



CROSS & JOFTUS

Hello colleagues and partners,

We are excited to announce a new partnership between Cross & Joftus and Los Angeles area charter schools to improve the quality of services and systems that support special needs students in our schools. Cross & Joftus has been awarded a grant through the use of LAUSD's ARRA funds for special education to address this issue in conjunction with the LAUSD charter schools. This letter is to introduce you to this team and ask for your active participation.

Our mutual goal is to examine the data, to determine which current sets of services are effective, to understand which services are not, and to develop with the Charter community a set of services designed to meet the needs of students with disabilities and Charter Schools alike. As I'm sure you'd agree, it is critical in this effort that services not currently in place be developed and implemented to provide a comprehensive set of services for students with disabilities, including those students with more extensive needs. This is not being done solely as a federal or state compliance issue, but to ensure that all of our students receive the best educational opportunities we can offer. It is why many of us committed to the charter movement and it will assure that we are models in how we serve our special needs students. We look forward to learning from you what additional assistance we can provide to support the impact of your future work on increased gains in student achievement.

This project--led by myself, Alice Parker (a former Assistant Superintendent of Special Education for the California Department of Education and Aspire Public Schools' former Executive Director of Innovation and Dissemination for Special Education) with seasoned data, education and charter school professionals--will provide a needs assessment; recommendations for the creation of meaningful data systems; recommendations with implementation and training support for best practices and new approaches; and support for the creation of extended school year options. As colleagues pioneering education reform in the charter school movement, we couldn't ask for stronger partners to ensure our services to students are not only aligned and data driven but excel.

The Cross & Joftus team will focus on building the infrastructure needed in order to serve increased numbers of students with special needs in our charter schools. This will include support for:

- Pre-identification intervention/ Response to Intervention (RtI)
- Continuum of services to support students with Autism
- Continuum of services to support students with behavior/emotional challenges
- Broad scale training and professional development
- Planning for and establishing dedicated special education classrooms and cutting edge programs

CHRISTOPHER T. CROSS

CHAIRMAN

109 SUNHAVEN ROAD

DANVILLE, CA 94506

CHRIS@EDSTRATEGIES.NET

OFFICE: 925.314.1863

CELL: 925.683.4877

SHARON DEICH

VICE PRESIDENT

3807 N. DITTMAR ROAD

ARLINGTON, VA 22207

SHARON@EDSTRATEGIES.NET

OFFICE: 703.534.6486

CELL: 703.965.8511

SCOTT JOFTUS, ED.D.

PRESIDENT

8610 RIDGE ROAD

BETHESDA, MD 20817

SCOTT@EDSTRATEGIES.NET

OFFICE: 301.229.3049

CELL: 301.524.2603

- Data collection
- Assessments (needs assessment and recommendations for improvement and implementation)
- Extended school year options for 2010-2011.

To kick us off, we will begin conversations, focus groups, interviews, and surveys in January. We will partner with the Los Angeles Charter School community in this endeavor to ensure that not only do they have the major voice in the process and recommendations, but also to ensure this is a seamless, integrated process. We will ask current school level staff to actively engage in the process. In late spring, a report of findings, recommendations and an action plan will be provided to the Stakeholders as well as all members of the Charter Community and the district. Additionally, flowing from these recommendations and actions will be training, model implementation, and support across the areas enumerated above. If you are interested in serving or nominating a member of the charter school community, please feel free to contact me at alice@edstrategies.net and our Project Manager, Nancy Taylor nancy@edstrategies.net.

As a school and charter community leader, we ask for your support and staff availability to determine set dates to participate in February and March school visits, as it works best for your campus. **Your openness to preset visits in February or March and sharing of your best calendar availability will mean a great deal to accomplish this work.**

We look forward to the coming months of this work together and to building a better range of tools and services for our schools and movement. This is clearly cutting edge work amongst charter schools in the nation and your participation in this endeavor will write the book for charters across the country.

Sincerely,



Alice Parker
Senior Associate
Cross & Joftus

