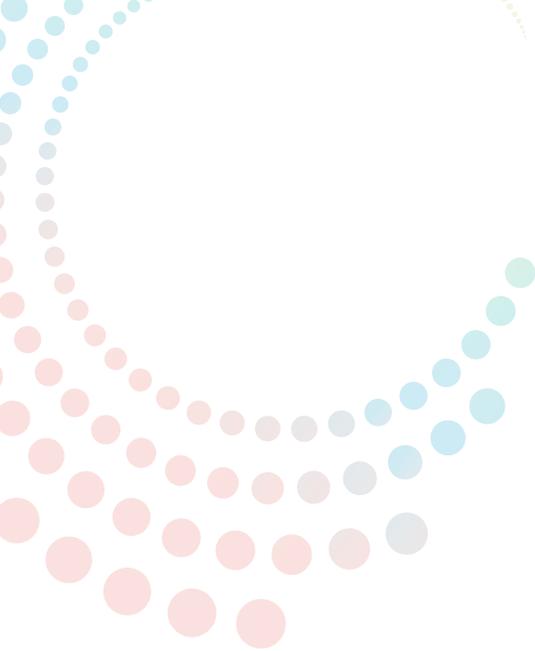


# 107th Street Elementary Joins the Partnership: A Case Study



**PARTNERSHIP**  
FOR LOS ANGELES SCHOOLS





“At 107th Street the Partnership changed the atmosphere. The school is painted, cleaned, and not so drab. Staff call students “scholars” not “students.” Students wear uniforms. Teachers are getting more training. Before the Partnership became involved, attempts to improve were ‘half-tries’”.

—107th Street Parent

## INTRODUCTION

School transformation is perhaps the hardest but most vital work in education. Despite the best efforts of policy makers and reformers, positive change has proven difficult to achieve at scale, with a study of the Obama administration’s \$7 billion School Improvement Grant program finding “no significant impact” on student performance. But the continued challenge makes a focus on the work imperative, and it is essential that we learn from the teams undertaking school transformation. Toward that purpose, this report shares the story of the first year of transformation work at 107th Street Elementary School (107th Street), a high-need, Watts-adjacent elementary school in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LA Unified; District).

In July 2015, LA Unified invited the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools (Partnership), a non-profit supporting school transformation, to manage 107th Street. With only a month to plan before the start of school, the Partnership rapidly assessed the needs of the school, hired a new principal and began supporting 107th Street with its capacity-building and advocacy model. While the first year was not a neat, linear path toward success, 107th Street finished the year in a markedly better place, with significant improvements in academic and social-emotional data, and with 80% of staff agreeing that the “school is headed in the right direction,” up from 17% the previous year.

This report details the context for the Partnership’s transformation efforts, how the Partnership’s model was applied at 107th Street, and the outcomes from year one and priorities heading into year two. The report relies on interviews with Partnership staff, LA Unified staff, 107th Street staff, students and families, and data from the school, Partnership, and LA Unified. Ultimately, the report attempts to distill these various stakeholders’ reflections on the first year of the transformation effort into discrete lessons learned that can be applied to schools and organizations pursuing transformation in various contexts.

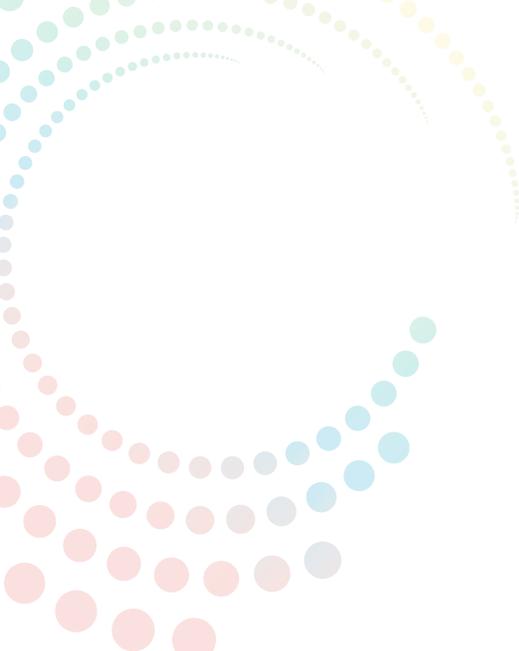
# 107TH STREET ELEMENTARY JOINS THE PARTNERSHIP: A CASE STUDY



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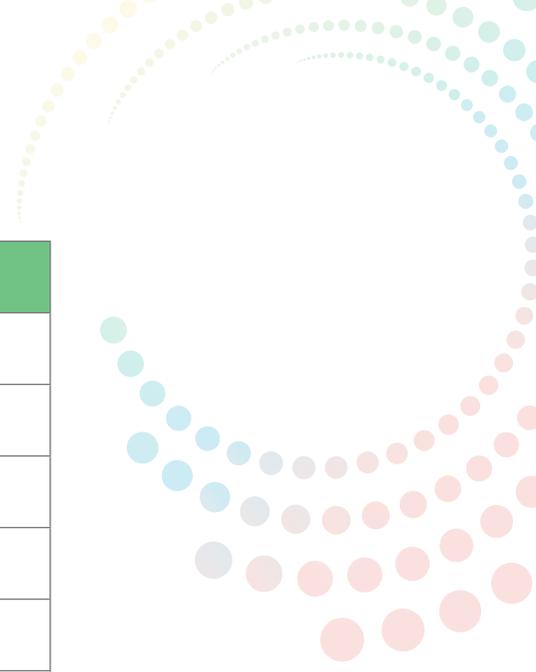




## BACKGROUND

The mission of the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools is to transform schools and revolutionize school systems to empower all students with a high-quality education. Launched in 2007, the Partnership promotes change through an innovative approach to school transformation: working side-by-side with the Los Angeles Unified School District under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Partnership manages a cohort of the District's chronically underserved schools, serving all students as neighborhood schools and honoring all District collective bargaining agreements.

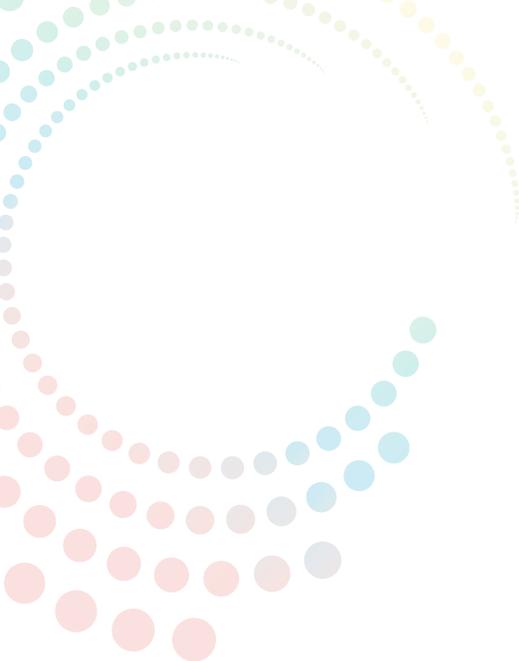
The Partnership's network now includes 18 LA Unified schools in Boyle Heights, South LA, and Watts, serving 14,500 students. These schools are among the highest-need schools in the city. In fact, according to Advancement Project, InnerCity Struggle, and Community Coalition, the Partnership network includes Los Angeles' highest-need elementary school, the second highest-need high school, and four of the 25 highest-need middle schools.<sup>3</sup> 107th Street is ranked as the fifth highest-need of all 492 elementary schools in LA Unified.<sup>4</sup> Partnership students are 88% Latino and 10% African-American, with 95% qualifying for free and reduced-price lunch (a metric for determining socio-economic status), 30% classified as English Learners and 15% qualifying for special education services.



PARTNERSHIP STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS	
Total Students	14,500
African American	10%
Latino	88%
English Learners	30%
Qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch	95%
Students with Disabilities	15%

The Partnership serves this high-need population under essentially the same constraints as other LA Unified schools, and utilizes District services while leveraging private philanthropy and community partners to transform its schools. The additional resources the Partnership provides cost approximately \$700 per student beyond the LA Unified budget, a number that is invested differently over time to adapt to shifting needs and also includes the Partnership’s advocacy and systems change efforts. The Partnership’s additional support has resulted in dramatic success across its network of schools. Over the Partnership’s first five years, it was the fastest improving mid to large school system in California, with Academic Performance Index (API) gains outpacing all other mid to large school systems. The network graduation rate has more than doubled from a baseline of 36% to 81%, and suspensions at Partnership schools have dropped from 21% to just 3%. Schools have seen steady gains in academic proficiency across subject areas, including on the new Common Core-aligned Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) exams.

In addition to the results at Partnership school sites, the organization’s position as a manager of LA Unified schools allows for advocacy that reinforces school-site successes. Improved district and state policies and practices that result from Partnership advocacy

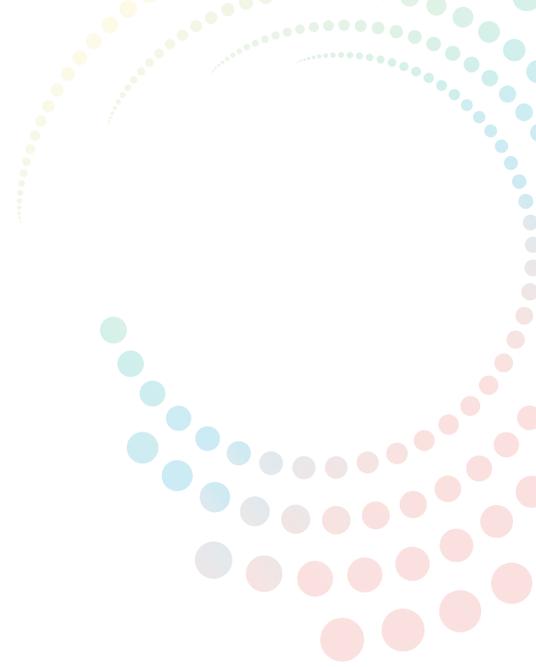


benefit Partnership schools, and these improvements create greater credibility for further advocacy. The Partnership has piloted several programs that have subsequently been adopted by all LA Unified schools and has successfully advocated for policies to better meet diverse student needs. For example, parent-friendly school report cards, universal gifted testing and online credit recovery all started with the Partnership.

These successes stem from the Partnership’s school transformation model, which is designed to promote replicable, sustainable and scalable results, and which consists of three core elements, all of which are funded through philanthropic support:

- **Great Leaders** – hiring, developing and supporting the best school leaders to lead Partnership schools;
- **Highly-Effective Teaching** – building excellence in classroom instruction by empowering teachers through professional learning, leadership development and coaching; and
- **Engaged & Empowered Communities** – engaging all stakeholders, including families, community partners, and school staff, as advocates toward a common vision of neighborhoods and schools that support student achievement

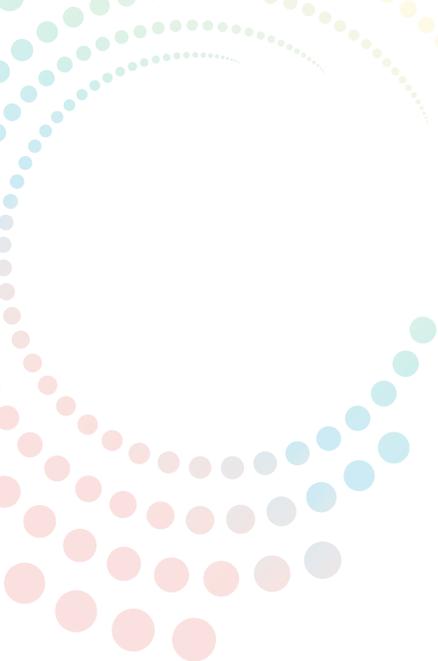
107TH STREET DEMOGRAPHICS	
Total Students	922
African American	25%
Latino	73%
English Learners	44%
Qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch	94%
Students with Disabilities	8%



107th Street Elementary School is a large, urban elementary school in a South Los Angeles neighborhood adjacent to Watts. 107th Street serves over 900 students from transitional kindergarten through 5th grade, with 94% qualifying for free and reduced lunch. According to the Student Need Index referenced above, 107th Street is the 5th highest need elementary school in all of Los Angeles.

107th Street had a multi-year history of low performance. In 2010 it was designated as a “focus school” based on its low performance and LA Unified invited both internal and external teams to develop plans to increase student achievement as part of Public School Choice, a District initiative to turn around schools deemed chronically underperforming. But the plan selected by the District, which was created by a team of current school staff, ultimately did not realize the substantial gains students deserved. On the 2014-2015 Smarter Balanced assessments, only 11% of students met or exceeded state standards in English language arts, and only 7% met or exceed standards in math. This again placed 107th Street among the lowest-performing elementary schools in Los Angeles.

Other metrics also indicated significant problems. Student attendance was low; only 52% of students had good attendance (defined by LA Unified as attending at least 96% of the time),<sup>5</sup> and only 54% of students reported feeling safe at school.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, a staff survey revealed that only 12% of teachers felt that student culture was positive at the school, and only 17% of teachers felt the school was headed in the right direction.<sup>7</sup>

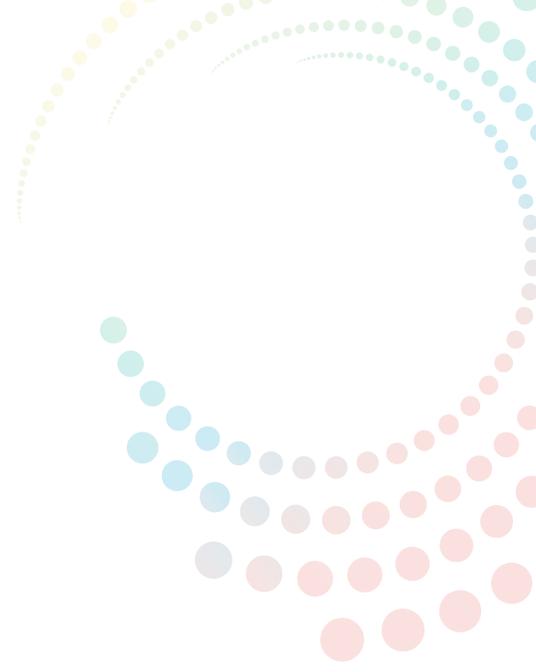


## 107TH STREET JOINS THE PARTNERSHIP

The addition of 107th Street Elementary to the Partnership network was the culmination of internal conversations within both the Partnership and LA Unified. In 2015, LA Unified reorganized its schools into six “Local Districts.” While previously all Partnership schools had been part of a centralized division of intensive support and innovation, Partnership schools were now part of three different local districts. More than half of the Partnership’s schools are located in Local District South, and the reorganization spurred immediate collaboration between the Partnership and Local District leadership.

As referenced above, 107th Street had been a “focus school” for LA Unified since 2010, but 2015 SBAC results and community feedback indicated that the school had not made significant progress. At the end of the 2014-15 school year, LA Unified determined that new school leadership was needed and transferred the principal. At the same time, LA Unified leadership recognized the need for additional external supports and asked the Partnership to consider adding 107th Street to its network of schools.

Serving additional schools is not a decision the Partnership makes lightly, as expanding the network can strain resources and supports for existing schools. But the Partnership felt compelled to respond to the District’s invitation because of the clear need for greater support for the students of 107th Street. The Partnership also saw several other arguments for growing its network of schools. By serving additional schools within the same neighborhood, more students can maximize their learning by attending Partnership schools for a greater part of their K-12 education. Additionally, serving a new school offers the opportunity for the Partnership to apply its model under new



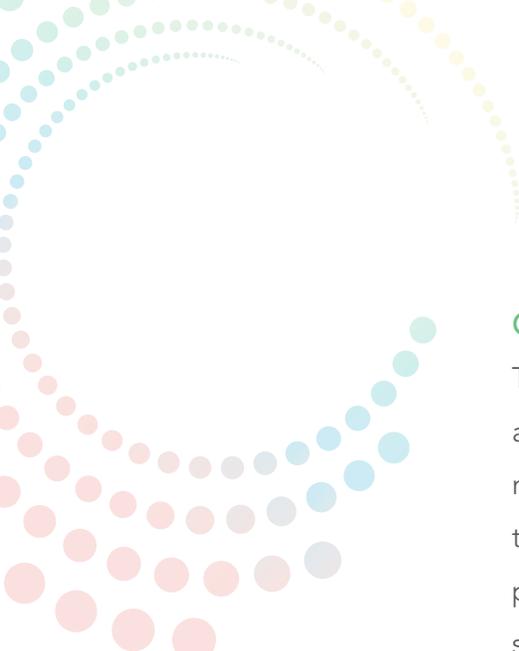
*In the summer of 2015, the visions of LA Unified and the Partnership converged, as the District invited the Partnership to add 107th Street to the Partnership network in order to transform the school.*

conditions and further refine its supports. Finally, as a close partner to the District, accepting LA Unified's invitation opened doors to deeper collaboration.

In the summer of 2015, the visions of LA Unified and the Partnership converged, as the District invited the Partnership to add 107th Street to the Partnership network in order to transform the school. Given the severity of the crisis at 107th Street, the Partnership and LA Unified had extensive conversations to define the model for District-Partnership cooperation, including the formal terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by both parties. This MOU generally followed the larger MOU dictating the Partnership's overall agreement with LA Unified, but provided for specific areas for deeper collaboration. As part of the agreement, the District supported some transition costs, such as school facility upgrades, and provided extra support on staffing issues.

## FIRST YEAR INITIATIVES

The Partnership and LA Unified did not sign the MOU establishing Partnership management of 107th Street until July 2015, leaving the Partnership with less than a month to prepare for the coming year. At that point, the school had no principal, significant school culture concerns, a discouraged teaching staff, and a community that indicated they felt disconnected from the school. In creating a plan to transform 107th Street, the Partnership attempted to balance a reliance on the broad principles and mechanisms of the Partnership model and a tailored approach for 107th Street, bringing in additional partners and resources where they could be most valuable, and taking advantage of the flexibility that comes with being a Partnership school. In the following sections, this report attempts to condense the transformation of 107th Street into a discussion divided by each of the Partnership's three model areas.



## Great Leaders

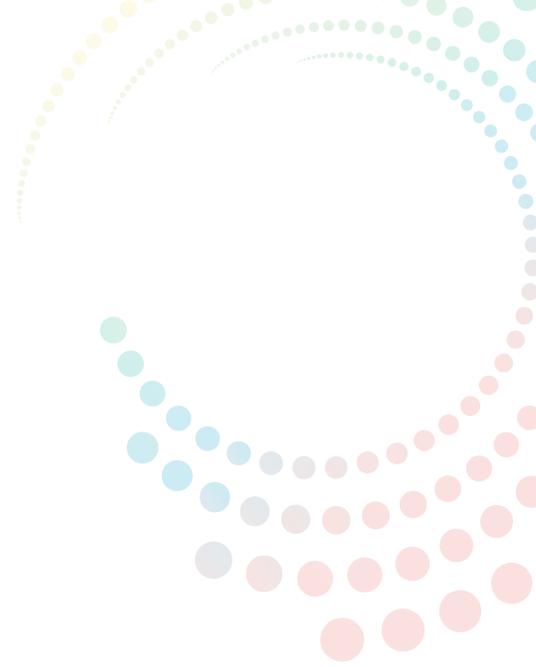
The Partnership has always believed that having a great school leader at the helm is a vital part of a successful school, and invests significant resources in hiring, developing, and supporting the best principals to run Partnership schools. LA Unified had transferred 107th Street’s previous principal at the end of the 2015-16 school year, and the school lacked effective systems for managing behavioral problems and addressing parental concerns, leaving the staff perennially responding to crises on campus instead of planning for and managing the long-term needs of the school.

Ultimately, the depth of need at 107th Street and short timeline before the start of the school year led the Partnership to make the most consequential decision of the transformation process by appointing one of its own leaders as principal of 107th Street. In place of its typical process for principal hiring, which includes broad stakeholder input, the Partnership selected the Partnership’s Chief Academic Officer, who had previously served as a high-performing principal in a nearby school. Given her experience as a school leader in a similar community and her knowledge of the Partnership, and given the urgency for filling the vacancy, the organization determined that the expedient appointment was worth any downsides related to reduced stakeholder participation.

107th Street’s leadership team in its first year with the Partnership also included an assistant principal (AP) who was a long-tenured member of the 107th Street team, as well as a literacy coordinator who transferred from the Partnership home office to work at 107th Street. This balanced support proved essential, as the school’s leadership team spent the final weeks of the summer working urgently to prepare for the school year.

“The instructional leadership team is a great way to inform teachers, and an efficient system of communication and leadership.”

—107th Street  
Teacher

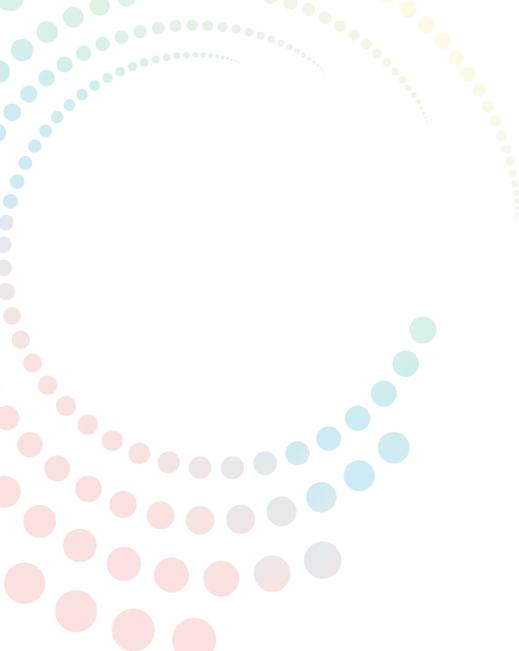


With this staff in place, the Partnership moved quickly to integrate 107th Street into the Partnership network and familiarize its leadership team with the practices expected of Partnership school leaders, including the intensive monthly professional development sessions provided to all Partnership school leaders. These sessions go beyond LA Unified’s program of professional development and encourage knowledge-sharing among Partnership school leaders working at the same level (i.e. elementary, middle, high). The Partnership also supported the leadership team with intensive coaching, with one Partnership director on average supporting five schools (in contrast to the district norm of one director for as many as 30 schools). In this way, the leaders of 107th Street would gain access to Partnership-wide tools and best practices.

In accordance with Partnership structures, the 107th Street leadership created a new instructional leadership team (ILT) that included administrators and teacher leaders participating in Partnership professional development. This team created a new strategic plan, outlining goals and strategies for the year in a way that was measurable, actionable, and responsive to changing needs. The instructional leadership team created committees responsible for discrete concerns at 107th Street, such as a school culture committee. But while the school leaders’ vision was to empower a culture of distributed leadership, in the first year this was largely aspirational, as the urgency and scope of change required more concentrated leadership. These demands strained the capacity of school leadership, limiting what could be accomplished in year one.

### Highly Effective Teaching

By any measure, it was clear to both the staff at 107th Street and the Partnership team that there was room for significant growth among the 107th Street teaching staff. Interviews indicated that teachers did not feel supported by the previous school leadership to improve their instruction, and fewer than 40% agreed that they had been



*“The Principal doesn’t micro-manage. She’s not afraid to have people do their jobs. It’s all about building capacity for her.”*

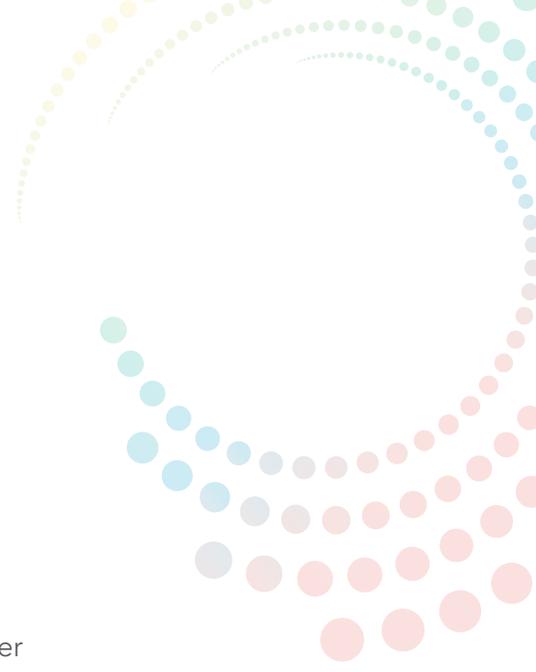
—107th Street  
Teacher

previously “prepared to teach to Common Core Standards.”<sup>8</sup> Improving instruction was therefore a major focus for the Partnership in year one, as staff organized to bring a variety of supports to 107th Street.

The Partnership’s supports for teachers are structured as a leadership development ladder that provides supports to educators at all stages of their career, from onboarding new teachers to empowering experienced teacher leaders to use their knowledge and expertise to develop their peers and in some cases supporting these teacher leaders through an administrator preparation pathway. Partnership staff implemented two full days of intensive professional development with 107th Street teachers before the start of the school year, and focused on introducing certain roles from within the leadership development ladder as the school year got under way.

While Partnership staff originally planned to introduce the leadership development ladder roles of “Peer Observers” and “Pioneers”, who would provide and receive specialized feedback to and from their fellow teachers to improve instruction, Partnership staff and the new principal ultimately decided to focus resources elsewhere. The Partnership was able to support the development of two “Common Core Leads” in year one – teachers who became experts on the Common Core Standards and learned to share this knowledge with their grade level colleagues as part of the school’s instructional leadership team.

107th Street also implemented new, more robust professional development cycles guided by the Partnership as a key mechanism for improving instruction. During weekly staff meetings, teachers participated in high-quality learning



experiences on, for example, school culture or math fluency. Teachers had time to plan lessons together in grade levels teams, and then conducted peer observations focused on the particular skills and methods they had planned for. Administrative observation followed this peer feedback, with 107th Street and Partnership leadership observing classrooms and sharing additional feedback with teachers. While instruction improved and teachers deeply appreciated this process, particularly peer observation, 107th Street and Partnership leadership felt that they could have implemented more structured observations to reinforce the learning.

Another area of schoolwide focus was literacy. As noted above, an experienced literacy coordinator transferred to 107th Street from the Partnership home office, and along with other trained teachers and intervention coordinators, she completed a major effort to conduct reading level assessments for each student. These results were shared directly with students and families in an attempt to leverage the various areas of the Partnership model together: engaged and informed parents would advocate for improved instruction and support their students at home. This was not a painless process, as parents whose children received A's were upset to learn their child was reading multiple grade levels behind, getting enough appropriately leveled books in each classroom was difficult, and conducting the student reading assessments was time consuming. Still, stakeholders were pleased with the attention to reading and SBAC results suggest that students are beginning to improve.

One important contributor to this improvement was the introduction of outside supports and improved technology. The Partnership deepened individual coaching of 107th Street teachers by bringing in literacy and math experts from the home office, starting in the summer. One major outcome was the adoption of Eureka Math, an alternate curriculum in place at other Partnership schools that is better aligned with Common Core state standards. Along with this improved curriculum and upgraded data collection programs, LA Unified also upgraded the school's technology. While 107th Street's technological



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“There is a greater focus on reading and math... and a greater expectation for students.”

—107th Street Parent

weaknesses previously hindered 21st century teaching and learning, the Local District purchased new computers for 107th Street and Partnership staff provided intensive technical and instructional support to utilize this technology effectively, helping teachers to guide students through blended learning instruction that increased their comfort using technology and improved literacy.

### Engaged & Empowered Communities

The Partnership views parents and families as more than simply volunteers at their schools – instead they are critical partners who have a unique ability to impact student outcomes. But when the Partnership arrived at 107th Street, only 54% of parents reported feeling like a partner in making decisions about their child’s education, while only 58% reported feeling welcome to participate at 107th Street, well below LA Unified averages of 74% and 87%.<sup>9</sup>

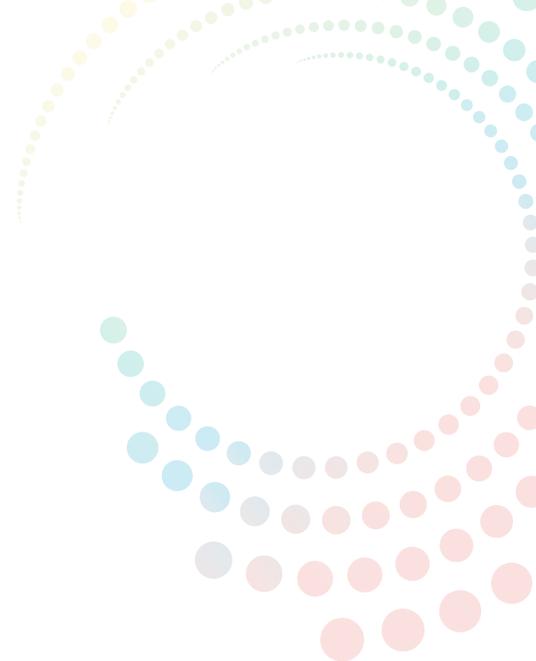
In order to reduce the tension and conflict that previously defined much of the school community, the Partnership focused on outreach to parents, an increased focus on restorative practices, and support from partners. The Partnership relocated the school’s Parent Center to the front of the campus to create a more hospitable environment for families, and brought in an experienced Community Representative as a 107th Street staff member to help connect parents, families, and partners. The new principal made a concerted

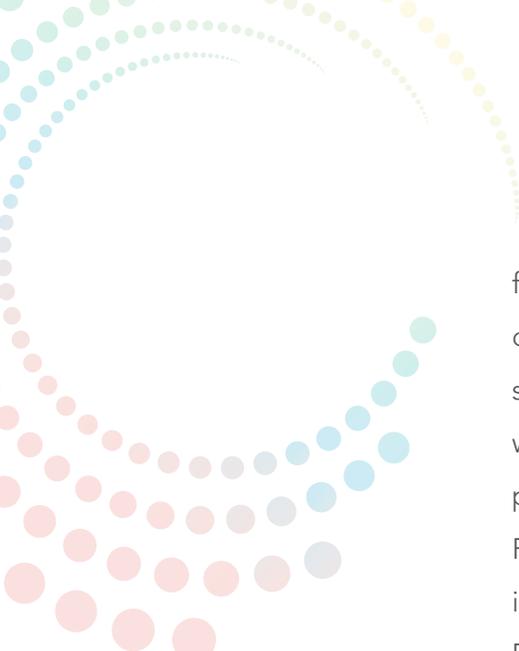


effort to welcome parents through formal structures such as a “Coffee with the Principal” program and a broader emphasis on listening to community concerns. This included a large push to get 107th Street parents to attend Parent College, an existing program in each community served by the Partnership, which delivers a robust curriculum of Saturday classes to train parents with the skills and tools to be advocates for their children’s education. 49 parents attended Parent College in the first year, including 18 parents who graduated Parent College based on attending four or more sessions.

In the month before the school year started, 107th Street and Partnership leadership focused on a plan for school behaviors during difficult times such as recess and passing periods, and Partnership staff supported trainings on restorative justice. The Partnership also brought in PlayWorks, an external partner that helps provide structure and social-emotional skill development during recess. These additional resources, training and attention improved campus culture and safety, but behavior remained a major challenge throughout the year. The depth of the need and trauma taxing students at 107th Street meant that behavioral issues on campus required constant attention from school leadership, and there were significant setbacks throughout the first year.

Another major initiative the Partnership led to make the school more welcoming was an upgrade to facilities and a broad effort to beautify the campus. As mentioned earlier, LA Unified covered some facilities costs when 107th Street joined the Partnership network. These upgrades served mainly to get the campus back to a





“More staff are focused and not using their phones. Teachers are running to open the classroom and be on time. Leading by example motivates students.”

—107th Street Parent

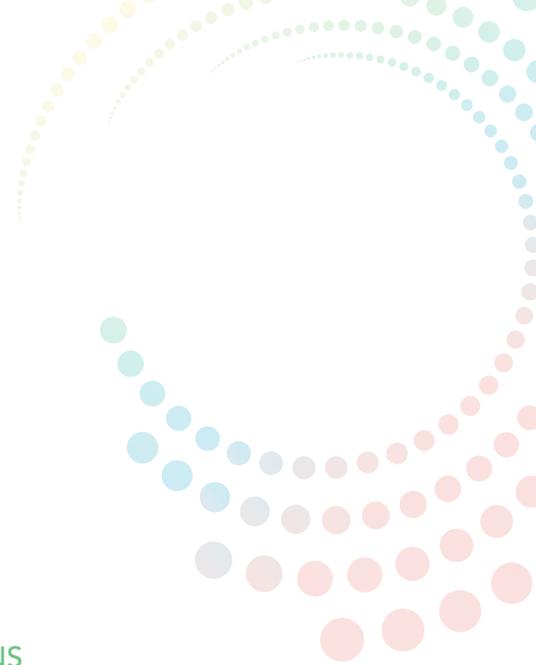
functioning state – in 2013-14, the most recent year with available data, only 13% of 107th Street students felt the bathrooms at their school were clean and only 37% felt the cafeteria and lunch areas were clean, both well below LA Unified averages.<sup>10</sup> These data points only confirmed the state of the campus as observed by Partnership staff, which was generally unclean and faced sewage issues, animals on campus, and dilapidated classroom buildings. The District helped take care of these needs, blocking off unsafe areas, deep-cleaning bathrooms, emptying gutters, and repairing old roofs. The Partnership also brought in additional external partners to help tackle the task of physically transforming the school, such as a service day that utilized some 350 volunteers, including the entire Los Angeles corps of City Year. Along with additional service days from the Mission Continues and other partners, this work made the campus much more inviting, bringing new murals across the playground, newly organized classrooms, and cleaned common areas and storage spaces.

## OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES

### Year 1

In the Wallace Foundation’s ‘School Turnaround Field Guide’, practitioners define a timeline to success as ‘two to four years, with improvements in student performance starting by the second or third year’.<sup>11</sup> In many ways, 107th Street’s transformational first year in the Partnership network exceeded these expectations, as supported by quantitative data and interviews with school and Partnership staff. By the end of year one, the percentage of 107th Street teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing that their school was headed in the right direction had jumped from 17% to 80%, parents felt more engaged, and the school showed increases on math and literacy assessments.<sup>12</sup>

*...practitioners define a timeline to success as 'two to four years, with improvements in student performance starting by the second or third year'. In many ways, 107th Street's transformational first year in the Partnership network exceeded these expectations...*



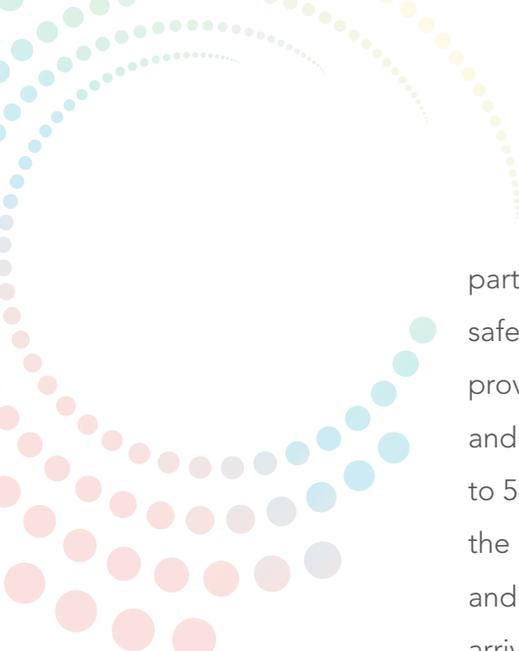
### SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT (SBAC) ELA AND MATH GAINS

	2015	2016
ELA Met or Exceeded	11%	17%
ELA Nearly Met	17%	16%
ELA Not Met	72%	67%

	2015	2016
Math Met or Exceeded	7%	8%
ELA Nearly Met	20%	23%
ELA Not Met	72%	68%

While SBAC gains from 2015 to 2016 are undoubtedly modest relative to the growth that's needed, they are a marked break from the stagnation the school experienced in the past. From 2010-11 to 2012-13, the final year of California's Academic Performance Index (API), the school's API had dropped from 686 to 670. The stabilization at 107th Street in year one set the stage for further growth, as shown by the movement of students from the lowest performance bands, and was felt across campus by diverse stakeholders.

While bringing in a new principal without a thorough search caused some tension among 107th Street staff, it's clear that her leadership alongside her AP's experience and guidance transformed the campus in valuable ways. The percentage of staff agreeing or strongly agreeing that decisions are made based on students need and interests jumped from 43% to 78%, and parents in



particular felt the change. The percentage that agreed their child was safe on school grounds jumped from 51% to 90%, that 107th Street provides high quality instruction to their child went from 62% to 93%, and 92% of parents felt welcome to participate on campus, compared to 58% the year before. Staff also felt more welcome at 107th Street by the end of year one, with 64% agreeing that the school is a supportive and inviting place to work, compared to 28% before the Partnership arrived.<sup>13</sup> While many of these performance indicators still need significant growth, and still place 107th Street below other extremely high-needs schools, they reveal that the stagnation and decline of previous years was halted in year one, with the Partnership and school leadership setting the stage for further growth to come.

## LESSONS

Looking back on 107th Street's first year with the Partnership, multiple lessons emerge that can guide future transformation initiatives, both within the LA Unified context and more broadly for high-need schools.

### Lesson 1: Lead Time is Overrated

The short transition time of 107th Street into the Partnership network (one month before the start of the school year) in many ways defined the experience of the first year. Nearly everyone interviewed for this report said they wished there had been more time to plan and prepare the transition. Partnership, district and school staff were all forced to make hard choices with imperfect information and planning time, and if the first year could be replayed in a more controlled setting, certain missteps could have been avoided.

Nevertheless, one of the standout lessons of the first year at 107th Street is that substantial impact can still be achieved even without extensive planning and controlled conditions. The Partnership's work at 107th Street was not neatly scripted and was forced to adapt to



rapidly shifting circumstances, but it nonetheless made a real difference for over 900 students at a struggling school. While it is easy to conclude that real impact can only be made under very specific ideal conditions, these are nearly impossible to find in the contexts within which most high-need students can be served. The Partnership's work at 107th Street shows what is possible when stakeholders are willing to commit to transformation.

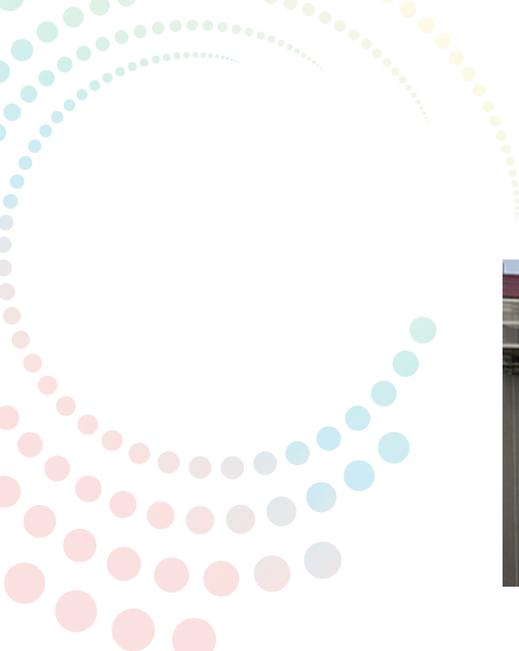
## Lesson 2: School Leaders Set the Stage

While 107th Street benefited from various new supports provided by the Partnership, year one showed that leadership is key, and strong leaders are essential for successful school transformation. The new principal of 107th Street did not have the opportunity to plan for months, select her own teaching staff or to train all staff before the school year began. What she did do was assemble a strong leadership team – including a seasoned Assistant Principal already at 107th Street and new leaders familiar with the Partnership – to build a shared vision of high expectations, mutual respect and urgency to serve the students of 107th street as well as possible with the resources at hand.

Staff, parents and students felt the difference from day one and largely stepped up to contribute to this new vision for the school. A few examples illustrate this point: District operations prioritized multiple 107th Street facilities revitalization projects that had dated back years, responding to the urgency of the school's shared vision. Teachers began collaborating in grade level teams to plan lessons and share feedback with each other based on common professional development goals. Parent volunteers built a leveled library so that all students could access books appropriate to their reading level. Students learned their reading levels and got excited about setting goals to improve. Each of these examples were made possible by the culture and shared vision the principal established.

## Lesson 3: Data is the Basis for a Shared Vision

Partnership and 107th Street leadership invested significant time early in year one to make data a priority; conducting one-on-one reading assessments with every student took months of staff time. But having the data shifted the whole culture of the school – the process became a way to



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unify everyone (students, staff, and parents) around a shared vision for teaching and learning. Instead of intervention teachers shouldering the load of students behind grade level, these needs became something that everyone could contribute to, including parents and students. One of the main regrets of 107th Street’s principal is not completing the reading assessments sooner, so they could have acted on this information through the fall.

Data also serves as a foundation for utilizing technology, intervention programs and libraries more effectively. Students’ time in the computer lab and with intervention teachers was differentiated based on their reading level, and teachers learned to use software programs and teaching methods that adapt to meet the particular needs of students. Leveled libraries allowed families to access books that met the specific needs of their children, which changed throughout the course of the year.

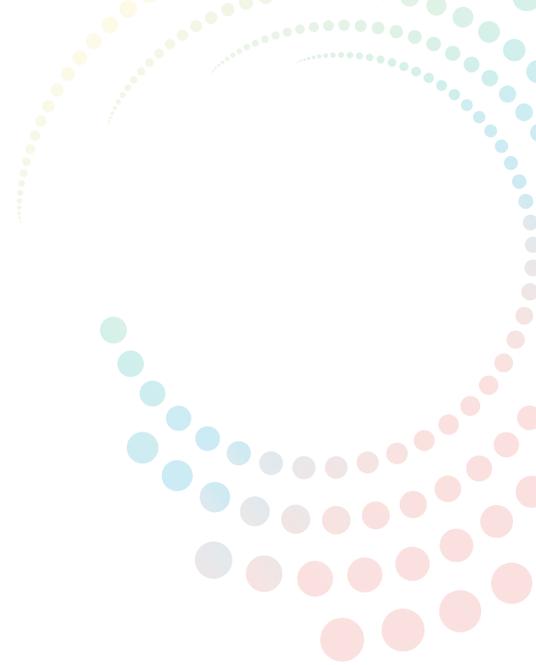
#### Lesson 4: Visible Early Wins Sustain the Change

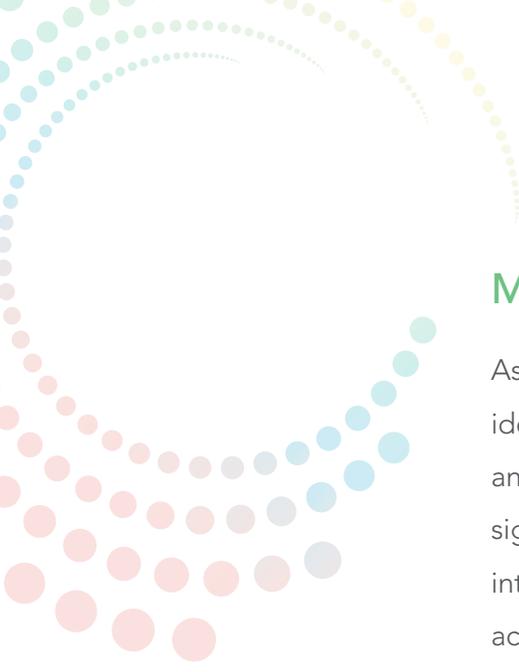
While vision and leadership are essential, the first year at 107th Street also underlines the importance of visible early wins that make a tangible difference to key stakeholders. An early needs assessment revealed important gaps around facilities, playground supervision and technology. Responding to these needs quickly and visibly helped



staff, parents and students see and feel that change was happening. For example, the service day leveraging multiple partner organizations made the campus significantly more attractive, with cleaner facilities and bright new murals. This helped spur greater ownership among staff, parents and students for the ongoing maintenance and cleanliness of the facilities. Another example is the front office, which received a newly painted interior and new blinds to feel more friendly. This in turn helped front office staff be more welcoming to parents who needed their help. In parent reflections at the end of the year, tangible supports like the new computer lab and cleaner facilities clearly stood out. There were also missed opportunities. The Partnership could have done more to visibly support teachers, for example with laptops for teachers. For teachers grappling with major changes, small supports can make a substantial difference.

The role of philanthropy is important for supporting these early wins. School site budgets are stretched and relatively inflexible, which limits what schools can do themselves. For example, Partnership resources were used to buy the paint, cleaning supplies and plants for the front office makeover, all of which was pulled together over one weekend. Using school dollars for this project would have been much more difficult, expensive and time-consuming. It was also possible to connect donors with particular interests to needs of 107th Street. One foundation that is a major supporter of the Partnership helped support leveled libraries at 107th Street. Another individual donor invested in computers for students. Donors were eager to contribute to this new campus, and the 107th Street community felt the effects of this support throughout the year.





## MOVING INTO YEAR TWO

As 107th Street enters year two with the Partnership, leadership has identified multiple areas of focus to continue the progress of year one and address unmet school needs. Although 107th Street has seen significant growth, absolute performance remains low, and the school intends to deepen its work with teachers, parents and partners to accelerate progress.

Key priorities for the school in year two include:

- Deeper professional development cycles with an increased focus on math and science
- Growing the number of teacher leaders
- Building foundational literacy skills, supported by LA Unified's Early Literacy and Language Program for K-2 students
- Identifying focus students in every classroom and implementing a strong intervention program for struggling students
- Reducing chronic absenteeism

These priorities will be supported by continued Partnership investments in coaching, professional development, teacher leadership, family and community engagement, and coordination with LA Unified and community partners.

With strong leadership from administrators and teachers, engaged parents and partners, and a shared vision for teaching and learning, Partnership and 107th Street staff believe that these next steps will continue to propel the school forward, building on the transformation of year one and the reflections of those involved.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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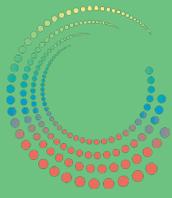
Thank you to Sheri and Les Biller Foundation for your generous support of this project. Special thanks to Colleen Oliver, for sharing your time, observations and insights from your support of 107th Street.

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# PARTNERSHIP FOR LOS ANGELES SCHOOLS

20th Street Elementary School • 99th Street Elementary School • 107th Street Elementary School • Carver Middle School • Figueroa Elementary School • Grape Street Elementary School • Florence Griffith Joyner Elementary School • Hollenbeck Middle School • Huerta Elementary School • Jordan High School • Markham Middle School • Math, Science & Technology Magnet Academy at Roosevelt • Mendez High School • Ritter Elementary School • Roosevelt Senior High School Santee Education Complex • Stevenson Middle School • Sunrise Elementary School

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