ($300,000+)
Applied Materials Foundation
Douglas and Maria DeVos Foundation
The William Penn Foundation
W. K. Kellogg Foundation

LUMINAR ($100,000 - $299,999)
Leo M. Shortino Family Foundation
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Stuart Foundation

BENEFACTO ($25,000 - $99,999)
Jeanne and William Barulich Family Foundation
New Teacher Center
Silver Giving Foundation
Sobrato Family Foundation
Susan Stoddard-Phillips and Julien Phillips
W. Clement and Jessie V. Stone Foundation
Walter and Elise Haas Fund

INNOVATOR ($10,000 AND UP)
Clark R. Smith Family Foundation
Google
Joyce Stupski
S.H. Cowell Foundation
The PSN Family Charitable Trust
The Reddere Foundation
The William and Charlene Glikbarg Foundation

ADVOCATE ($5,000 - $9,999)
Esth & Young
Genki Kondo
Madeline and Bruce Ramer
Rosemary and Tom Tisch
U.S. Bank Foundation
Wells Fargo
William H. Donner Foundation

LEADER ($1,000 - $4,999)
Derek Mitchell
Eric Barela
James Bryant Kirkland III
Kathleen Burke and Ralph Davis
Mark Walker
Salesforce.com Foundation
Shellbrook Foundation
Umpqua Bank

INVESTOR ($500 – $999)
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
Catherine Farry-Thorn and Christopher Thorn
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Sharon and Deveraux Chen
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Betsy and George Gammell
Cheng and Cathy Liao
Daniel Arnerman
David Davidovic
Debbie Lee and Alfred Ung
Diana and Steve Halprin
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Kate Godfrey
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Linda Lazor
Lionel Yee
Lyle Hurst
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Nancy Atwell and Timothy Dowd
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Reena Panchal
Rita and Rob Lancefield
Ryan Lee
Sue Ann Levin and Robert Schiff
Susan and Fred Stern

Susan Ramer and Mark Coleman
Thomas R. Atwell
Timothy Stephens
Tira and Marc Ramer

FRIEND (UP TO $100)
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Aileen Y. Chang
Carmen de Jesus
Carolyn and Michael Kelemen
Chukwuka Chiemelu
Cynthia and Herbert Ho
David Kerins
Douglas Gammell
Hervé Ernest
Jacqueline De Jesus
Janis Asrat
Jessica Gammell
Jonathan S. Atwell
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Monique Gascon
Morgan Brewer
Neal Ramer
Rhea Boyd
Roger Rothenburger
Scott Roberts
Tessa McCaffrey
Tinka Markham Piper

IN-KIND
Atlassian
Dropbox
GoogleGrants
Hoku Ho
Phi Nguyen
Taproot Foundation
Watermark Press

Jennifer Sierra
SCHOOL INNOVATION PARTNER
Grand Rapids Public Schools, MI

Change Agent
“I’ve always believed that every child was deserving of high expectations, an engaging curriculum, and excellent teachers. But I didn’t, until working for Partners, truly understand how the systems and structures set up in our society contribute to the opposite of that for many students of color and English Learners. I do this work to help teachers and leaders become aware of these issues, how they play out in schools, and how they can examine their role in it. Through this we can begin to truly start connecting with our students and families, validating their experiences, investing in their learning and success, and creating classrooms and schools where these students thrive and are opened to a world of limitless possibilities.”
When we founded Partners in School Innovation in 1993, we committed to a vision of thriving public schools for all students, most especially those African American and Latino students in low-income neighborhoods who lack access to such schools. In a country whose core value is equal opportunity for all, the moral imperative for our generation is to eliminate the achievement gap.

I am proud of the approach that Partners has developed over the years to help partner schools and districts develop thriving schools that are shrinking that gap. Partners’ Results-Oriented Continuous Improvement approach (ROCI) remains the foundation of that approach. It sets a standard of best school practice that ought to be adopted across the country. Partners is working in that direction.

Partners also engages in its own continuous improvement, of course. In the past few years, for example, our staff have incorporated Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning into the Partners approach in order to strengthen teachers’ ability to engage their students more fully in their own learning. And most recently in this era of Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which raises the bar for students and teachers alike, Partners has built our capability to help teachers learn the new instructional methods needed to cultivate their students higher-level thinking skills.

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