

Around AUSL

VOLUME III

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Three New AUSL Turnaround Schools Under Way

AUSL began another school year with three new turnaround schools: Johnson School of Excellence (North Lawndale), Dulles School of Excellence (Greater Grand Crossing) and Bethune School of Excellence (East Garfield Park). The addition of these schools brings AUSL's total to 14 and almost 8,000 students.



Students line up for class.

The first day of school is always full of anticipation and curiosity. At Bethune parents watched their youngest children line up in the gym while teachers placed them with their new classes. Parents marveled at the clean and newly painted classrooms. They were even more impressed with the way the new administrations were treating their children.

Within two weeks of school, parents at Dulles were lining up with their children for entrance, raising their hands like the faculty and staff to request quiet before entering the building. Many parents of

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AUSL and NLU Win Teacher Quality Partnership Grant

AUSL and university partner, National-Louis University were among 28 awardees of the Department of Education's Teacher Quality Partnership grant. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, called out the success of the AUSL/NLU program during a major speech on teacher preparation: "In Chicago, I was lucky to work with the Academy for Urban School Leadership, one of the nation's top residency pro-

grams."

This award is a great stride forward and AUSL is proud of the trust the DOE has placed in us. However, we still need the help of others. The TQP grant includes requirements that we match through private fund-raising the federal funds provided by the DOE. As such, AUSL still needs to raise almost \$30 million over the next five years to leverage this investment.



The TQP grant will allow us to train more residents like Uriah Rice, class of 2010. Uriah is a graduate of North Park University with a major in Biology. He's looking forward to becoming a science teacher at a turnaround high school next year.

AUSL's Mission

Our mission is to improve student achievement in Chicago's chronically failing schools through our disciplined transformation process, built on a foundation of specially trained AUSL teachers.



Academy
for Urban
School
Leadership

Visit our website
www.ausl-chicago.org.

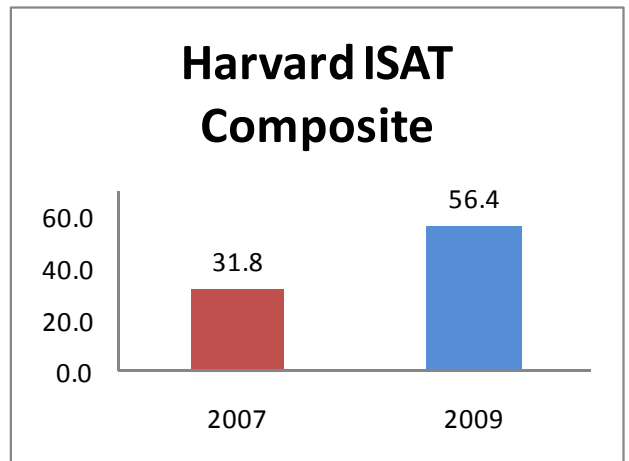
“Instead of helping kids beat the odds, why don’t we just change the odds?”
 -Geoffrey Canada
 Founder of Harlem Children’s Zone

Three of Four AUSL Elementary Schools Break 50

Turning around chronically failing schools does not happen overnight. In some cases these schools were failing when the parents of current students attended them. This spring, three of AUSL’s four elementary turnaround schools broke the 50% barrier* on the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) for the first time in almost a decade. Harvard School of Excellence led the way improving from 31.8% to 56.4% of students meeting or exceeding the state standard in just two years.

Harvard also made incredible gains on the Chicago Public School “Value Add” score. This score indicates how the school is impacting students’ yearly academic growth compared to similar students. Harvard’s score of 6.1 was one of the highest in the district.

* Percent of students meeting or exceeding state standard.



AUSL Awarded AmeriCorps Grant

A new AmeriCorps grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service offers 28 AUSL secondary residents the opportunity to earn a \$4,725 Education Award that can be used to pay qualified student loans or future tuition at a qualified institution of higher education. This grant supports residents’ service at an AUSL network school while training to become a new teacher.



AUSL’s AmeriCorps Members at National Service Recognition Day in Springfield, IL on October 15.

Often described as the “domestic Peace Corps,” AmeriCorps is a national service program, involving all Americans to “get things done” in their communities by addressing needs in education, human service, the environment, public health, or public safety.

Serve Illinois oversees 31 programs and engages more than 700 AmeriCorps members across the state. The mission of the Commission is to improve Illinois communities by supporting and enhancing volunteerism and community service.

Disney and Southwest Spruce up Bethune with Chicago Cares

Thanks to Chicago Cares who put together a volunteer corps of over 200 people to spend a day of service at Bethune School of Excellence in East Garfield Park on September 29. Volunteers arrived at 6 a.m. and worked non-stop until noon. They built and painted benches, created a mural in the gym, painted the cafeteria, and built an outdoor classroom.

Bethune is one of AUSL's new turnaround schools. While the summer construction improved the school significantly, the Chicago Cares volunteers added a little human touch. The benches built and painted by the volunteers now brighten the hallway with color. The gym



mural replaces a drab stage and reminds the students that they are all Bethune Bears. Of course the highlight of the day was a visit from Mickey and Minnie Mouse!

Thanks to Chicago Cares, the Disney Company and Southwest Airlines for giving back to the children of Chicago.

AUSL Looks to Build New Field at Howe

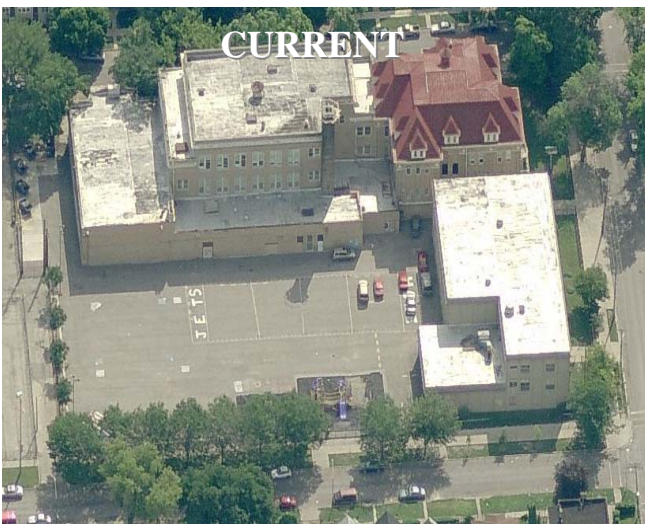
AUSL turnaround schools tend to be in some of the highest poverty neighborhoods in Chicago. There is a dearth of park space, safe play grounds and sports fields in these neighborhoods. Children often play in the gym or in empty lots. Off of school property they face a host of dangers from drugs to gangs.

Last year AUSL raised \$2.6 million to replace the muddy field at Orr Academy High School with a new all-weather, regulation sized track and field. This year AUSL is hoping to build a field at the Howe School of Excellence. There are no parks near Howe. The football team practices on concrete.

According to Don Feinstein, executive director of AUSL, the field will make a big difference in lives of Howe students and the community. The field will be used for school recess as well as Howe's athletic teams, including soccer and tackle football. Area youth teams will also be able to use the field. In all, at least 2,000 students will use the new field.

"It's amazing what green space does for children. They will have a safe place to play... thanks to this project."

-Don Feinstein



Chicago Bears Help Celebrate New Orr Field

On September 5, the Orr Academy High School Spartans played their first home game in over a year. The old “field,” little more than a mud pit, was replaced last fall with an all-weather artificial turf field and track courtesy of some very generous donors, the City of Chicago and the Chicago Park District. Thanks to these generous donors for making this project possible:

- Rauner Family Foundation \$600,000
- Pritzker Foundation \$500,000
- NFL Grassroots and Chicago LISC \$200,000
- Brian and Kelly Swette \$100,000
- Mike and Lindy Keiser \$100,000



Israel Idonije (#71) and Patrick McCaskey of the Chicago Bears joined the celebration of the new field and made it even sweeter by donating another \$30,000 to the AUSL elementary football program.



Israel Idonije then fired up the Orr Spartans to return the opening kickoff for a touchdown.

AUSL Adds Art and Music to Turnaround Schools

Music teachers and art teachers will now be a part of every new AUSL turnaround school. Teachers like Christopher Cvangros at Johnson make a significant impact to the school culture when they are a part of the permanent school staff. While after-school music and art programs may influence 20-30 students who volunteer for the program, programs that are a part of the regular school day can influence up to 600 students.



4th graders sing the Johnson song under the direction of Christopher Cvangros, music teacher and Johnson song composer.

AUSL’s music and art teachers will transform the options available to AUSL students, giving hundreds of students music and art classes that they would otherwise not have access to.

AUSL now manages 14 schools on the south and west sides of Chicago, serving almost 8,000 students.

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AUSL students were frustrated that they had no other options for their children before the turnaround. As soon as they saw that the new school administration put their children’s safety and education ahead of all other issues, they became champions of the turnaround.

