

January 18, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

We, the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union, are seeking letters of interest from prospective partners for the transformation of 24th Street Elementary School located in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) under California's historic Parent Trigger law. We have spent the past several months working to transform our school through community organizing, and attempting to collaborate with teachers and the school district. However, as of this date, the district has not been able to produce a transformation plan that will give our children the high quality public education they need and deserve, and we cannot wait another year for our school to improve. Therefore, we have elected to launch a formal "Request for Proposals" (RFP) process to solicit proposals from non-profit charter school operators, LAUSD, and other potential non-profit organizations to partner with us in transforming our children's under-performing school.

Upon a thorough review of all letters of interest submitted by **12pm PST on Friday, January 25, 2013**, we will solicit proposals from respondents for the purpose of selecting an operator for the newly transformed 24th Street Elementary during the 2013-2014 Academic Year. If we ultimately select a charter school operator to transform our school, their charter petition will immediately be submitted to the Los Angeles Unified School District for final approval.

BACKGROUND:

24th Street Elementary is located in the West Adams neighborhood of Los Angeles and serves grades K-5. It has been in Program Improvement and subject to corrective action by the state since 2006. The school is one of the worst performing in the Los Angeles Unified School District, and is in the bottom 2% of LAUSD elementary schools. In 2012, 68% of students were not proficient in English Language Arts, and 65% were not proficient in math. Additionally, the school has the 2nd highest suspension rate out of all LAUSD elementary schools, further highlighting the failure of leadership and broken culture at our school.

The parents at 24th Street Elementary have a long history of organizing, and we have become exceedingly frustrated with the unacceptable academic situation and the broken culture at our school. We have tried for years to make meaningful change at the school, and have even circulated petitions to change the principal in the past, but our attempts were unsuccessful. Our voices are not being heard, and the needs of our children are not being met.

We first met with Parent Revolution, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering parents to transform under-performing schools, in the spring of 2012. Parent Revolution offered to help us create a Parents Union chapter to strengthen our collective voice. In August of 2012, we formally created the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union chapter and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Parent Revolution asking them to support our work and our organization. We have close to 100 formal members of our chapter, and are continuing to grow every week. We continue to work with and be supported by Parent Revolution in a variety of ways – including this RFP process.

Upon the creation of the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union chapter, we immediately began trying to work with teachers and others at our school on a plan to improve it through Public School Choice (PSC). We put together a list of objectives that we hoped to see in the plan and worked with teachers to try to make those objectives a reality. Unfortunately, the plan proposed by the teachers did not lay out a real path to transformational change, and our chapter membership passed a formal resolution of no confidence in the current PSC process. In fact, just days ago, Superintendent John Deasy formally gave the school's current plan the lowest rating possible, saying it was still at a "Beginning" stage. He stated, "The plan does not clearly outline the key priority areas and how the team will strategically address the problems."

We have an enormous sense of urgency around radically improving our school in time for the next school year, which begins in August 2013. Our school has languished as one of the worst in the district for far too long. We all want our children to make it to college and beyond, and we cannot afford to have them spend yet another year in a school that is one of the worst in the district. We are hopeful that collaborative efforts with LAUSD and our school can lead to the changes we need, but given the current state of that work, we cannot afford to move forward without other potential options.

Because of this incredible sense of urgency, we decided that Parent Trigger a crucial part of the path towards the change we needed to see at 24th Street Elementary in 2013. Either the district can respond and give us the change we need, or we will have the opportunity to find someone else who will. We have spent the past two months engaging our fellow parents at the school, and on January 17, 2013, we submitted petitions representing a huge supermajority – 68% - of students at 24th Street Elementary. Superintendent Deasy lauded our efforts, saying “This is powerful parent organizing and powerful parent choice.”

Having submitted our petitions to LAUSD, we are now formally soliciting proposals from both the district and non-profit charter operators to ensure that we see a transformed school open its doors this fall. While we would like to work with the district to develop a plan to transform our school, we must recognize that at this point, the district has not produced a plan, and we must take action now. We have outlined our list of objectives (attached) that we believe are necessary in order to transform our school next year, and we will select the plan that best meets those objectives.

Therefore, we intend to exercise our power under CCR, Title 5, and Section 4802.2 to solicit additional proposals for partners that can transform 24th Street Elementary. We are hopeful that the Los Angeles Unified School District will participate, and submit a letter of interest to transform the school. Under the regulations, this process will be open to anyone capable of submitting a high-quality, non-profit independent charter petition. Furthermore, we will continue to communicate with all stakeholders in this process, and we will certainly remain open to other potential solutions that will meet our objectives and give our school the radical change it needs.

The ultimate selection of our school partner will be made by a vote of the parent petitioners, according to the process outlined in the Parent Trigger law’s state regulations and outlined during the Parent Trigger campaign.

Upon receipt of these letters of interest by January 25, 2013, the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union will invite qualified respondents to participate in the RFP process. Additionally, all selected respondents will be invited to participate in workshops with the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union to facilitate the process of creating a proposal informed by, and reflective of, the input of parents.

Letters submitted become the property of the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union. We cannot provide any assurances that any award will be made. Proposers will be responsible for their own costs of making any submissions.

Please address any questions to the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union. You can contact steering committee member Marbella Jacobo at (213) 219-9878. For Spanish contact Parent Union Coordinator Amabilia Villeda (323) 735-7837. Or, you can e-mail the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union at 24th.street.parents.union@gmail.com

Answers regarding this request will be provided in writing and may be shared with other potential proposers. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,
The 24th Street Elementary Parents Union

LETTER OF INTEREST: SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

REQUIREMENTS

The Request for Proposal process (“RFP”) for the newly transformed 24th Street Elementary School will be a competitive process. Letters of interest must be received by **12:00pm PST on Friday, January 25, 2013**.

Letters of interest shall provide:

1. A detailed explanation of the Proposer’s qualifications as a school operator, charter management organization or educational management organization.
2. A general description of the Proposer’s current or proposed educational program and their unique ability to meet the specific needs of all students at 24th Street Elementary, specifically special education students, English language learners, and students in need of remedial support.
3. A commitment and description of plans for establishing a collaborative learning community that meaningfully engages the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union, and parents and community members in the West Adams area.

By submitting a letter of interest, selected Proposers agree to attend at least two workshops for the following purposes prior to submission of a proposal:

1. One workshop with the parents of 24th Street Elementary in order to understand their vision for the school and to identify common ground where a school district or other operator can forge a collaborative relationship with parents from the outset.
2. One informational workshop that will detail the planned RFP’s guidelines, timeline, and evaluation criteria. In addition, this session will enable respondents to ask questions about the laws that will govern the transformed 24th Street Elementary, including admission requirements, etc.

TIMELINE

- This Letter of Interest Request is dated January 18, 2013.
- Letters of interest will be evaluated by the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union immediately upon submission. Based on its review of the Letters of Interest, the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union will then invite qualified potential operators to participate in its RFP process and to submit full proposals for the transformation of 24th Street Elementary (Academic Year 2013-2014).
- All respondents that submit a letter of interest agree to attend at least two required informational workshops as outlined under the above “requirements” section should they be invited to participate in the RFP process.
- Letters of interest must be submitted via email to **24th.street.parents.union@gmail.com** no later than **12 pm PST on Friday, January 25, 2012**.

The following is the timeline of the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union RFP process:

Timeframe	Activities
Friday, January 18	Release of Letter of Interest Request
Friday, January 25	Letter Of Interest Due Date
Monday, January 28	Respondent Notification
Monday, January 28	Release of RFP Application & Information Session
Friday, March 8	RFP Due Date

FORMAT & EVALUATION CRITERIA

FORMAT:

Please use the following guidelines to format your letter of interest:

- **LENGTH AND FONT SIZE:** Please use fonts no smaller than 11 point. Maximum letter of interest length including cover letter should not exceed **four** pages.
- **TITLE PAGE:** Name of Proposer, address, website address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and primary contact person.
- **COVER LETTER:** Signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the Proposer
- **LETTER OF INTEREST:** Discuss your qualifications as a Proposer capable of successfully implementing a proposal to operate a school at the transformed 24th Street Elementary. You should touch upon your capability to turnaround the academic performance at 24th Street Elementary, your distinctive ability to meet the needs of the school's population and to meaningfully engage the school's parents and community members in West Adams.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Letters of interest shall be evaluated by the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union upon the following criteria:

1. Respondent's experience, knowledge and the strength of the proposer and any current educational operations.
2. Respondent's ability to meet the unique educational needs of all students at 24th Street Elementary and significantly improve academic outcomes starting in the 2013-14 school year.
3. Respondent's commitment to the 24th Street Elementary Parents Union mission for the transformed 24th Street Elementary School and to establishing a collaborative learning community that meaningfully engages the school's parents and community members as partners.

The 24th Street Elementary Parents Union will invite respondents that submit Letters of Interest that show merit to participate in the RFP process.

MISSION AND PROFILE OF SCHOOL /SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

MISSION:

The mission of the newly transformed 24th Street Elementary will be not only to prepare students for middle school, but also to successfully put them on the path to college. Ultimately, the school should be one in which students feel safe, respected, and inspired to learn and grow. The school should have

a strong leader with a vision for the school, and all teachers will work to create a culture of high expectations.

The transformation at 24th Street Elementary shall be launched no later than September 2013. It is anticipated that, in the absence of restructuring, the transformed 24th Street Elementary would open with approximately 622 students in kindergarten through Grade 5. All students currently enrolled in 24th Street Elementary in 2012-13, and their siblings, will have the option to attend the transformed school and will be guaranteed admission to the transformed 24th Street Elementary. As a school of choice, no student can be compelled to attend the new school. In addition, students residing within the attendance boundaries of 24th Street Elementary have a right to attend the school, subject to any laws or rules pertaining to enrollment. (See section 4800.3 of the implementing regulations.) Proposers intending to apply for Public Charter School Grant Program funding should carefully review the guidelines of the State Board of Education reconciling lottery requirements with California laws regarding admissions preferences. While we cannot with 100% accuracy predict enrollment, the following is our conservative enrollment projection for 2013-2014 academic year, based on current enrollment:

	2013-14
Kindergarten	124
Grade One	133
Grade Two	98
Grade Three	114
Grade Four	95
Grade Five	58
TOTALS	622

SURROUNDING COMMUNITY: WEST ADAMS

West Adams is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Los Angeles, with a population of about 22,857 residents. The community is considered moderately diverse for the city of Los Angeles, with 56% Latinos, and 37% African Americans. The student population at 24th Street represents slightly different demographics, with 80% Latino students and 18% African American students.

The median household income in the West Adams neighborhood is \$38,000, which is low for both the city and county of Los Angeles. Additionally, only 7.8% of residents over the age of 25 have a four-year degree. The percentages of residents under 10 years of age and between 11 and 18 are among the county's highest.

On the campus of 24th Street Elementary, there is a particular non-profit community organization that has been an element of success in a school that is so far behind. The Garden School Foundation supports the parents in their endeavor to improve the school, and should be recognized as an important part of the school's community.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT DATA: 24TH STREET ELEMENTARY

24th Street Elementary has been a under-performing school for over 6 years, and is showing no signs of improvement. The school is in the bottom 2% of all elementary schools in LAUSD (out of 563), and is in the bottom 10% of schools in the state, even when compared only to schools with similar demographics. Additionally, the school has the second highest suspension rate of any elementary school in LAUSD, an astonishing statistic that is associated with not only academic challenges, but with a broken culture as well.

As illustrated in the foregoing chart, school failure continues to be a persistent trend for 24th Street

Elementary. The school has been persistently failing, and has shown no signs of drastic improvement. 24th Street Elementary was placed in Program Improvement status in 2006-07, and since that time, it has failed to achieve “Adequate Yearly Progress” each year.

24TH Street Elementary Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Year	API Score	Met AYP?	# of AYP Criteria Met
2007-08 (PI Year 4)	680	No	17 of 21
2008-09 (PI Year 5)	681	No	11 of 21
2009-10 (PI Year 5)	659	No	11 of 21
2010-11 (PI Year 5)	660	No	14 of 21
2011-12 (PI Year 5)	667	No	15 of 21

Based on 2012 STAR Test scores:

STAR Test Results 24th Street Elementary School

	% Proficient or Advanced: English Language Arts	% Proficient or Advanced: Mathematics	% Proficient or Advanced: 5 th Grade Science
2007-08	26%	40%	19%
2008-09	26%	35%	13%
2009-10	23%	31%	23%
2010-11	27%	41%	39%
2011-12	32%	35%	27%

Demographics of 24th Street Elementary School (STAR Data)

Special Education	15%
Free and Reduced Lunch	100%
English Language Learners	42%
Hispanic	80%
African American	18%

We believe passionately that every child, regardless of his/her family’s financial means, is entitled to a high-quality, free public education. We believe that providing high-quality educational options is an imperative for our community, and our nation’s future success. As residents of Los Angeles, we understand what our community’s children need to succeed, and we understand the hard work that must take place to ensure their success.