OUR ANNUAL LETTER

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we begin a new decade and AUSL’s 19th year of service to quality public education in Chicago, we pause for a moment of reflection and gratitude for all of the partners and supporters who make this work possible.

Since our 2001 inception, AUSL has worked tirelessly to deliver on the promise that all students have access to an excellent education, right in their neighborhoods. Previously, many of our thirty-one public, neighborhood schools were the lowest-performing in the district. Now, our students have access to a positive climate for learning, rigorous academics, and passionate teachers who care for their educational, social, and emotional needs.

This year marked a significant milestone in our work. We are now deepening our educator learning trajectory and enhancing the model that made us impactful – teacher and leader professional development, mentorship, and leadership pathways. To expand our reach, AUSL’s Advisory Team spreads and refines this work to improve districts across the nation. With this emphasis on educator development, we also renewed focus on supporting the ‘whole child,’ including a holistic approach focused on safety, after-school programs, and social/emotional learning.

Our 2019 Annual Report tells the story of our impact and highlights the individuals who made this progress possible. We are deeply grateful to the partners that enhance our school community and the donors who enable us to do this work. Looking to the year ahead, we are excited to see the continued impact of the work we do together.

On behalf of AUSL’s Board of Directors, we thank you for your continued commitment to our schools and students.

Sincerely,

Mike Zafirovski
Acting Chairman, AUSL
Founder and President,
The Zaf Group

Donald Feinstein, Ph.D.
Executive Director
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The School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) is the Board of Education’s policy for evaluating school performance. It establishes the indicators of school performance and growth and the benchmarks against which a school’s success will be evaluated on an annual basis.

CPS uses this five-tiered performance based system to assign each school a School Rating and Accountability Status. The chart below shows how AUSL schools performed in SY 19.

68% AUSL Schools Were Rated Good Standing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Levels 2+, 1, 1+ Good Standing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morton</td>
<td>Dewey</td>
<td>NTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dulles</td>
<td>Bradwell</td>
<td>Sherman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Howe</td>
<td>Chalmers</td>
<td>Casals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Keeffe</td>
<td>Herzl</td>
<td>Solorio HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>Piccolo</td>
<td>CAHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard</td>
<td>Carter</td>
<td>Stagg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collins HS</td>
<td>Gresham</td>
<td>Marquette</td>
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<td>Phillips HS</td>
<td>McNair</td>
<td>Lewis</td>
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<td>Curtis</td>
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<td>TCA</td>
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Level 3 (<2.0) | Level 2 (2.0 to 2.9) | Level 2+ (3.0 to 3.4) | Level 1 (3.5 to 3.9) | Level 1+ (4.0+)
AUSL’s public-private partnership with Chicago Public Schools demonstrates an innovative model for urban education reform that is proving effective in revitalizing low-performing schools.

Longitudinal studies of children growing up in high-needs areas, like the neighborhoods AUSL schools are located, consistently reveal that these students are at a high risk of educational underachievement as early as first grade. AUSL raises substantial funding from foundations, corporations, government agencies, and committed individuals to provide our students with extra support structures above and beyond the resources CPS provides for general school operating budgets. These services range from teacher coaches to afterschool programming and everything in between.

### Fiscal Year 2019 Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Network Schools</td>
<td>$2,103,632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago Teacher Residency</td>
<td>$4,935,833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Educational Services*</td>
<td>$2,444,778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Curricular Enhancements</td>
<td>$2,179,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; Financial Development</td>
<td>$2,303,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$13,967,264</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Network Educational Services includes coaching, professional learning, performance management and advisory services.*
AUSL ANNUAL BENEFIT DINNER

On November 7, 2019 AUSL hosted our Annual Benefit Dinner. The theme was Soaring to New Heights. The evening was co-chaired by Brian and Nan Doyal, and David and Liz Chandler. It was a historic evening of fundraising for AUSL, thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and partners.

In keeping with the evening’s theme we heard an inspiring story from Orrian Arnold, Casals School of Excellence Alumnus and current Northwestern University student. Orrian spoke of how the support of Principal Kristie Langbehn and the opportunities AUSL provided him set him on a path to excellence, culminating in his successful matriculation to Northwestern University as an engineering major.
Left: CTR Award Recipient Mauricia Estes, Assistant Principal Carter School of Excellence. Right: The Solario Advanced Choir

Left: Greta, Peri, and Kevin Warren Middle: Principals Matt Sullivan and Jessica Resiner and Mike Zafirovski Right: Robi Zafirovski and Bernice Billups.

Other highlights of the evening included:
• CTR Award - Mauricia Estes was honored with AUSL’s first Chicago Teacher Residency Award. The CTR award recognizes teachers who truly espouse the values of AUSL. Ms. Estes, now Assistant Principal at Carter School of Excellence, credits her skill and efficacy as a teacher to the time and resources that AUSL invested in her.

• AUSL honored The Boeing Company for their enduring partnership and commitment to STEM education. Thanks to Boeing, AUSL has provided thousands of our students with STEM programming, preparing them for educational and career opportunities. Boeing made a special announcement that they would match all gifts made at the benefit, and an incredible commitment to install FUSE Lab in each of our 31 schools.
DONOR PROFILE: ROBERT AND EMILY KING


Robert “Bob” and Emily “Emmy” King are friends of AUSL. They are generous and earnest benefactors who believe that all children, given a chance, can achieve at high levels and should be given that opportunity. When Mike Koldyke took them to see the first “turnaround” school that AUSL was taking on in 2006, the Sherman School in Englewood, it was clear to them that the conditions existing there were not compatible with the word “education”. It was at Sherman that Bob and Emmy watched AUSL get to work.

They had the opportunity to visit Sherman during its makeover and were blown away by the quick and efficient results. From that moment, they were inspired and committed to supporting AUSL. Bob said “One of the things I liked was the model. It was simple and straightforward, it was repeatable, scalable, and measurable... and at the core, it’s the teacher in front of the classroom that makes everything else work.” Executive Director Don Feinstein, Ph.D. says “We are blessed to have individuals like them who want to be part of our mission, and want to walk the path with you.”

Since AUSL’s founding in 2001, Bob has served on AUSL’s board of directors. The Kings’ philanthropic support has been game-changing for AUSL. In 2009, the AUSL team sought to provide more ways for students in our high school network to also earn college credits. Through Bob’s involvement with Rasmussen College, a new partnership developed to support AUSL network students. With the collaboration of Chicago Public Schools, Rasmussen College and AUSL were able to create two programs - Dual Credit Coursework and a Health Science Certificate pathway. Today, the partnership now includes Collegis Education, which manages the technical support and technology infrastructure of the program and has served hundreds of students since 2009.

“
This is an esteemed organization, we do great things for kids.

We are going to continue supporting AUSL, after all these many years. Because we believe in it.

— Robert and Emily King
Solorio Academy High School, an AUSL network school located in the Gage Park neighborhood of Chicago, has participated in these programs since 2014. In 2017, Rasmussen College opened a new Learning Center, Centro de Aprendizaje, located just blocks away from Solorio. Centro de Aprendizaje provides high school students and adult learners with on-site resources— including bilingual staff, convenient study and meeting spaces, access to computers and internet, and academic coaching and financial advising. Assistant Principal Rosa Jimenez says of the program, “The majority of our students come to us from low-income families. We do obviously serve a pretty big group of students who are undocumented. Rasmussen has given them the opportunity to graduate from Solorio with college credit that is transferable.”

Bob and Emmy continue to spur transformative change in urban education. AUSL received more than $1 million from the Kings to accelerate the expansion of AUSL’s Advisory Services program. Leveraging the knowledge and experience of our work in Chicago, AUSL provides Advisory Services to school districts across the country to further its impact on public education. Services are tailored to meet each client’s needs and include offerings such as targeted improvement support, talent pipeline development, and comprehensive school support services.

Through the years, the Kings have stood behind AUSL with their time, talent, and treasure because they believed in what AUSL stood for, and the power of AUSL’s leadership. They have witnessed the change that AUSL can have on a community, and they have become the change that they wanted to see in education. Their generosity and leadership aided AUSL in its mission and vision, and their faith in our organization inspires us to do even more to bring equitable education to children; to give them the chance to achieve at high levels to better their future.

“One of the things I liked was the model. It was simple and straightforward, it was repeatable, scalable, and measurable.... And at the core, it’s the teacher in front of the classroom that makes everything else that we do work.
The following is an open letter from Marina Chestnut-Jefferson, parent at Lewis School of Excellence.

My name is Marina Chestnut-Jefferson and my children have been attending Leslie Lewis since the beginning of the 2016 school year.

When I first moved into the neighborhood, my goal was to find a school where not only my children felt comfortable, but I did as well. I went to two other schools before I went into Lewis.

The administration staff was nothing short of amazing! The entire enrollment process was a breeze. They made me feel like I was making the right decision by placing my children in school at Lewis.

Although I worked a full-time job, I made time to be involved. I, alongside my husband, got familiar with all the teachers and began to create working relationships with them to ensure our children's success.

In the 2017-18 school year, we needed to rely on the resources of the school. My youngest son, who was eight years old, was having a really hard time behaving and following directions in class. He was often a class clown but sometimes he'd let his anger get the best of him. The ESP staff were a huge help. They not only worked with my husband and I on an action plan for my son, but they also went above and beyond sometimes, trying to solve whatever the situation was before calling one of us. I was so grateful for that because we worked the third shift.

When the new AUSL coach came on board, she and I became close, working to solve whatever I needed help with. I volunteered more and more at the school because of the school's openness and willingness to give parents the resources they needed so everyone could work together. Along with the principal, who's so amazing by the way, the staff, administration and ESP, I'm glad to say that I'm part of the atmosphere that is Lewis School of Excellence.

Lewis gave us the resources we needed to get the help my son needed. Lewis gave me a sense of pride and security. Lewis gave me a place to be proud of when I say my children attend there. I'm glad to be part of such an amazing school.

— Marina Chestnut-Jefferson, parent at Lewis School of Excellence
The following is an open letter from Yanilka Muriel, parent at Lewis School of Excellence.

My name is Yanilka, and I have 4 kids that attend the Lewis School of Excellence. I am so grateful for Lewis. They have done so much for me and my family. I’ve gone through some hard times, and Lewis has been there to support me and my kids through them all.

I went through a really tough time a couple years ago, where I didn’t even know where me and my kids were going to lay our heads. Lewis provided resources to help my kids continue to go to school there. They provided resources that helped me to find housing and other supports. They provided bus cards, coats, school uniforms, and school supplies. Without that stuff, my kids wouldn’t have had a successful year.

Recently, my family experienced several losses that were really difficult for us. My kids were so upset that they didn’t even want to leave the house. Lewis provided a counseling resource to help my kids deal with their grief. They are currently getting counseling from Catholic Charities thanks to Lewis. They are back in school and doing much better.

With the loss, I was in need of some legal resources to help me with custody issues. Lewis helped me get in touch with a place that is giving me free legal aid to help with my case. Any time I need something, Lewis is there helping every step of the way.

My kids have gotten so much better since attending Lewis. My oldest went from getting D’s at her former school to getting straight A’s at Lewis. She is currently the president of Student Council and a member of the Peace Ambassadors. My other children have gone from C’s and D’s to B’s, and C’s. One of my boys was having difficulty with his work. He was getting frustrated at his former school. Lewis helped my son get an IEP, which helped him so much. My kids are happy and have grown so much since being at Lewis. I can’t say enough good things about the school.

The best thing about the Lewis School of Excellence is the relationships that I have with staff. The staff keeps me informed about what is going on with my kids. I know the staff cares about my kids.
PARTNERSHIPS

AUSL recognises that developing and learning do not begin and end when children walk through the doors of the school. AUSL establishes partnerships with many community-based organizations and local agencies that provide vital in-school and out-of-school services to our students.

AUSL’s partnership with TFA creates school-based leadership experiences among early-career professionals. The TFA/AUSL Leadership Program exposes teachers to leadership opportunities such as coaching new teachers and facilitating culture meetings. This program is part of AUSL’s larger professional learning trajectory, which ensures our educators continuously learn and access pathways to leadership, a key factor in retaining high-quality educators.

City Year ensures our students stay on track to graduate, with a focus on core grades and attendance. Each year, City Year corps members provide school-based tutoring and mentorship at fourteen AUSL schools. Their work positively impacts the success of hundreds of students in grades 4th - 9th. Members also reliably engage in classroom and school functions, providing support to the school culture and climate.

In partnership with LEAP Innovations, a cohort of AUSL schools are on a journey to reimagine school. Personalized Learning helps students build confidence, self-awareness, and the decision-making skills they will need as adults.

With LEAP’s framework and training, you can see the transformed practices at our two pilot schools, Stagg and Lewis Schools of Excellence. AUSL students can now make informed choices that suit their learning style, from small group instruction to personalized Edtech pathways, and demonstrate mastery at their own pace. As success mounts, AUSL will engage other elementary sites in the network to bring the practice to scale.

“Personalized learning is about building productive members of society. Students are learning how to work by themselves and engage with other students. They are given the autonomy to advocate for themselves.”

— Ms. Ashley Jarrell, Teacher at Stagg School of Excellence
PARTNERSHIPS

From tutoring to fine arts programming, AUSL’s partners offer our students an incredible range of life experiences.

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100K in 10  
Arts Alliance of Illinois  
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Compass  
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Department of Education  
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National Teachers Network  
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Playmakers  
Princess Within Foundation  
Safe Haven  
Safe Passage  
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SGA Youth and Family Services  
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Success Bound  
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