

**CENTRAL FALLS DISTRICT-CHARTER COMPACT**  
**A Collaboration to Transform Public Education in Central Falls**

The parties to this agreement share a fundamental and abiding commitment to the education of the children of the City of Central Falls. We recognize and greatly appreciate the extraordinary commitment of teachers and administrators in the system. Yet the parties to this agreement recognize that the Central Falls school system as a whole must do more to meet the needs and expectations of the community. The challenge is great but the responsibility for educating a Central Falls student to his or her full potential is the responsibility of all of the district's stakeholders.

Whereas, the Central Falls School District and the five area Charter Schools that serve our students desire to promote good relations among and between the District and the Charters in the best interests of high quality schools of choice for the children of Central Falls, the Central Falls School Board of Trustees and the Signatories herein believe that this Compact creates a powerful and effective foundational partnership that supports the exchange of best practices, efficiencies of scale, successful innovations, and leadership development so that each child of the City of Central Falls is enabled to reach high academic standards in service of becoming informed, critical thinkers so that they may be active participants in our democracy and in this global society.

The parties agree that within the framework of the Compact, we will develop a deep professional collaboration that communicates well and serves students, teachers, parents and the public and will commit to service and to problem solving for powerful solutions.

The parties' collaborative roles hold the potential to serve and guide our school communities toward successful public and political advocacy that can break through the barriers toward gaining and sustaining high student academic performance, excellence in teaching, informed parental involvement, and committed partnerships.

The Central Falls School District and the five area Charter Schools acknowledge and support these expressed ideals. The parties publicly commit our energies toward reaching them.



This District/Charter Collaboration Compact (the "Compact") commits district and charter leaders serving students from Central Falls to improve the ways they will work together and influence each other for the benefit of all students in the city, and to ensure that all children have access to high-quality public schools. The individual responsibilities of each party, including the district superintendent and charter school leaders, are as follows:

1. District superintendent and public charter school leaders serving students from Central Falls agree that they have a collective obligation to ensure that *all* students in

the city graduate from high school prepared to succeed in college, work, and life. The children living within Central Falls do not belong to a particular district school or to a particular charter school – we all have a responsibility to provide all children a great public school.

2. Mayoral Academy and Independent Charter leaders agree to support the success of district schools and to be open sources of educational and pedagogical ideas and practices as well as providers of high-quality education options for Central Falls students by:
  - a. Serving all types of students in the city, including redoubling efforts to recruit, serve and retain students in the following categories:
    - Students requiring special education services
    - Students who are English Language Learners
    - Students in other underserved and at-risk populations;
  - b. Ensuring transparency regarding all student demographic data in a way that allows for academically useful distinctions between special populations; while acknowledging that students at high-performing public schools routinely cease to be identified by IEP and/or ELL designations and that this phenomenon should be tracked in order that it not be mistaken for serving a low percentage of these populations
  - c. Ensuring transparency regarding student mobility and achievement, particularly college readiness, including publicly tracking and reporting these data;
  - d. Operating and positioning public charter schools as partners with the district in creating a high-performing system of public school choice;
  - e. While responding to parent demand, also working with the district to locate new schools in highest-need areas, and connected to district feeder patterns
  - f. Actively exchanging demonstrated best practices, and participating in communities of practice between the Central Falls Public Schools, Mayoral Academies and Independent Charter Schools to scale up what works and build capacity;
  - g. Partners under this agreement will support the Learning Community’s goal of reaching 500 teachers and 10,000 students in five years through their Lab School portfolio of services (as articulated in their business plan) so long as the lab proves an effective resource for RI educators and/or educators nationally.
3. The superintendent and the Central Falls Board of Trustees agree to support the success of Mayoral Academies and Independent Charter Schools serving students from Central Falls by:

- a. Making available, where possible, the benefits of school district economies of scale at the option of public charter schools (e.g., contracts for purchasing supplies, products and services), to increase their efficiency and effectiveness
  - b. Working toward equitable distribution of resources for public charter schools and district schools, including advocating for equitable per-student funding and ensuring access to district facilities for public charter schools
  - c. Removing obstacles and barriers that hinder the success of individual public charter schools or that thwart their expansion and replication (e.g., charter caps)
  - d. Protecting the autonomies of all public charter schools and honoring state public charter school statutes, including public charter school principles of independent governance, operations and open enrollment.
  - e. Actively exchanging demonstrated best practices with all public charter schools to scale up what works and build capacity in all public schools
  - f. Actively promote the Learning Community Lab offerings for teachers and other education professionals.
4. The superintendent, the trustees, and charter leaders accept a mutual obligation to pursue accountability across all schools in the city, including by working to close, reconstitute, or by other means immediately address persistently low-performing schools, whether district or charter.
  5. The superintendent and school board and charter leaders embrace and will act enthusiastically to help the most effective schools expand and replicate, whether those schools are district or charter schools, in order to extend quality offerings to larger numbers of students.
  6. Work together to influence and inform teacher preparation institutions to ensure graduates are meeting the needs of both district and charter schools; and to assure that all on-site teacher and leader preparation courses are open to employees of all the compact participants whenever space is available.

**DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT AND CHARTER SCHOOL LEADER JOINT COMMITMENTS:**

- Agree to treat each other with respect according to an agreed upon professional code of conduct designed to keep conversations civil and productive without sacrificing honest debate about “what works”.
- Establish district and charter school board subcommittees to jointly convene with the Compact signatories on a quarterly basis, and to monitor and validate district and charter performance in executing Compact commitments, including publishing annual reports regarding progress and challenges in implementation

- Hold an “Annual Shared Practices Summit” on specific topics such as academic support for underserved youth to advance practical solutions and strategies for common challenges
- Develop a common approach to operating admission lotteries for all oversubscribed schools, including common forms and common parent information system. Agree to allow Dr. Martin West of Harvard Graduate School of Education and Dr. Kenneth Wong of Brown University to track outcomes of students winning and losing those lotteries and follow-up on lessons learned based on lottery study results
- Co-develop a bank of questions for use in formative assessments aligned to Common Core Standards and develop related teacher and student supports
- Jointly commit to transform district and charter teacher evaluation and support systems, including agreeing to: (1) implement teacher evaluation systems as or more rigorous than those being developed as part of Rhode Island’s winning Race to the Top plan/AFT Evaluation Model; (2) develop a system of cross-LEA teacher observations to promote constructive critical feedback and shared best practices; (3) co-develop a standard parent-student survey of effective classroom practices;
- Explore the possibility of a common school report card and evaluation system to compare school-level results across all public schools in the city
- Share access to longitudinal data systems and data warehouses; share best practices regarding data use and standard operating procedures at all levels (classroom, school, district) to improve student success
- Work together to influence and inform teacher preparation institutions to ensure graduates are meeting the needs of both district and charter schools; and to assure that all on-site teacher and principal preparation and certification offerings at any of the partnering LEAs be open to teachers and leaders at all of them when space is available;
- Commit to a collaborative discussion with state legislators to advance legislation in areas of mutual interest
- Collaborate on coursework requirements for charter and district school students, including for those enrolled in AP, college or community college courses
- Engage teacher focus groups from both district and charter schools, facilitated by an outside provider, to talk about substantive issues around providing effective services for Special Education/ELL students.
- Coordinate to the extent possible afterschool and summer services provide by the LEAs and their community-based partners.

**DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT COMMITMENTS:**

- Provide public charter schools access to adequate facilities.
  - Honor and share the work of Central Falls teachers in the areas of curriculum development, restorative practices and accountable talk.

- Commit to a mapping study that defines excess space that might be available for use by charter schools.
- Provide sufficient lease terms for charter schools to secure financing necessary for renovations
- Secure municipal financing or guarantees for charter renovation projects
- Partner with a non-profit financing entity to provide district incubator space for public charter start-ups.
- Honor Rhode Island's system for 100% equitable per-pupil funding for monies passed through the district.
- Permit charter schools to purchase food service, transportation, procurement, and back office functions from the district, if they desire
- Identify opportunities to support charter school working capital needs, such as using district borrowing capacity to help fund charters needs.
- Provide charter school students the opportunity to participate in athletics or other after school activities that are unavailable in public charter schools due to smaller enrollment; and agree to mutually lobby the Rhode Island Interscholastic League to develop new regulations that are sensitive to the varied start and end times of each LEA's school day and year.

#### **CHARTER SCHOOL LEADER COMMITMENTS:**

- Pursue grant funding in collaboration with the district
- Work with teachers in district schools to develop a visiting instructor residency model or principal residency program, permitting district school employees to work for a year or two in a charter environment
- Participate in the convening of a working group of Special Needs and ELL administrators in order to explore potential operational efficiencies through shared services.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND TIMELINE**

The parties of this agreement will convene a joint Oversight Committee comprised of members of their staffs and/or boards as well as four working groups to pursue specific strategies for implementation focused around four key areas of work: 1) Shared Operational Services; 2) Student Information and Assessment; 3) Professional Development and Teacher Evaluation; and 4) Shared Administrative and Academic Services.

The working groups agree to work collaboratively over the coming months and years to advance the strategies described below and to report their findings and recommendations to the joint Oversight Committee.

**1. Shared Operational Services** group will:

- Review and recommend action plans for efficient use of all services outside the core academic programs, including facilities, custodial and maintenance, clerical, equipment, food, bulk purchasing, transportation, athletics and after-school programming.
- Oversee the development of a facilities study and strategic plan that identifies all available facilities inventory in Central Falls and the surrounding area and recommends a plan for its intelligent and efficient use by all parties to the compact in need of both core and supplemental facilities space.
- Meet with the Rhode Island Interscholastic League to develop a full understanding of the challenges and opportunities for shared athletic programming. Make recommendations.

**2. Student Information and Assessment** group will:

- Review current practices around use of student information systems for disaggregating, tracking, and assessing the academic and social outcomes of Central Falls' demographically diverse student population; and for the purposes of holding lotteries for schools of choice; as well as for the purpose of adjusting and improving the effectiveness of academic instruction.
- Recommend strategies for common use of student information systems that allow for apples-to-apples comparisons between schools and student populations; greater public transparency and communication of outcomes; as well as greater sharing of effective assessment tools.
- Work with Dr. Kenneth Wong of Brown University's Urban Education Policy program and Dr. Martin West of Harvard Graduate School of Education on a "lotteried-in / lotteried out" study of the Central Falls student population.

**3. Professional Development and Teacher Evaluation** group will:

- Review and report out all current professional development programs and teacher evaluation practices used by the participants.
- Identify and publicize all professional development sessions and on-site course offerings immediately available to the staff of compact participants.
- Monitor the progress of Rhode Island's Race to the Top teacher evaluation system/AFT Evaluation Model and develop a rubric for measuring the systems of individual Compact schools against it.

- Work to develop and implement a system for teacher and leader visits between district and charter schools as well as explore the feasibility of half or full-year visiting residencies between district and charter participants.
- Develop a standard parent survey of effective classroom practices.
- Plan an annual Shared Practices Summit.

**4. Shared Administrative and Academic Services group will:**

- Convene District and Charter Special Needs and ELL Administrators to review administrative and academic capacity and practices.
- Determine to the extent possible the current distribution of special student populations across all schools.
- Engage teacher focus groups from both district and charter schools, facilitated by an outside provider, to discuss all substantive issues around providing effective services to Special Needs and ELL students.
- Develop a system to improve the fair and equitable distribution of both students, funding and effective services across all schools participating in the compact.

The joint Oversight Committee, Working Groups and any necessary consultants will implement the Compact over two years beginning immediately.

Year 1 (9/1/11 – 8/30/12)

Q1:

- Confirm participants and convene Oversight Committee to:
  - Nominate members of Working Groups
  - Develop communication plan to highlight Compact work and to maintain trust and transparency between participants during implementation
- Convene Working Groups monthly to:
  - Review current practices in their area
  - Determine deliverables and solidify their implementation timelines
  - Determine need for consultants
  - Draft RFPs for any necessary consultants
  - Report the above back to Oversight Committee

Q2:

- Oversight Committee approves any necessary RFPs
- Working Groups manage RFP process and make recommendations to Oversight Committee
- Oversight Committee engages any necessary consultants
- Oversight Committee plans public event celebrating Compact, timed with lottery outreach season

Q3-4:

- Working Groups oversee completion of action plans,
- Working Groups develop specific metrics against which each deliverable in action plans can be measured
- Working Groups report the above to Oversight Committee; adjust plans based on feedback
- Oversight Committee approves actions plans
- Oversight Committee publishes year-end progress report

Year 2 (9/1/12 – 8/30-13)

- Working Groups meet monthly to implement action plans
- Oversight Committee meets quarterly to review
- Oversight Committee publishes Year 2 progress report, including:
  - Recommended modifications to action plans
  - Recommended additional agreements to be incorporated into Compact

We, the undersigned, agree to the terms of the compact.

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Fran Gallo, Superintendent of Central Falls School District

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Anna Cano-Morales, Chair of the Board of Trustees of Central Falls School District

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Michael Magee, CEO of Rhode Island Mayoral Academies

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Carolyn Sheehan, Executive Director, Blackstone Academy Charter School

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Angelo Garcia, Executive Director, Segue Institute for Learning

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Meg O'Leary, Co-Director of The Learning Community Charter School

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Julie Nora, Director of the International Charter School

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Jeremy Chiappetta, Executive Director of Blackstone Valley Prep Mayoral Academies

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Mayor Daniel J. McKee, Chair of the Board of Rhode Island Mayoral Academies & Blackstone Valley Prep