Orlando Ramos Domenech, Ed.D.

| ✉ orlandoramos123@gmail.com | 🌎 Bilingual – English/Spanish

Dear Members of the Search Committee,

Over the past two decades, I have been entrusted to lead some of the nation's most complex and challenging school systems, with a particular record of turning around organizations facing extraordinary academic and institutional pressures**.** I have accomplished something few education leaders have achieved: twice, I played a pivotal leadership role in helping major urban school districts—Milwaukee Public Schools and East Baton Rouge Parish—move away from the brink of state receivership and preserve local control through measurable academic improvement. In Milwaukee, a 77,000-student district, I helped lead the system away from potential state takeover, producing the highest ACT achievement gains in district history for two consecutive years and reducing student course-failure rates by 30 percent. In East Baton Rouge, a 42,000-student system, I helped avert state intervention by moving every F-rated high school to a D or C rating, reducing ninth-grade failure rates by 20 percent, and helping achieve the highest college-enrollment and graduation rate in district history.

My leadership experience extends across more than 80 schools in some of the nation's most challenging educational environments, including New York City, Chicago, Milwaukee, Baton Rouge, and Richmond, California**.** What distinguishes my career is not simply the number of schools or systems I have led, but the complexity and magnitude of the challenges I have been asked to address—and the measurable results that followed. I have built my career around transforming organizations in moments when the stakes are highest, aligning people around a compelling vision, strengthening academic and operational systems, and creating the conditions for sustainable improvement. I believe this record of large-scale turnaround leadership, combined with my experience navigating state intervention, organizational crisis, academic reform, and stakeholder engagement, uniquely positions me to lead an institution seeking not merely incremental improvement, but meaningful and enduring transformation.

I have led and served in diverse educational systems across the United States and abroad—consistently advancing student achievement, stabilizing schools under threat of state takeover, and building strong, collaborative teams dedicated to equity and excellence.

I have proudly served in the following capacities:
- Thirteen years with the New York City Department of Education—the largest school system in the nation.
- Associate Superintendent, East Baton Rouge Parish School System (42,000 students).
- Regional Superintendent, Milwaukee Public Schools (78,000 students).
- Chief Academic Officer, The American School of Fes, Morocco.
- Principal/Director (7 years), Assistant Principal (2 years), and Teacher (7 years) across multiple school communities.

Leadership Philosophy and Personal Commitment

I believe in the power of restorative leadership—anchored in equity, empathy, and excellence. My approach emphasizes building strong teams, empowering educators and stakeholders, and ensuring that every scholar's success remains our North Star.

In 2008, I was honored as one of three recipients of the California Peace Prize for mediating peace agreements among rival gang members and implementing initiatives that kept students engaged in school—an example of my lifelong commitment to turning adversity into opportunity.

Fluent in English and Spanish, I bring a global perspective, deep community roots, and an unrelenting focus on student achievement. As someone who once experienced homelessness and dropped out of high school before returning to earn a doctorate in education, I view this work not as a career, but as a mission. My story affirms my belief that every child, regardless of circumstance, deserves the chance to fulfill their potential.

It would be an honor to bring my experience, vision, and passion for educational excellence to your district. I welcome the opportunity to discuss how my leadership can advance your strategic goals and the success of every student.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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CORE LEADERSHIP STRENGTHS

Strategic Planning & System Transformation • Academic Improvement • Instructional Leadership • Organizational Turnaround • Board & Stakeholder Relations • Budget Development • Talent Recruitment & Retention • Staff Coaching & Evaluation • Community & Parent Engagement • Conflict Resolution

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Twice prevented state takeover of major urban school systems — Led turnaround strategies in East Baton Rouge and Milwaukee, helping both districts avoid state receivership following formal threats of state takeover.
- Transformed one of New York City's most violent schools — Led the 3rd most violent school in NYC off the city's Top 10 Most Violent Schools list within a single school year, implementing comprehensive safety, culture, and student-support strategies.
- Improved academic outcomes across 80+ schools — Led instructional improvement initiatives that produced measurable gains across more than 80 schools in New York City, Chicago, Milwaukee, Richmond (CA), with results reflected in state and national assessments.
- California Peace Prize Recipient — Co-recipient of the California Peace Prize for facilitating peace agreements among rival gang members and developing targeted interventions that helped at-risk students remain in school and avoid dropping out.
- Significant Public and Charter school experience

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Chief Strategy Officer | Real Journey Academies
Ontario, CA • **2021–Present**

Hybrid executive portfolio encompassing academic leadership, human resources, stakeholder engagement, and hearing-officer responsibilities across the academy network.

- Lead systemwide initiatives involving school start-ups, recruitment, communications, academic oversight, and leadership development.
- Authored and implemented the organization's AI policy and developed a Future Teachers Pathway for students.
- Partner with Human Resources on talent recruitment, retention strategies, and organizational culture.
- Serve as hearing officer for selected personnel, student, and compliance matters; advise the CEO and Cabinet on strategy and execution.

Chief Academic & Strategy Officer | American School of Fez
Fez, Morocco • **2019–2021**

- Directed curriculum, instruction, and accreditation for an international PreK–12 institution.
- Advanced Cognia/AdvancED accreditation readiness through systemwide curriculum alignment.
- Supervised and coached site administrators; served as Acting CEO during absences, maintaining continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic.

High School Principal | Beloit Memorial High School
Beloit, WI • **2018–2019**

- Reversed four consecutive years of ACT score declines and improved the school's rating from "Meets Few Expectations" to "Meets Expectations "on State report card
- Strengthened staff culture and instructional coherence through literacy and grading reforms.

Regional Superintendent | Milwaukee Public Schools
Milwaukee, WI | 77,000 students • **2015–2018**

- Directly supervised 32 schools along with multiple central-office departments.
- Helped move the district from the brink of state takeover to sustain local control through record academic gains.
- Delivered the highest ACT achievement gains in district history for two consecutive years.
- Reduced student course-failure rates by 30% and increased college readiness across all subject areas.

Associate Superintendent, Office of Innovation & Reform | East Baton Rouge Parish School System
Baton Rouge, LA | 42,000 students • **2012–2015**

- Helped avert potential state takeover by improving every F-rated high school to a D or C rating.
- Reduced ninth-grade failure rates by 20% and achieved the highest college-enrollment rate in district history.
- Supervised 10 principals and key departments, including Curriculum & Instruction, Career and Technical Education (CTE), and JROTC.
- Earned "Highly Effective" ratings for three consecutive years.

District Transformation Officer | Decatur Public Schools
Decatur, IL | 9,000 students • **2011–2012**

- Implemented grading and literacy systems that significantly reduced course-failure rates.
- Designed district accountability and progress-monitoring frameworks.
- Expanded community partnerships to rebuild public confidence.

Director, Office of Transformation Schools | Chicago Public Schools
Chicago, IL | 400,000+ students • **2010–2011**

- Negotiated stakeholder agreements in eight communities to implement school-turnaround strategies.
- Co-authored and secured the largest single-source grant in district history
- Built infrastructure, performance systems, and risk-management protocols for Transformation and Turnaround schools.

SCHOOL-SITE LEADERSHIP & TEACHING

High School Principal — 4 years • Middle School Principal — 2 years • Assistant Principal — 2 years • Bilingual Spanish Teacher — 7 years (Teacher of the year recipient twice)

EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

- Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, FL
- Master of Education (M.Ed.) Cambridge College, Cambridge, MA
- Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York, NY
- Certified Conflict Resolution Specialist — New York City Department of Education

HONORS, RECOGNITION & CIVIC LEADERSHIP

- California Peace Prize, Co-Recipient (2008)
- Man of Merit Award — West Contra Costa Delta Project (2008)
- Founder, Peace Fest initiative — associated with a 30% reduction in suspensions and a decline in community gang violence
- Performance Bonus Award, New York City Department of Education — Whole-School Improvement (2001)
- Teacher of the Year and Friendliest Teacher — Walton High School, Bronx, NY
- Executive Board Member (building level) United Federation of Teachers, New York City
- Recognized by the City of Fontana with a Legacy Award and by the California State Legislature for contributions to residents of Assembly District 50(2025)
- Served on multiple advisory bodies, including the San Jose Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force
- Game Changer Award-Real Journey Academies (2022)-For creating outstanding school