



Academia de Lenguaje y Bellas Artes
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August 16, 2018

Dear Ms. Bridget Schock, Charter School Program Manager II,

ALBA School is intending to renew its five year contract with the Milwaukee Public Schools District due to success of our educational program. ALBA School is seeking to continue as an instrumentality charter school of the district.

The contact person for this process will be Brenda Martinez, Lead Teacher.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda Martinez".

Brenda Martinez ABD
Lead Teacher

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cristiana Salazar".

Cristiana Salazar
SGC President

**Academia de Lenguaje y Bellas Artes
Charter Contract Renewal September 2018**

Educational Performance

1. Provide a description of how the school has been faithful in implementing its educational program outlined in the charter proposal (Appendix A).

ALBA School has maintained faithfulness to the educational program outlined in its charter proposal and subsequent addendums. There are four primary constructs of the ALBA educational program: teacher led school administration, developmental bilingual program which advances the acquisition of English language proficiency, fine arts drawing upon traditional cultural art forms, and active parental involvement.

Although the teacher led schools movement has diminished in MPS over the past years, ALBA School faculty and parents continue to esteem and support this model of administration. Parents and teachers are empowered as agents of change and deciding stakeholders. These two bodies working together optimize learning for all students in the school. An example of our faithfulness to the teacher led model is the annual re-affirmation our School Governance Council and Teacher Cooperative make to remain a teacher led school despite the loss of additional funding. Both bodies conduct an annual meeting to review and make necessary updates to roles and by-laws.

The developmental bilingual program at ALBA has stood strong in the wave of district reforms in curriculum. For example, while the district alternates reading languages weekly in bilingual schools; through the autonomy entrusted by our charter ALBA continues to teach reading in both English and Spanish daily in the intermediate grade levels. Secondly, the focus on the native Spanish language development in the kindergartens and primary grades allows students to make a natural transition into school routines and gives parents the ability to greater assist at home with foundational skills for school success. Upon completing 4th or 5th grades our bilingual students typically graduate from the English as a Second Language (ESL) program, thus affording them the opportunity to take advantage of the richness of middle school program options that MPS has to offer.

English language acquisition is developed at ALBA in a nurturing and non-threatening manner. Students engage in authentic learning experiences in their homeroom and their fine arts classes which are taught in English. In addition, thoughtful and careful bridging instruction in the English language supplements the concepts being taught in their native language. Print rich environments afford students and families the opportunity to explore literature in both languages at home and in school. Our school library houses an extensive collection of both fiction and non-fiction books for all reading levels in both languages. ESL is taught through the content of Science so that students in K5 through 5th grade engage in academic learning in listening,

speaking, reading, and writing and not just social language development (BICS [Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills] vs CALPS [Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency] as theorized by Jim Cummins).

We continue to foster Hispanic cultural identity and appreciation through strong parental support and community involvement. The school year is organized around quarterly themes to develop and cultivate positive self-identity. Classroom teachers and Specialists collaborate on cross-curricular connections within the quarterly themes. Parents also support these themes for our school community. For example, during the first quarter Indigenous Roots theme, our Hispanic Heritage Celebration showcases student learning about the Aztecs, Mayans, Incas and Tainos (Arawak). Parents support this by bringing their cultural knowledge and culturally relevant items to exhibit and present to the larger school community.

The following accolades are testaments to the educational program, environment and culturally responsive community developed and sustained at ALBA. This positive climate enables teachers, students, and parents to collectively focus on learning while individually strengthening their own skills and abilities to educate and support the whole child.

The White House Initiative for Education Excellence for Hispanics highlighted ALBA School as a Bright Spot for our work in closing achievement gaps for K-12 Education and College Access in the state of Wisconsin. The culturally responsive, encouraging, respectful, and nurturing environment at ALBA School is recognized at the state level. The positive, equitable systems of support fully integrate academic, behavior, and social-emotional skills.

2012-2013 School of Merit Award in PBIS.

2013-2014 School of Distinction Award in PBIS.

2014-2015 School of Distinction in Math and Reading and PBIS

2014-2015 WI DPI Title I School of Recognition for Beating the Odds

2015-2016 School of Distinction in Math and Reading and Merit in PBIS

2015-2016 WI DPI Title I School of Recognition for Beating the Odds

2016-2017 Silver in Behavior and Bronze in Reading and Math

2017-2018 Silver in Math, Reading and Behavior

Staff

Wisconsin's Influential Latinos 2018

People Magazine-Teacher of the Year

Herb Kohl Teaching Fellow

Wisconsin Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Early Career Educator

Civic Music Association-Music Teacher of the Year

Education Deans of Greater Milwaukee Teacher Career Award

WIABE Teacher of the Year

MMABSE Teacher of Year

Parents

2016 ALBA PTO received a Commendation from the Milwaukee Common Council

Healthy Latino Schools Initiative - over 30 Parent Graduates

When it comes to arts education, minority students and those from low-income households have less access to arts instruction. This important to be aware of as ALBA school's population embodies this statistic with 99% Hispanic students enrolled and 90% free and reduced lunch. Studies show that even though Hispanics are the largest minority group nationally in the public school system, they are less likely to receive an arts-rich education. Therefore, providing a rich education in the arts and academic areas are foundational to providing quality learning.

ALBA School's focus on the fine arts arises from the positive impact on educational performance. The fine arts teachers at ALBA collaborate with classroom teachers to connect and develop concepts across disciplines. Students benefit from 80 minutes of art and 80 minutes of music instruction weekly supplemented with presentations from guest artists and ensembles. Through partnerships with the Milwaukee Art Museum, students in 3rd through 5th grade participate in the Jr. Art Docent Program three times a year. ALBA students have received scholarships for summer arts camps at the Milwaukee Art Museum. Beginning in K4, students can take Suzuki violin lessons through our partnership with the Milwaukee Conservatory of Music. Lessons are geared towards families and our youngest musicians. At the end of second grade, ALBA students are selected for the highly coveted Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra (MYSO) Progressions Program for weekly string instrument and orchestra lessons. As a part of their music classes at ALBA, 4th and 5th graders learn to play wind and percussion instruments with opportunities to perform for the school community several times throughout the year. The Artists and Community in Education (ACE) partnership works with students in K5

through 5th grades to bring a deeper connection to the arts through ensembles, concerts, and integrating music in the classroom. In grades 3rd through 5th, students are provided the opportunity to take weekly ballet lessons at Milwaukee Ballet in the Relevé ballet program. Danceworks partners with ALBA for the Mad Hot Ballroom and Tap dance program in 4th and 5th grades. ALBA students are also able to participate in Cantos de las Americas through showcasing their native dances at the annual concert celebration. America Scores, a combination of soccer and creative writing after-school program, affords students the ability to work on their writing skills through carefully guided lessons while developing their athletic dexterity. Sharp Literacy, our most recent arts based partnership, provides a critical component in marrying visual art, science and vocabulary in hands on, creative, experiential learning for students in K4 through 5th grade. It is clear to see through all of the above activities that ALBA is a unique educational program amalgamating the arts with culturally relevant teaching and academics. ALBA values and invests in creativity.

2. Explain how the school has met goals and measurable objectives during the term of this contract. Highlight growth in student achievement and provide evidence of how the school is making progress towards meeting its academic outcomes.

The annual Pupil Academic Achievement Reports paint broad strokes of the generalized impact of ALBA School. These reports demonstrate how ALBA routinely meets or exceeds district proficiency in the Forward and PALs tests and the other goals and measurable objectives required in the contract. On the state report card, ALBA School received Exceeding Expectations for two consecutive years and Meeting expectations for one year. The newest state report card is expected to be out later this fall. In 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 ALBA was awarded the WI DPI Title I School of Recognition for Beating the Odds.

The mission of ALBA School focuses upon students who are English Language Learners hence more than three quarters of ALBA students are identified as ELLs. Progress in the native language, Spanish, is carefully monitored to ensure firm foundational literacy skills before adding English reading in 2nd grade. We continue to monitor proficiency in both languages to ensure that students are balanced bilinguals. To paint a detailed stroke of the strategic language instruction and educational program at ALBA prepares our second language learners we present the following data from the 2016-2017 Forward Exam, the most recent publicly available data.

- In 2016-2017, 25% of ALBA 3rd grade ELL students were proficient on the Math Forward test while the state average was 20.8% proficiency for 3rd grade ELLs.
- In 2016-2017, 20% of ALBA 4th grade ELL students were proficient on the English Language Arts test on the Forward test while the state achieved only 10.8% proficiency for 4th grade ELLs.

Typically half of the students who are English language learners exit ESL at the end of 4th grade in ALBA. Therefore, comparing our 5th grade Forward data for students who are English proficient to the state, demonstrates how well our educational program prepares traditionally marginalized students to meet academic benchmarks and goals set for the majority population.

- In 2016-2017, 50% of ALBA 5th grade English proficient students were proficient on the Forward Math test while the state had 48% proficiency for 5th grade English proficient students.
- In 2015-2016, 52.6% of ALBA 5th grade students who were English proficient were advanced/proficient on the Forward Math test while the state had 47.3% advanced/proficient for 5th grade students who were English proficient.

Our unique culturally responsive climate and educational program emerges as an antidote to the achievement and opportunity gaps.. Providing a quality education is the very foundation of the ALBA mission and vision created 15 years ago. ALBA continues to fulfill the call to equip bilingual students who flourish in middle school, high school, and as lifelong learners. All goals and objectives are not met through quantitative data but through qualitative practices and the future success of our students, staff and parents.

Financial Performance

3. Explain how the school has met its financial performance standards. Describe how the school is financially sound.

ALBA has met its financial performance goals. Our biannual financial audits have been clean without findings since the inception of the school. Student well-being and learning is at the heart of our annual budget co-created by the SGC and the Teacher Cooperative. Student instruction and support are prioritized over materials and supplies. In years where the budget or outside grants allows for additional materials and resources we are careful to order what is needed for long term gains. An example of our financial prudence was the selection and purchase of our writing curriculum, Units of Study. After a careful and thorough examination of curriculum and how it could be used ALBA's language model we adopted the program knowing it would work in both languages and utilized mentor texts readily available in our library.

Through extremely cautious spending and careful monitoring of budgetary funds and outside grants, we have updated virtually every learning space utilized by students. We have successfully renovated classrooms, the library, added technology to each classroom, increased instruments for our youngest musicians, updated auditorium sound equipment and renovated the playground.

In the library, not only were furniture, drapes, accessories and electrical needs updated but the collection of books available in both English and Spanish was significantly increased. Presently

we have over 15,000 items in circulation with more than 5,000 titles available in Spanish! The library is truly the central hub of the school.

Through careful and selective planning we have also been able to upgrade and increase the technology available for teaching and learning. Every classroom is equipped with a Smartboard, document camera, LCD projectors, ipads, computers and chromebooks. Students in grades 2nd through 5th are one to one with Chromebooks. This past school year ALBA refreshed the computer lab in order to improve technology speed, access and embark on new technology goals to thrust our students into competition with suburban districts.

In the last Charter renewal document our playground was inadequate as it needed significant repairs that were never completed. For the fourteen years of ALBA's existence our students have not had any play structure available on the playground. As of August 2018 this goal has been met and a beautiful culturally inclusive playground was installed. ALBA funded this playground renovation through funds saved through the PLAN program, vacancy adjustments in prior contract terms, through an MMSD grant, and City of Milwaukee green infrastructure support.

Organizational Performance

*4. Illustrate how the school has a well functioning organizational structure. Include pertinent information about parental involvement, staffing, health and safety, school enrollment and discipline guidelines, and school facilities. Describe how the **community partnerships have impacted students.***

ALBA is a teacher led school run by The Teacher Cooperative. The Teacher Cooperative along with the School Governance Council have successfully operated and managed ALBA school for 15 years because of the following organizational structures that are in place:

Management of the School

As ALBA is a teacher led school, we have a two pronged administration, a Teacher Cooperative and a School Governance Council.

Teacher Cooperative

A Teacher Cooperative is the embodiment of distributed leadership. The teachers at ALBA take on the administrative duties that would normally be delegated to a principal. Educators share the responsibilities with integrity to manage the day-to-day operations of the school. Through highly collaborative committees and grade level teams educators are the voice and decision makers in how the school is run. We have one lead teacher, who is serves as the school contact person for

the district. When major decisions need to be made, the co-op meets and comes to consensus on the decision.

Staffing

The staff at ALBA school collaborates to provide a well-rounded education for all of our students. Para-professionals help students in each classroom with a highly qualified educator. As a fine arts elementary school, we have a full time art and music teacher. This well-functioning structure not only supports academic instruction but furthers the mission of our school in the fine arts. Staff continually develop their leadership capacity through school wide committees, events teams and in leading professional development and workshops for colleagues and parents. This empowerment has launched teachers and paraprofessionals into new opportunities including:

Associate Educator of Teacher and School Programs at the Milwaukee Art Museum
Head Start Manager and Early Learning Liaison, Highline School District, Washington
Senior Director of Academic Coaching, Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee
MarVan Scholars Program Manager at Boys and Club of Greater Milwaukee
Harvard Law School, Staff Attorneys at Greater Boston Legal Services
Assistant Principal, MPS
GE Coach, MPS
Bilingual Teachers, MPS
Bilingual Teacher, Chicago Public Schools
Reading Specialist, Elmbrook School District
Dean of Academics, Waukesha School District
Assistant Principal, Waukesha School District
Peace Corps Volunteer, Nicaragua
Teacher, Shanghai United International School, China

School Governance Council (SGC)

Parents play an active and integral role in the management of the school. The SGC is responsible for overseeing and approving any major policy or procedure in addition to the budget and the school improvement plan. In addition they are empowered to collaborate with staff to develop goals and interpret general policies while remaining true to the vision and mission of ALBA.

Parent Involvement

ALBA has strong parental support and community involvement. We are proud of the time and dedication that ALBA parents invest in the betterment of the education of their children. The parents of our students are genuine and vital partners in education. They are active in the classroom where they share their unique funds of knowledge, cultural heritage, and traditions. The Parent Center is a vibrant hub for parents throughout the school day. Workshops and classes are held with topics ranging from how to help with homework to personal development, ESL and

managing finances. ALBA's PTO takes a role in organizing and running supporting events. Throughout the year, parents organize and support events – from Hispanic Heritage Month (September) to Graduation (May) — for students and staff. Their participation in leadership training and community activism earned a Commendation from the Milwaukee Common Council.

Enrollment

ALBA's enrollment continually grows. Each subsequent year an additional grade is opened in the third track of our school, presently reaching to three classes of 3rd grade. During the five years of this contract ALBA has added over one hundred students, despite changes to 3 year old Head Start enrollment. Parents continually seek ALBA as the educational provider for their children. Open enrollment students come as from as far north as Good Hope Road to as far east as Cudahy. From the southwest we have students from Whitnall and Greenfield School districts. Additionally, student attendance remains at 95%, which is higher than the district average.

Discipline Policies

ALBA's school wide focus on appropriate behaviors for learning creates a positive school climate. Prevention is pursued and valued, not punishment. Our culturally responsive environment successfully mitigates most discipline issues resulting in very few, if any, behavioral referrals and suspensions. Parents and staff work together to create a positive and safe learning environment throughout the school that fosters students' personal growth and academic performance. This unified commitment to the ALBA model contributes to a safe school environment and climate. Our behavior policy follows a culturally sensitive multi-level system of support setting clear expectations for students from the onset of the school year. Additionally, ALBA rules and expectations are reviewed at monthly student assemblies. To set the educational tone for the day, every morning, students repeat the ALBA Pledge in both English and Spanish, which highlights our behavior expectations: "I am always respectful; I live and learn safely; I am responsible; I always do my best; I am ALBA."

Health and Safety

Five years ago ALBA formed a Comprehensive School Health Team. Working in conjunction with the school nurse, when available, the Health Team provides teachers with strategies and plans to raise students' overall awareness of health and safety concerns. In 2015, ALBA began a two year partnership with the Sixteenth Street Clinic which supported healthy habits for our entire school community. ALBA was the pilot school for this program that has since been carried out in schools across Milwaukee county. ALBA continues to implement the policies that resulted from this partnership. To ensure the daily safety of our students, ALBA utilizes all staff in ensuring that our students are safe. From arrival at school in the morning until the last student leaves from after-school activities, staff work together to keep our students as safe as possible. Monthly drills for fire, crisis and health are conducted. We are hopeful that the district will allocate a school safety aide for our building.

Another component adding to the overall well being of the students are the ALBA gardens and newly installed green infrastructure. Green space provides an outdoor classroom for lessons on sustainability, conservation and environmental science. Staff, parents, and students plan and cultivate various vegetables, flowers, and herbs. Students get to experience working the soil, observe the growing cycle and literally taste the fruits of their labors. This action builds a sense of community. An important part of the new playground is the green infrastructure to decrease further erosion and damage to the play space. Our new playground has a grass U-10 soccer field, grass and tree perimeters for sun and wind protection as well as a rain garden to capture water run-off from the playground. Staff, parents, and communities members have donated and planted over 300 perennials for this unique feature.

School Facilities

ALBA shares the Walker Complex with a non-instrumentality high school. ALBA uses all of its allocated spaces as developmentally and instructionally appropriate. Presently the kindergarten students are located on the “garden” level while the second floor houses primary grades on the west corridor and intermediate grades on the east side. As our student body has grown so has our support staff. More space is needed to accommodate the growing needs.

5. Provide evidence that parents and students are satisfied with the school.

Children whose parents are engaged in their school, no matter their income or background, display greater student have better attendance and feel more self assured about their learning. There are also fewer behavior problems and higher academic performance than those who are not. ALBA school has great parental involvement. Parents regularly volunteer in various classrooms, schoolwide activities, and parent meetings. Evidence of parental satisfaction that supports and maintains a high level of involvement can be confirmed through the following:

- An active School Governance Council that is growing in attendance and advocates for students.
- 95% of parents attend parent/teacher conferences.
- High chaperone count for field trips
- Average attendance of monthly parent meetings is 60-80 parents.
- Average attendance of special programs, such as the winter program, 700 people.
- Average attendance in K5/5th grade graduation ceremony 600.
- Graduation speakers that connect with the community include a university professor, other leaders in the community and even a former Green Bay Packer.
- Parents building a community of learners by leading ESL classes for each other.
- Parents petitioning the district for ALBA to expand through middle school.
- Parents advocating for their children organizing meetings with central office staff and board members.

In addition, a high satisfaction rate is evidenced by our parents choosing to transport their children. ALBA School does not provide transportation to regular education students, parents are responsible for bringing their children to school daily. The average daily attendance rate is 95% .

Central Office Staff, school leaders from various schools, walk through data, potential parent visitors, universities and others have consistently commented on the positive school climate the school has created. They are impressed on how happy students and staff are in the school. A retired principal once stated, “It is a joy to walk the halls in this school because you hear the teaching and learning coming from every classroom.” During our open houses, many parents are delighted about the child centered the environment. Many of the parents have stated, “It is like going to school in our native country, except better!”

ALBA students spend may spend eight years of their young lives with the staff. 5th grade graduation is an emotional time for families, staff and the 5th graders as strong family like bonds are developed during the course of the eight years together. Many of our students come back to visit the school, showing up at big events or stopping by after final exams in high school or college. As a PreK-5th grade school it is difficult to track students throughout their middle and high school careers. ALBA students typically attend Wedgewood Park IB Middle School, Audubon Middle, Golda Meir, Parkside School of the Arts, Nativity and Notre Dame private schools. For high school many ALBA students attend Ronald Reagan IB High School. ALBA students actively participate in the Reagan choirs, band and performance ensembles as well as have leading roles in the musicals. Other students have continued at Rufus King IB, Riverside, Hamilton, Pulaski, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, Veritas, Tenor, Marquette University High School, Carmen High School, Divine Savior, St. Anthony’s, Cristo Rey, St. Thomas More, Pius XI, and St. Lawrence Seminary.

Being just 15 years old, ALBA’s oldest students are in college or the early stages of their careers. Presently, ALBA students are: secondary Math teacher, pharmacy techs, attending MSOE for industrial design, attending UWM and Marquette University for nursing and political science. At Mount Mary College ALBA students are majoring in international business and interior design. ALBA students at Alverno College are education majors. Pre-med majors are found at UW-Parkside and St. Norbert College. Several students are doing their general education courses at MATC while another is a pre-dental majors at MATC.

6. Demonstrate that the school has an active and effective school governance structure. Provide examples and explain.

The School Governance Council (SGC) is highly active in creating and implementing school policies. Stakeholders convene regularly to oversee the educational performance of the students. The council members uphold the integrity of the charter when making and carrying out

decisions. For example, our SGC annually votes on remaining a teacher-led school despite financial disincentives for abstaining from being principal-led. The uniform and attendance policies that ALBA follows were created by the SGC as a result of parent requests. Annually the SGC develops the school budget setting some of the instructional, support and scheduling parameters for the following year. An example is when physical education was decreased in the school budget, SGC voted to keep the same number of minutes of instruction in physical education with the classroom teacher instructing when the Phy. Ed. teacher was not on site. Likewise SGC representatives keep the pulse of the school and share the needs of the greater parental community with the school. The members of the SGC actively supervise and enforce the policies with other families and in collaboration with teachers.

Plans for Continued Success

Educational Performance

1. Describe any proposed changes to the school's educational program for the term of the next charter.

ALBA is pursuing the following changes to our educational program during the duration of this next charter contract:

- Expansion to add 6th, 7th and 8th grades with feeder pattern to Reagan, Pulaski and MHSA
- School board designation as an IB Fine Arts School
- Pursuing IB programme candidacy for Early Years Programme K3-6th grades and Middle Years Programme 7th and 8th grades with the funding and staffing allocations as provided for traditional IB schools.
- Maintain the early start calendar
- Full carryover of board funds
- Review prior budgets from the term of the 2014-2019 contract for carryover that was requested and not brought forward.
- Equitable funding for centralized positions such as principal, secretary, guidance counselor, literacy and math coaches etc. In a teacher led school, administrative duties are shared among teachers and are still completely without a principal. ALBA School wants the full funding of an administrator and other centralized positions for allocation to effectively support our teacher led model. "Funding the position responsibilities not the person."
- Reallocation of space within the Walker Middle School building as the last configuration was spring of 2014 with one hundred students fewer than this year.
- Allocation of another classroom and necessary modifications for a multi-purpose arts performance space or renovation of one gym into a dance studio
- Updating the kindergarten level to reflect the early childhood and programmatic needs for additional sinks, bulletin boards and bathroom modifications.

- Provision of new flexible arrangement furniture, curriculum, technology, supplies and materials for each class of the middle school expansion.

2. *Provide the proposed enrollment and grade levels for the term of the next charter contract.*

ALBA School is seeking a maximum contract enrollment in the following grades for the year of the proposed five year contract.

2019-2020 K3HS-6th grade 570 students

2020-2021-K3-7th grade 585 students

2021-2022- K4-8th grade 615 students

2021-2023 K4-8th grade 635 Students

2023-2024 K4-8th grade 650 students

3. *Outline the school's goals and measurable objectives for the term of the next charter and describe how the school intends to meet these goals.*

As education is a lifelong process and students are unique learners with individual needs, ALBA School will continue to increase student performance academically and in the fine arts, improve parental satisfaction and increase its contribution to the community.

- Academically, we will continue improving test scores to meet or exceed state proficiency percentages in Math and English Language Arts for similar students in similar grades.
- Artistically, ALBA will increase fine arts offerings and percentage of students participating in the partnerships.
- While ALBA School has substantial parental involvement as compared to other MPS schools, we anticipate incremental increases in the quantity of parent and community volunteers directly providing academic support in classrooms.
- With the deep roots ALBA has established in the community, we not only benefit from community partnerships but also desire to give back to the community through service learning and artistic projects. It is our desire that ALBA School continue to be recognized as an arts school within the local arts community.

Financial Performance

4. *Explain the school's financial plans and forecast.*

Financially ALBA School would like to be afforded the autonomy that was given to instrumentality charter schools during the first charter contract. An example of this autonomy is

the funding that all schools were given for a principal is greater than the funding that was given to teacher led schools where principal duties are shared among staff rather than completed by one administrative person. This results in the teacher leader working more than 191 days but only having a central allocation for 191 days thus requiring the school to pay the difference since centralized funding was allocated based on person and not position.

Our financial plans and forecast are very dependent on the financial policies of the district and state. The need to renovate the entire playground was great and without the centralized funding of cyclical maintenance, it took many years of ALBA saving, writing proposals and seeking outside partners to secure the funding and carry out the project. In addition, we have a significant need as a fine arts school for a multi-purpose space with flooring suitable for dance classes and theatrical accommodations for a black box intimate performance space. This is a space that would be well utilized by our current elementary school population. We do not have any funds set aside to begin this project and welcome suggestions to fund this.

Organizational Performance

5. Illustrate plans for strengthening parental and community involvement in the school's educational mission.

ALBA School will involve parents to ensure sustainability through the empowerment and building the capacity of our school community. Parents have historically been and presently are actively engaged in decision making and in supporting the needs of the school. Through the monthly parent meetings, new parents are brought into the school community to positively impact the educational success of the students. During the monthly meetings parents receive educational training with an academic or social/emotional focus. This training is presented by the parent coordinator, school social worker, school psychologist, teachers, specialists, and community organizations. This school-wide community effort also introduces parents to support staff available within the school for any individual concerns..

As ALBA has an open door policy to parent volunteers, parents often find their niche in supporting classroom, specialty rooms, and the parent center. This allows the school to build the capacity of our parents in leadership, volunteerism and as advocates for education. To further enhance home-school relationships, ALBA School regularly has school wide events that foster: communication among parents and with the staff, engagement in their child/children's learning, and a showcase of student learning. Since the creation of ALBA, the Parent Teacher Organization has been active by meeting monthly and managing more than 10 events per year. This parent led group brings many opportunities for parents to be involved around the school mission and provide many cultural celebrations and educational support to the students and families. Parents are also active in our school governance council monthly meetings. The concerns from the parents are taken into account and solutions are brainstormed and put into effect.

Additionally, we continually partner with outside agencies to be able to offer classes to our parents for their personal self-growth and in their development as parents. The parent center has provided many opportunities for parents to learn, share their talents and support student learning including adult learning. All of the parent and community volunteers are trained and supported by the parent coordinator. At the end of the year a volunteer recognition program celebrates the many hours and help they gave to the school and students.

To ensure sustainability with community involvement, ALBA School will maintain its strong ties with the arts community but also pursue more partnerships with social service agencies. In a time of fiscal constraints, community agencies are increasingly partnering with ALBA to provide services to our children and families. For example, several parents became leaders in a 16th Street Community Health Center nutrition program. They then shared their newly acquired knowledge with other parents in the school's parent center. 16th Street Community Health Clinic and Core El Centro made a partnership with ALBA to offer monthly parent/child nutrition and healthy habits classes. This type of partnership is just one example of what we anticipate developing with more social agencies to meet the needs of our families.

We are embarking on a new partnership with Social Development Corporation for grandparent tutors for our students. This type of partnership bridges academic support and mentoring so necessary for student success. More partnerships for student mentoring is being actively pursued.

The proposed addition of middle school grades to ALBA would spark new partnerships with organizations that target the middle school age groups. We anticipate building relationship that utilize theatre, improvisation, and music to further the creative talents of our students.

Through our present community partners students have received scholarships for instrumental lessons at the Conservatory of Music, lifetime scholarships with Milwaukee Ballet and summer camp scholarships with the Urban Ecology Center and Milwaukee Art Museum. We desire to see the quantity of students increase in participation in these unique experiences.

6. Describe any changes to the school's governance structure.

No changes to our governance structure are being proposed at this time.