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ASPIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OUTPERFORMS EVERY LARGE SCHOOL DISTRICT IN CA SERVING MAJORITY HIGH-POVERTY STUDENTS

Aspire Posts Record Achievement on CA's API with Overall School Score of 824

Oakland, CA – Aspire Public Schools, the largest operator of public charter schools in California, today announced that a record 17 schools surpassed the target score of 800, the state's measure of a high-performing public school, on California's 2010 Academic Performance Index (API) Growth results. Aspire's overall API score of 824 made it the highest-performing school system in California serving a majority of high-poverty students, outperforming every school district in the state larger than 20 schools that also serves a majority high-poverty student population.

More than 90 percent of all Aspire schools (23 out of 25 schools) scored above 750. In addition, more than 80 percent of Aspire schools (14 out of 17 schools) that had at least three years of student achievement results surpassed 800, while close to 70 percent of all Aspire schools (17 out of 25 schools), including first-year schools, surpassed 800 points. Currently, 74 percent of Aspire Public Schools' students are socio-economically disadvantaged.

Aspire's newly-opened schools also opened to strong results. This year, Aspire's four first-year schools averaged 786 on the API, compared to five years ago when Aspire's first-year schools averaged 661.

"Aspire Public Schools experienced another banner year of performance as our team continues to build on our track record of incredible student achievement," said Aspire Public Schools CEO James Willcox. "These results are an incredible tribute to the determination of our team and their commitment to students. They have refused to let this economic crisis derail our students' journey to college, and are truly changing the odds for some of the most underserved students in the state. They have done this while opening nine new schools in the past two years to serve thousands of additional students across California."

Aspire's success is further underscored by the fact that seven Aspire schools were the top-performing public schools within their local districts. They include: Port City Academy (elementary) in Stockton Unified, Vincent Shalvey Academy (elementary) in Lodi Unified, University Charter School (elementary) in Sylvan Unified, Vanguard College Preparatory Academy (middle/high) in Empire Union, Lionel Wilson College Prep in Oakland Unified (including high schools with at least 100 students), East Palo Alto Charter School (elementary) and East Palo Alto Phoenix Academy (high) in Ravenswood City.

Leading the way for Aspire's highest performers included two public charter schools that surpassed the 900-point threshold: Vincent Shalvey Academy in Stockton achieved a score of 927 and University Charter School in Modesto a 916. Rounding out Aspire's top five highest-performing schools included River Oaks Charter School in Stockton at 887, Benjamin Holt College Preparatory in Stockton at 886 and East Palo Alto Charter School in East Palo Alto at 882.

Aspire's most-improved schools over the past year include: Langston Hughes Academy in Stockton, which grew 56 points; Monarch Academy in Oakland, which grew 52 points; Junior Collegiate Academy in Huntington Park (Los Angeles), which grew 49 points, East Palo Alto Charter School in East Palo Alto, which grew 40 points; and Rosa Parks Academy in Stockton, which grew 38 points.

Now in its 12th year, Aspire operates 30 open-enrollment public charter schools serving close to 10,000 public school students throughout the state of California, including five new charter schools opening this fall. Aspire's academic success in its K-12 schools has resulted in 100 percent of the students from its three graduating classes last year getting accepted to four-year colleges or universities, with many being the first in their family to attend.

About Aspire Public Schools

Aspire Public Schools is a nonprofit organization that currently operates 30 high-performing open-enrollment public charter schools throughout California with an emphasis on serving low-income communities. Aspire is also one of the highest-performing public school systems in California, operating public charter schools across the state with one specific goal – preparing urban students for college – encapsulated by its motto of “College for Certain”. Aspire offers a dependable, high-quality education in six communities throughout California, including East Palo Alto, Modesto, Oakland, Stockton, Sacramento, and Los Angeles. After opening five new schools this fall, Aspire now serves a total of 9,800 students in grades K-12. Aspire plans to open three to four new schools each year to provide the opportunity of “College for Certain” to even more children. Visit Aspire Public Schools at www.aspirepublicschools.org

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