

Desert Trails Parent Union Moves Forward To Transform Desert Trails Elementary School Following Historic Court Victory

Contacts: David Phelps, Parent Revolution, 213-718-4660, dphelps@parentrevolution.org
Susan Oliver, Kirkland & Ellis, 213-680-8220, susan.oliver@kirkland.com

Victorville, California – July 27, 2012 – Just one week after a landmark decision by Judge Steve Malone of the San Bernardino Superior Court upholding the “Parent Trigger” petition parents of children attending Desert Trails along with the Desert Trails Parent Union are moving forward with their efforts to transform Desert Trails Elementary. In a comprehensive eight-page set of guidelines released today (attached), the Desert Trails Parent Union is soliciting proposals for the purpose of selecting an operator for the transformed Desert Trails school, with a goal of implementing the changes commencing by the start of the 2013-2014 school year.

The Desert Trails Parent Union is requesting potential operators to submit a “Letter of Interest” (LOI) by 5:00 p.m. PST on Friday, August 3, 2012. Respondents whose LOI meet the criteria guidelines will be notified on Monday, August 6 of their inclusion in the next stage of the process: a “Request for Proposal” (RFP). Details of the RFP requirements will be released Tuesday, August 7, 2012.

RFP respondents have until Friday, September 21, 2012 to submit their proposal. All proposals submitted by the September 21, 2012, deadline will be evaluated in accordance with California’s Parent Trigger regulations and guidelines previously outlined in the attachment handed to each Parent Trigger signatory. In order to facilitate this selection process, the Desert Trails Parent Union - circulators of the Parent Trigger petition - will conduct a vote amongst parents who signed the petition in order to select a school operator, and that vote will be binding upon the petitioners’ selection.

“We are excited to move forward with this historic process to select a partner who will collaborate with us to transform Desert Trails. Our children have waited for so long to receive a quality education. Now it is finally happening,” said Doreen Diaz, Desert Trails Parent Union Coordinator.

“All proposals are encouraged, including from the Adelanto School District, other districts, labor organizations, and existing non-profit charter operators. Our priority is to make sure Desert Trails Elementary is transformed and fully operational by September 13, 2013.”

Ben Austin, executive director of Parent Revolution, which has been assisting the parents, stated the release of the guidelines is the next major step in this process.

“While we continue to celebrate Judge Malone’s landmark decision, the parents are focused on the real work ahead of transforming Desert Trails. These parents have been working around the clock to craft and begin implementing this historic and empowering process whereby parents will select their own school operator for the first time in American history.”

Mark Holscher, pro bono counsel for Kirkland & Ellis, who is representing the parents, said the state “Parent Empowerment” law, and affirmed by the Superior Court on July 18, authorized the Desert Trails Parent Union to begin the process of selecting a partner/operator immediately.

“Ninety days are allowed for the process, and the Parent Union has made it clear they do not want to waste any time in getting things underway. By releasing the guidelines today, potential partners and operators will have a full 45 days to respond to the RFP. The parents want thoughtful, focused proposals, specifically addressing the needs raised by the parents,” Holscher added.

-end-

Note to media: The Desert Trails Parent Union and Parent Revolution will provide regular updates at each stage of the process outlined in the guidelines released today.